

**City Limits**

1. **Tell us about your organization’s mission and vision.**

City Limits is a non-profit civic news organization, publishing investigative journalism and resources for people who are passionate about New York City. Since being acquired by the Community Service Society in November 2009, we have outlined a vision towards building a sustainable media organization, doubling our online audience and shifting to focus exclusively on in-depth editorial investigations in the areas of Housing and Community Development; the Economy and Labor Issues; Health and the Environment; Government; Education; and issues related to the criminal justice system.

1. **Why do you want to join The Media Consortium?**

In order to generate wider awareness and community engagement around the issues that we cover, it is essential that we establish strategic partnerships at the national level. We believe that as part of The Media Consortium we would be able to more fully leverage our investigative coverage, attract a wider network of progressive-minded readers, and build an infrastructure for grassroots, independent journalism that rivals the mainstream in impact and influence.

1. **How do you see your organization as a fit for The Media Consortium? Would you like to be an associate or full member?**

We believe that our commitment to telling the stories of poor and low-income New Yorkers, as well as the opinions of established community stakeholders at the advocacy and policy levels, fully aligns us with The Media Consortium’s goal of using the power of media to provide access and perspective for those who are disenfranchised from the networks of leadership in traditional news outlets. Like The Media Consortium, we also understand the need to reach new audiences and develop innovative earned revenue strategies on behalf of independent media. We believe that we meet the criteria necessary for full membership, and as full members, we envision our organization being full contributors to the consortium’s projects and strategies.

1. **How would you describe your primary audience in terms of size, diversity/demographics, lifestyle and geography?**

Our primary audience includes long-time supporters and unique visitors who are passionate about the civic investigations we provide. Since our re-launch in 2010, we’ve reached more than half a million readers with our content and we are on pace to reach more than 700,000 annual unique visitors this year.

60 percent of our readers are female, more than 30 percent of our readers are between the ages of 35 and 49, more than 20 percent of our readers are African-American and close to 75 percent of our readers have had a college education. Our audience tends to include people who are passionate about policy issues, and are employed at decision-making levels in the city’s business, civic and nonprofit sectors.

While the majority of our audience comes from the New York Tri-State region, our position as an influential civic news organization that covers policy issues in America’s largest city attracts a national audience of readers in other urban communities throughout the country.

1. **What is your operating budget?**

City Limits has an organizational budget of $700,000, which includes committed support from its parent organization, The Community Service Society, The Ford Foundation, The Knight Foundation, and The Brooklyn Community Foundation.

1. **How many staff do you have?**

Internally, City Limits has a full-time staff of four people that includes Mark Anthony Thomas, the Director of City Limits; Jarrett Murphy, the Editor of City Limits; Allison Tellis-Hinds, the Advertising Director of City Limits and Nekoro Gomes, the Community Engagement Manager for City Limits. We also retain the services of Anthony Smyrski for the design of City Limits Magazine and Citylimits.org, as well as a roster of contributing editors and freelancers who help us produce our original content.

1. **What are your primary platforms?  (e.g., print, radio, online, video, tv, books, social networks, etc.)**

Our primary platforms include Citylimits.org, our weekly online newsletters and our bi-monthly magazine. Due to a partnership with the WNET television show, Metrofocus, City Limits will also reach new audiences via television as well.

1. **How do you reach your audience? Please list subscriptions, online presence, listservs, or any other platforms (e.g., YouTube, MySpace, FaceBook) that your organization uses to engage your audience.**

Our website reaches 70,000 visitors each month and our weekly online newsletter reaches more than 10,000 subscribers. We also have more than 20,000 registered users to our online platform, My City Limits. Our bi-monthly magazine has a readership of 10,000. Our FaceBook presence, Twitter feeds, LinkedIn presence and YouTube page helps us engage more than 10,000 additional readers.

1. **What infrastructure is your organization looking to build? (e.g., advertising, web strategies, technological innovations, editorial planning, etc.)**

City Limits goal is to build a sustainable media organization that can serve as a national model for independent news outlets. On the business end, our goal is to develop an online digital advertising network and invest in innovative audience measurement tools and controlled circulation to grow our advertising revenue.

On the online and community engagement front, our audience development plan aims to reach more than 1 million readers by expanding beyond our core audience to reach and develop new online communities of advocates interested in our areas of coverage, implementing language translation tools grow our number of Asian, Latino and African diasporas readers, strengthening our mobile platform and developing an infrastructure for events that takes the conversation around civic issues offline. We also hope to publish more than 35 years of archived material on New York City’s advocacy history online.

1. **Does your organization have any areas of expertise that could be helpful to The Media Consortium and its members?**

Our team includes a group with extensive experience in the nonprofit, journalism, and business sectors. We believe that we could contribute significantly to projects by The Media Consortium in areas related to media branding and re-launching a non-profit news organization, event planning, developing innovative earned revenue strategies, and generating interest and coverage around progressive issues through editorial investigations.

1. **How does your organization fit into the progressive media network? (e.g., media producer, distributor, monitor, reform/justice, etc.)**

City Limits is an established producer of original content with a track record of award-winning coverage. Our coverage serves as an agent of public policy change, inspires further research and additional coverage in the mainstream media. City Limits also has an infrastructure in place for a community news network that would serve as a distributor of content for community bloggers and smaller news outlets.

1. **Is your senior management willing and able to contribute to Consortium discussions, meetings, and projects?**

As a member of the Consortium, City Limits would be fully committed to contributing and participating in Consortium discussions and meetings. Our management includes staffers who are actively involved in the Online News Association, the New York Society of Professional Journalists, the National Association of Black Journalists, and the Investigative News Network. We would also be eager to propose and develop projects with Consortium members and the larger network itself.

1. **Who will be the primary MC contacts for your organization?  (We recommend one editorial contact and one business contact.) These representatives will be expected to attend MC meetings, convey pertinent information regarding our projects to your staff, and ensure that your organization is involved in MC-related projects and conversations. If these contacts are unable to participate, who will serve this role in their place?**

The primary contact for The Media Consortium will be Nekoro Gomes, the Community Engagement Manager for City Limits.