

**Media Policy Education and Reporting Pilot Program Application**

**Application Deadline: January 26**

**Return to: Tracy Van Slyke,** [**tracy@themediaconsortium.com**](mailto:tracy@themediaconsortium.com)

*Application Length Limit: 4 pages*

Name: John Rudolph  
Title: Executive Producer  
Organization: Feet in Two Worlds

Will you be responsible for overseeing the program at your organization? No

If no, please enter name and title here: Sarah Kramer, Blog Editor

If you have read and agree to the requirements to the program, please mark X here: X

1. Why is your organization interested in reporting on the topic of media policy?   
*350 words or less*

As an organization that works closely with ethnic media and immigrant journalists, Feet in Two Worlds has a keen interest in understanding how technology, economics, government policies and other factors that fall under the umbrella of media policy impact media that serves immigrant communities. According to a poll conducted in 2009, ethnic media reaches 57 million adults on a regular basis. Yet there has been almost no reporting on how media policy affects this large and growing sector. Feet in Two Worlds’ six years of experience partnering with ethnic media and bringing the work of immigrant journalists to public radio and the web puts us in a unique position to report on this area.

The overwhelming majority of ethnic media organizations struggle to keep pace with the profound changes sweeping across the media landscape. Unlike large mainstream media entities, most ethnic media outlets lack the resources to fully understand, respond to or report on these forces of change. There are very few venues for ethnic media editors, publisher and reporters to talk to each other about media policy, let alone report on it for their readers, viewers and listeners. Meanwhile, mainstream media - other than devising advertising and marketing strategies to reach ethnic audiences - pays very little attention to the policy implications of how and where immigrant communities get their news and information.

Feet in Two Worlds proposes to begin to fill this gap under TMC’s “Media Policy Reporting and Education” pilot program. We see this as a natural outgrowth of our work building bridges between ethnic and mainstream media, and our mission to bring underreported stories from immigrant communities to a large and diverse audience on public radio and the web. Indeed, while media policy is a neglected subject, media policy as it impacts immigrant communities is even more under the radar screen. Our goal under the TMC program is to shed a light on this area of vital importance to all types of media and the ethnic and immigrant audiences that depend on them.

2. Has your organization reported on this topic in the past?  
Yes X

If so, please share headlines and links to past reporting over past year

## [Cell Phones Become Tools for Storytelling in the Hands of L.A. Immigrants](http://news.feetintwoworlds.org/2010/12/30/cell-phones-become-tools-for-storytelling-in-the-hands-of-l-a-immigrants/)

[Immigrants May Lose Vital Means of Communication Under Senate Bill](http://news.feetintwoworlds.org/2010/06/08/immigrants-may-lose-vital-means-of-communication-under-senate-bill/)

## [“Is This What We Need?” Russian Immigrant Leader Questions Brightn Beach Reality TV Show](http://news.feetintwoworlds.org/2011/01/04/is-this-what-we-need-russian-immigrant-leader-questions-brighton-beach-reality-tv-show/)

[Clash of the Newspaper Titans](http://news.feetintwoworlds.org/2010/07/22/clash-of-the-newspaper-titans/)

3. Please provide a quick snapshot of your audience:

Size: (i.e. print, online, viewers, listeners e-list, twitter followers, Facebook fans, etc…)

Geographic Distribution:  
Demographics:

What kinds of influentials in your audience would be receptive to this topic? (i.e. activists, policy makers, high number of retweeters, press contacts)

Feet in Two Worlds reporters reach a wide and diverse audience on nationally-distributed public radio programs including PRI’s ***The World*, *Studio 360***, and ***The Takeaway*,** American Public Media’s ***Marketplace****,* and NPR’s ***Latino USA****,* as well as on WNYC, New York Public Radio. Depending on the program, the audience for any single piece can range from hundreds of thousands to over 1-million listeners.

Our public radio work is complimented by the Feet in Two Worlds blog, news.feetintwoworlds.org, a daily source of stories about immigrant communities in the U.S. written by immigrant journalists, and our town hall events, live conversations that bring together ethnic media journalists and academic experts to talk about trends and ideas in immigrant communities and developments in immigration policy.

The blog attracts about 15-thousand readers a month. We have close to 700 followers on Twitter and 200 followers on Facebook. The audience at our live events generally runs between 200 and 250, and the content is also distributed on the web.

Most of our work is currently in New York. However our online audience is located around the country, mainly in cities with large immigrant populations.

While we have not done a scientific study, we know from comments on our blog and our Twitter and Facebook followers that our audience includes a significant number of immigration attorneys, immigration activists, immigration bloggers, ethnic media journalists, public radio producers as well as elected and appointed government officials. We believe that our audience would be very interested in this topic, and would be open to distributing the content we produce as public radio pieces and interviews, retweets, blog posts and links.

4. Please provide a brief outline of how you would cover this issue during the pilot program. Your outline should include:

* Platforms: print, audio, video, online (or mix thereof)
* Editorial Sub-topic(s) related to media policy that you are interested in covering or want to learn more about
* An overview of how often you could produce content and your vision of the content mix you would produce (investigative, breaking news, analysis)

Fi2W would produce bi-weekly blog posts, in addition to a number of longer, investigative and analysis pieces that would have audio and video components. In addition we would seek to place stories on nationally-distributed public radio programs and individual stations with whom we have ongoing relationships.

There are a number of editorial sub-topics that we’re interested in covering:

* How is the changing media environment affecting immigrant communities and the media outlets – ethnic and mainstream – that immigrants depend on for information? Historically, many immigrant communities have been separated from online information due to a "digital divide," in which members of these communities have less access to broadband Internet than U.S.-born Americans. However, access to the Internet through mobile phones has made a significant and swift impact on low-income immigrant communities, many of whom can’t afford broadband Internet at home or live in housing situations where subscribing to broadband service is difficult. How has smart phone news and information delivery affected these communities? What strategies, if any, have media outlets and other institutions devised to reach immigrant communities with lower rates of broadband access?
* Access to the Internet is often higher among the children of immigrants than it is among their parents. What’s the impact on the relationship between first-generation youth and their immigrant parents? Some immigrant groups – such as Arab-Americans – have much higher rates of Internet access than others – such as Hispanics. Does Internet access correspond to levels of political involvement or representation or community cohesion?
* Considering the FCC's recent decision that excludes mobile devices from net-neutrality, will low-income immigrant communities have less freedom to surf the Internet, and thereby get information, or express themselves, due to their tendency to access the web through mobile phones? Will they be more subject to restrictions and commercial values imposed by phone carriers like AT&T and Verizon?
* As Twitter, Facebook and other social media sites become global sources of information has the growth of these outlets damaged the economic viability of immigrant media? Is directly reading about riots in Tunisia or real estate in Mumbai from a direct source in the country taken away the traditional "messenger" role played by the ethnic press in the U.S?
* Do Orkut, Babbalu and other social media popular outside the U.S. provide opportunities for immigrant communities to express themselves in ways that perhaps Facebook and Twitter don't allow? What's the economic impact and social meaning of this? Does it fragment immigrant communities from the mainstream?

5. Please provide a brief overview of your Public Relations capabilities including social networking strategies/opportunities, press and ally relationships/contacts and what you could do to promote your reporting through the pilot program.

We will promote the reporting in this program in a variety of ways. We’ll send out regular email blasts to several thousand people who are recipients of email from our parent organization the Center for New York City Affairs at the Milano graduate school of the New School. We’ll share content with *It’s A Free Country*, WNYC’s politics website, as well as other websites that we frequently share content with including New America Media, *Voices That Must Be Heard* from the New York Community Media Alliance, Latina Lista, Vivir Latino, Long Island Wins and others. We’ll publicize the work to our Facebook and Twitter followers. We would also be interested in cooperative promotion with other TMC organizations in the program.

6. Would you be willing to collaborate with another TMC member to produce at least one piece of editorial content? If yes, share one broad idea of what kind of collaboration you’d like to explore.

Absolutely. If GritTV were interested, we would like to co-produce a video with them on one of these topics for web and TV broadcast. We would also be interested in collaborating with another news outlet on an investigative piece that requires data-crunching. Potential partners are Mother Jones, Colorlines, change.org and The Nation.

7. Do you have a reporter already on staff or a freelancer identified that covers this beat?

If so, please note their name. Aswini Anburajan

Aswini is an Indian-American journalist who went through the Feet in Two Worlds radio training program in 2008, and has produced pieces for *Marketplace, Latino USA, The World* and *WNYC.* She was Fi2W’s first blog editor. Aswini covered the Obama campaign in 2008 for MSNBC’s website. She recently obtained an MBA from the Judge Business School at the University of Cambridge, where she focused on international media and contributed to the *Financial Times’* Business Education Blog.