**The Media Consortium Network Gathering @ AMC**  
June 14, 2018  
Report Submitted by Jo Ellen Green Kaiser

On June 14, the Media Consortium met for the final time as a network gathering at the Allied Media Conference in Detroit. The goal of the gathering was to look past the Media Consortium as an organization. The question we asked was: What next steps could participants take to move us toward a more equitable media ecosystem?

Many , many thanks to Dyan Ruiz and Tim Nafziger, who volunteered to act as facilitators for this gathering; and to Ivan Roman, Linda Jue, Sabine Blaizin, Kate Lesniak, Kimberly Spencer, Yolanda Williams and Megan Zehender of the Visioning and Program Committees.

Who Came  
The Media Consortium’s final gathering was our most diverse yet. Thanks to Movement Journalism scholarships funded by the News Integrity Initiative, the Foundation for a Just Society and the Ford Foundation’s IIE program, the fifty journalists who attended our gathering were

* diverse geographically, coming from the deep south and the far west as well as from the Midwest and east coast;
* diverse professionally, working as both staff reporters and freelancers;
* diverse in racial and ethnic identity, with journalists of color comprising over 50% of the room, including people who identify as Latinx, African American, Filipino-Canadian, Chinese-American, and as immigrants.

Approximately half of the attendees came as representatives of outlets that had been [Media Consortium members.](#TMC%20Outlets%20@AMC%20) Alongside these outlets were reporters, comms professionals, foundation representatives, and media makers who were curious about the role the Media Consortium had played and what might follow in its wake.

What Happened  
For all the differences among participants, those present shared a joint passion for creating a journalism that would authentically speak truth to power. A consensus emerged that journalists must recognize, acknowledge and confront the white supremacy, class elitism, heteronormativity, mono-lingualism and patriarchal structures that still govern our society and that shape the production of journalism in the United States.

The morning, facilitated by Dyan Ruiz, consited of break outs on six topic areas:

1. How to Hold Media Systems Accountable (Linda Jue)

2. What is Movement Journalism? (Anna Simonton)

3. How to Empower of Local & Community Media Outlets? (Manolia Charlotin)

4. Resources & Access for Journalists of Color (Sabine Blaizin)

5. Cooperative Economics (Nati Linares)

6. Distribution beyond the Platforms (Jo Ellen)

*“Journalists of color, young journalists & LGBT journalists were largely present in the convening & I felt they were comfortable speaking openly*”—Dyan Ruiz

The afternoon opened with a surge of energy as facilitator Tim Nafziger supported attendees in arranging post-its of ideas harvested from the morning conversations into topic areas. Attendees then broke into groups based on the topics that had garnered the most interest:

1. “Power” –Applying a Power Analysis to Journalism
2. New Economy Models for Journalism
3. New Distribution Models for Journalism

Next Steps

The general consensus among those present agreed that the Media Consortium’s work, as an organization, was completed and that the time was ripe for a new way of organizing journalism centering on communities.

Attendees were particularly interested in the Movement Journalism track and the potential emergence of a hub for Movement Journalism based in the South. That project will be spearheaded by Anna Simonton of Scalawag, with possible support from current TMC assets.

Those present also committed to a few concrete next steps:

* **Continue to collaborate on specific projects**, linking to each other via the Media Consortium’s current listserv, Zoom account, and Slack (all of which will be paid for through 2019);
* **Research new economic models** **for journalism** including coops and public funding. This working group will be led by Nati Linares from the New Economy Coalition and supported by Tim Nafziger.
* **Fight back against the platform monopolies** by researching new tools for content distribution. This working group will be led by Chris Faraone of BINJ and supported by Jo Ellen Kaiser.
* **Identify organizations already doing grassroots journalism training** and developing a  
  curriculum based on best practices. This working group will be led by Anna Simonton of Scalawag and supported by Manolia Charlotin.

A fuller report featuring a narrative of The Media Consortium’s history and accomplishments, its reasons for closing, and the outcomes we hope to achieve, will come out in early July.

Meanwhile, the energy, vision and desire to keep moving forwards that we saw at our gathering at AMC demonstrates that, although The Media Consortium is sunsetting, its work will continue.

**Where TMC members can find new homes, new places for connection:**

TMC Communications

The TMC Listserve, a Google Group, will remain alive indefinitely

The TMC Zoom # will be available for informal networking through 2019

Membership Groups

ONA for individuals—provides updates on what’s happening in journalism

IRE for individuals—provides tools for investigative reporting

INN for nonprofit newsrooms—a 501c3 that functions like a trade association

LION for local newsrooms—a 501c3 that functions like a trade association

NEC for all groups working towards a New Economy

Conferences:

Allied Media Conference in Detroit

#Commonbound from the New Economy Coalition

People Powered Publishing Conference in Chicago

**Projects in Formation:**

Southern Movement Journalism Hub (in formation—talk to Anna Simonoton)

Media Makers of Color Network (in formation—talk to Manolia Charlotin)

Local Hubs:

* Boston (BINJ),
* Baltimore (BINJ)
* New Jersey (Free Press)
* North Carolina (Free Press)
* Chicago (City Bureau/INN/ProPublica)
* Arkansas (Arkansas Times)
* Denver (in formation)
* New Mexico (Generation Justice)
* Bay Area (Bay Area News Collaborative)
* The South (see Southern Movement Journalism Hub)

TMC Outlets @AMC

A total of 19 outlets, out of the Media Consortium’s 80 member outlets, attended the Allied Media Conference.

Sixteen TMC outlets were represented at the Network Gathering:

Bitch  
BINJ  
Care2  
Free Speech TV  
GWWilliams Center  
Laura Flanders Show  
Making Contact  
People Power Media  
The Progressive  
Public News Service  
Rethinking Schools  
Race, Poverty, Environment  
Rewire  
Scalawag  
Truthout  
Yes!

TMC outlet representatives who could not attend the Network Gathering but who attended the Allied Media Conference and participated in the Movement Journalism track:

Belt Magazine  
Colorlines  
Feet in 2 Worlds