

**Project Proposal**

**To The Chicago Community Trust for On The Table 2017**

*Submitted March 7,2017*

1. **Executive Summary**

The Media Consortium is a 501c3 network of independent and community media outlets dedicated to values-driven journalism. Founded in 2006, the Media Consortium grows the impact of member organizations through collaborations and partnerships that cross-pollinate communities with critically important stories.

Our Who Counts project in 2016 centered on reporting on immigrants, including a briefing that was attended by over 20 Chicago-based outlets. In February 2017, seven community-based Chicago outlets traveled to DC to participate in the Media Consortium’s annual meeting (thanks to generous support from MacArthur). We look forward to continuing and developing a strong network of Chicago-based community media.

1. **Scope of Work**

The three objectives of this work will be:

* to foster new relationships among news outlets that serve different communities within Chicago;
* to support these news outlets in developing their own civic conversation with each other and with local, regional and national outlets that have a particular interest in Chicago;
* and to expand the civic conversation nurtured at On the Table by communicating the content of those conversations to the broader community.

This project is comprised of 8 components:

* Recruit 15 Chicago-based news outlets, focusing particularly on outlets engaged with specific communities (Latino, African American, Chinese, etc) to report on and engage with On the Table 2017.
* Gather editors from these outlets for an in-person meeting on Thursday, March 16 to provide a briefing about On the Table; to determine how the outlet will participate in an On the Table event; and to obtain firm commitments from the outlets to allocate a reporter/editor to the group.
* Provide these outlets with a Media Consortium membership and connect them with Chicago-based Media Consortium members to provide additional support and to develop a stronger identity for Chicago-based news.
* Follow up the initial in-person meeting with phone/video calls with all participating reporters to ensure they are fulfilling their commitments; to answer questions they may have; and to support their work. We will particularly be seeking to identify collaborations and partnerships between different outlets in this cohort.
* Maintain a record of all editorial collaobrations produced by this cohort between March 16-May 26, 2017.
* Gather engagement statistics from the outlets (if they are available) about how widely these stories were read and how much audience engagement they elicited (such as facebook likes or comments); and qualitative feedback about the impact of On the Table on the outlets themselves.
* Provide a final two-page report detailing which outlets participated and whether they hosted or otherwise engaged directly in On the Table events; a listing of stories produced; a summary of the outlets’ experiences participating in On the Table; and an analysis of the impact of outlet storytelling on the wider perception of On the Table in the communities these outlets serve.

Please note: A core value of the Media Consortium is truth-telling. We will not dictate nor change the direction of a reporter’s story, nor ask reporters to pull stories that are unfavorable to our funders.

1. **Timeline**

Kick-off phone meeting with media outlets: March 14

Team meeting at the Trust: March 16

Weekly calls to enhance partnerships March 20-May 8, 2017

Attendance at On the Table May 16, 2017

Post On the Table Calls and Evaluation May 22, 2017

Produce Report June 15, 2017

1. **Funding Request**

Our total funding request is: $20,000

Project Manager ($3000/month): $9000

Media Consortium Memberships (15 outlets@ $75/outlet): $1125

Support for Collaborations among On the Table Cohort (15 outlets @$500/outlet): $7500

Grant Bookkeeping and Reporting: $2000

Contingency: $375

1. **Team Background**

The project lead for the On the Table reporting project will be the Media Consortium’s Associate Director, Manolia Charlotin. Deeply familiar with Chicago’s ethnic communities, Manolia is herself an immigrant who speaks five languages. As a journalist who has worked in community media, Manolia understands the desire of these journalists to tell the truth of their communities and knows how to support them in their work.

Submitted by:

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| Signer, Title |  |  |

TMC/ On the Table Outlets

**Committeed to Participate:**

Vocalo

**Invited to Participate:**