



SNAPSHOT of FOUNDATION SUPPORT for FEMINIST GENDER JUSTICE MEDIA

by Ariel Dougherty

INTRODUCTION

A report from Catalyst Fund of Tides Foundation that focuses on funding women of color-led reproductive justice organizations inspired an examination into the actual support by foundations of feminist gender justice media (FGJM) organizations. The 3-page chart that displays those foundations/funders and a sample of 20 FGJM organizations that they fund is attached, starting on page 7.

Since 2007 **Media Equity Collaborative (MEC)**, as a practitioner-led initiative, has worked to ensure better, comprehensive funding for this field. MEC is about movement building of the feminist gender justice media community. At the conclusion of a year's effort in 2008-2009 funded by the Social Science Research Council, with support of the Ford Foundation, it became clear that foundations and individual donors are an integral and necessary component of any effort to obtain substantial, additional support for a new initiative. In a second phase of Research & Development, MEC expects to build those alliances.

ANALYSIS

In this compilation, 20 representative feminist gender justice media organizations, estimated to be 5.7% of the field, were selected based on size, operating budget, geography, media form and delivery. Collectively, from data on organizations' websites, and augmented through emails, 114 funders here have supported these 20 organizations. This data does not deal with a large range of other support of FGJM.

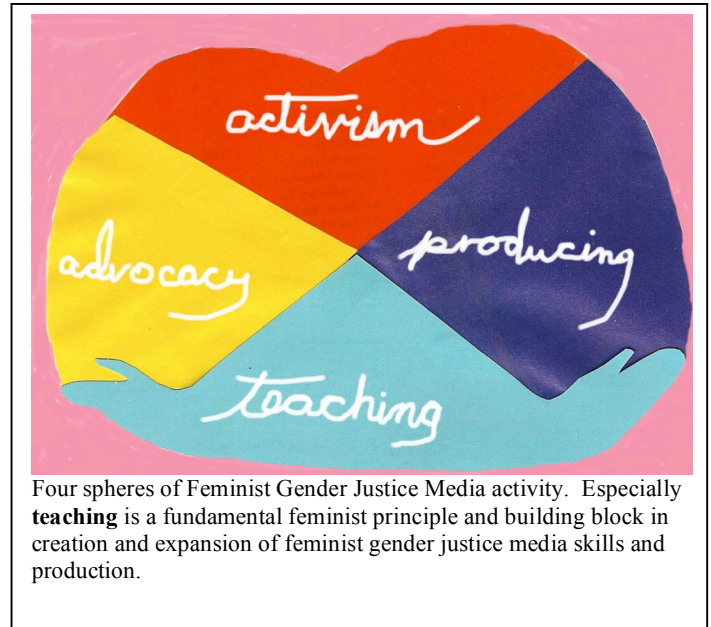
Only nine (7.9%) of the funders are **repeat funders** of feminist gender justice media. The lead funder—at support for five groups (25%)—was the **Media Justice Fund (MJF)**, which now sadly has folded. This support is 250% higher than the next level of support for two organizations. A small cadre of funds from the Women's Funding Network (WFN)—Astraea, Chicago Foundation for Women, New York Women's Foundation and Third Wave (three of them located in New York City)—have funded two (10% each) of these 20 groups. Another four members from the WFN are also funders of this group of FGJM. An unknown number of these funders are members of the Grantmakers for Film and Electronic Media (GFEM). It is also probable that a larger number of these funders are not active within either of these two networks.

Especially the demise of the MJF leaves a big hole in the health, and future funding options, of FGJM. In deciding to create this snapshot the perceived loss of the MJF was seen as significant. But quite frankly, in tallying up this data, even I was startled to discover how dire the loss of MJF will be on this community of media activists, producers and organizers whose core work is gender justice. MJF specifically targeted organizations in developmental phase. Here identified as "Middle Ground" on this chart, the five "X"s from MJF all fall here among 14 organizations (*Uprising* listed in the first category, should be in this "Middle Ground" category). This concentration, where need is greatest, actually reflects MJF's support for this sector of 14 organizations at 35.7%.

SNAPSHOT of the Chart Data Results (see pages 7 – 9 for full details)		
114 foundations / funders	only 9 are repeat funders	7.9%
1) Media Justice Fund	supported 5 FGJM orgs	25% of total 20 orgs
concentration of MJF	Middle Ground \$50k - \$500k	35.7% of 14 Middle Ground orgs
MJF support of 5 orgs	over next highest support of 2 orgs	250% above next level of support
4 women's funds 2) Astraea Lesbian Foundation 3) Chicago Foundation for Women 4) New York Women's Foundation 5) Third Wave Foundation	Support 2 FGJM groups each	10% @ of the 20 total orgs
4 other funds 6) Crossroads Fund (Chicago) 7) Leo S. Guthman Fnd (Chicago) 8) Nat'l Girls Collaborative Proj 9) Park Foundation	Support 2 FGJM groups each	10% @ of the 20 total orgs

MEET THE FIELD

Feminist gender justice media (FGJM), estimated at 350 groups, cuts a wide swath—in forms of media, issue concerns, geography, participant age, means of delivery and constituency served. Some teach skills. Others produce programs. Yet, others monitor and work to hold mainstream media (MSM) accountable. Activism for others is the core, with media the tool. Many combine two or more of these spheres of activity. The majority of FGJM field works with budgets under \$50k or no funds at all. Among these, some have difficulty attaining foundation support but operate as best they can while underfunded. A portion of these groups operate without foundation support as a matter of choice, and *principle*. As in **MobileHomeComing**, an experimental, activist blog, seeking strong grassroots support first has mutual community benefits. Seeking foundation support might come later.



All FGJM organizations fit within the three GFEM areas—Content, Infrastructure and/or Policy.

FGJM range from activist, intersectional projects like **CyberQuilting** to daily broadcast news programs such as **Uprising**. Only several dozen groups remain from a thousand+/- that emerged from 1970s activism like **Sophie's Parlor** or **Women Make Movies**. Others came along in later decades, like **On the Issues**, initially a print magazine from the 1980s, that went dormant, then re-emerged on-line in 2008. In the 90s Third Wave women stepped up to design new outlets like **Bitch**, a feminist magazine on popular culture.

Since 2000 new venues and efforts have burst forth to meet an escalating need: **Chica Luna** serves low income women of color; **Queer Women of Color Media Arts Project (QWOCMAP)** teaches production and showcases works; **Women in Media & News (WIMN)** analyzes MSM, works to get women's voices heard and advocates policy change; **Women & Girls Can** has empowered young women to dissect MSM imagery and become spokeswomen for change. These new efforts are not solely among the young, as **Women's eNews** and **Women's Media Center** attest. The "new girl on the sphere" is **GRITtv**, which reports and analyzes news and public affairs through a diverse range of women's perspectives unmatched in the TV landscape. What all these organizations do is give voice to women and girls-- "*seeking another kind of now.*"¹

LACK OF FGJ PERSPECTIVE IN MEDIA POLICY

Collectively these 350 organizations, outlets and projects form a movement, yet to be coalesced. So under-resourced, "women-centered media" has not been able to develop along the lines of better understood issues like violence against women or reproductive health. Nor, has the full potential of FGJM been tapped by many organizations within the larger women's movement as outlets for their issues.

Most significantly, there is not one woman—as with other identity constituencies—working fulltime to address media policy issues from a feminist gender justice perspective.



¹ Gumbs, Alexis Pauline, "We Can Learn to Mother Ourselves: The Queer Survival of Black Feminism 1968-1996" (2010), dissertation introduction, page1 (<http://brokenbeautiful.wordpress.com/2010/03/01/the-prologue-of-my-dissertation-is-a-love-letter-to-you/prologue-for-the-masses-2/>)

As a field such policy development is critical. The field needs at least one full time activist in this capacity in order to achieve growth and development. Further, a feminist gender justice advocate on policy issues will strengthen over all policy advances within the larger media reform community. As it is now, without such capacity to create the on-going analysis, and the necessary outreach to and input from the field, feminist activist views are lacking in most media efforts. **Women In Media & News (WIMN)** has this as a part of its 4-point strategic plan, but struggles with its most basic needs. **WIMN** has been able to support coalitional efforts but not hire the full time organizer to build the policy analysis.

The “pale, male” syndrome—rampant not only within mainstream media (MSM), but the progressive community as well—needs a visceral feminist, intersectional shake-up.

COMMUNITY RADIO AND UNIQUE CHALLENGES

Community radio provides vital incubation ground for innovative programming. Driven by the passions of their volunteer host-producers, a challenge exists whether such efforts can evolve into a funded, possibly more far reaching program. *Uprising* out of KPFK in LA, born on the eve of war in Afghanistan, produces each weekday morning a one-hour community news show with a feminist frame that now has two staff supported by Pacifica. *Uprising* also creates a weekly one-hour edit for national distribution. *Issues for Your Tissues* (KOOP, Austin), the only wholly devoted broadcast time in the US that focuses specifically on reproductive justice, along with several dozen other feminist gender justice radio shows, remains strictly volunteer. For programming content that is fervently desired by a larger audience, lack of capacity for further development for some of these shows presents huge challenges.

Democracy Now!(DN) is, of course, the highly successful model program to have emerged from community radio, adding television later to its format and distribution. Today, DN encompasses more scheduled program time on all community media than any other show. The five 1-hour weekly show operates with a substantial budget, nearing \$4M. Because of its founder and host, Amy Goodman, DN can be perceived as “women-owned”. Yet, in 2006 the show had women guests only 28% of the time.² This is only four percentage points higher than mainstream media.³

WOMEN’S OWNERSHIP, THEORIES OF CHANGE AND DEEPENING CAPITALIZATION

“Women’s media ownership” is a critical strategy for advancement to achieve greater equity for women and girls. But it must be designed, and a commitment made, within a feminist gender justice framework in order to accomplish those ends. Far too many efforts do not recognize that critical ingredient. It is not solely enough that women achieve equity in MSM, or that a feminist is involved in progressive programs or decision-making. There must also be a policy in place and commitment to advancing feminist gender justice media as entities of their own where a particular theory and policy vision originate, where real stories about women and girls can germinate and blossom. Then, and only then, can MSM, maybe, really make the necessary adjustments to be fair, and accurate, in its coverage of gender justice issues.

The “Middle Ground” of FGJ media organizations—those that fall between \$50k and \$500k—have been most vulnerable to the recession, loosing important dollars that they depend upon. This has forced **Chica Luna** to rely again on its Founding Board of Directors to conduct administrative tasks. **RH Reality Check** tightened its belt with a 40% budget cut. Or, in **Texas Media Empowerment Project’s** case, they had to curtail programs, then seek out entirely new sources of income.



² Raphael, Kate, “Democracy Now! and the Gender Gap”, unpublished written report. Aired on Women’s Magazine, April 9, 2007. (Listen here: <http://www.kpfa.org/archives/index.php?arch=19634>)

³ 2010 preliminary findings from the Global Media Monitoring Project can be found here: <http://www.whomakesthenews.org/news/2010-preliminary-report.html>

From Media Equity’s survey in 2009, and long observation of the field, feminist gender justice media is in great need of major capitalization. **RH Reality Check** has received a sizable range of \$250-\$500k per year from one source. The United Nations Foundation has also been its shelter over these first five years. This summer, however, it will spin off from this umbrella into its own 501(c)3. Special efforts must ensure that this vital reproductive health outlet makes this transition smoothly. This on-line publication played an essential role during the health reform debate and remains a key leader in shining light on both the successes and disparities this legislation holds for women, especially around reproductive health.

GRITtv was launched in 2008 with a pledge of \$500,000 in matching grants from Free Speech TV. Successful, it negotiated a subsequent matching grant worth \$400,000 in 2009. But this startup support will diminish over time. As the first FGJM major TV effort it is vital that mainstreaming gender justice views continues. **GRITtv** offers a platform and a broad national audience for many of the people and projects mentioned in this report.

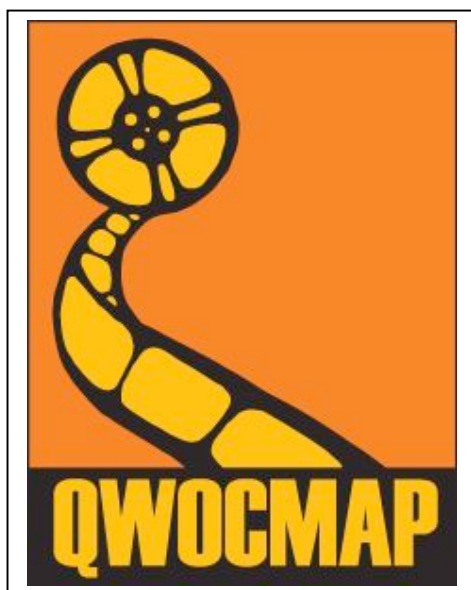


Laura Flanders, host, above. Below Tracey Casseus, intern at GRITtv from Brooklyn College.

While on the scale of other support of FGJM these amounts are large, in comparison to other daily media (especially TV)—from progressive entities to commercial—\$500k is hardly a drop in the bucket. If progressives and feminists, especially through the donor community, are committed to the advancement of women and girls, then vastly stepped up support of feminist gender justice media, as the communications tools of all FGJ issues, is paramount. Such capitalization, however, should not be limited to evolving media outlets solely. For example, the remarkable organizing model of **Texas Media Empowerment Project** to engage the public in media activism needs sizable support as well so other organizations can benefit from their experience.

A RICH AND DIVERSE RANGE OF RESOURCES TO SUPPORT FGJM

Out of necessity, creative approaches to fund raising are a hallmark of FGJM. There is a rich list of resources for **MobileHomeComing** from academic contributors, as well as grassroots supporters. **WIMN**, too, has benefited from conducting academic workshops and speaking. Far greater interaction between the academy and FGJM is needed. Deepened, and on-going, academic study of the activist media field can enrich the educational awareness among students, young and old, as well as the larger public. Such substantive academic work will be an important building block for the health and longevity of FGJM.



National Radio Project, producer of “*Making Contact*”, on its website has a nifty pie chart which quickly conveys that 80% of its support comes from individual contributions. This model of individual support becomes especially vital as women are now the major benefactors in the US. Earned income needs deepened exploration. **Women Make Movies**, with over 90% of its annual income from its distribution service, provides a critical model. All of these kinds of funding models can be worked into technical assistance programs that encourage greater field development. **QWOCMAP**—which among its work trains new producers to work with filmmakers—especially underscored how such technical assistance programs have enabled their organization to have a rapid growth rate over the past four years, almost quadrupling their annual budget, despite the recession.

Lastly, in order to improve the funding base of the FGJM community, there needs to be better and more focused media awareness (literacy) encouraged among the funding community. This is more than likely true in all corners of media funding.

IN CONCLUSION

In a very rough estimate it will take \$3.3M to maintain the 14 organizations listed in the Middle Ground at their pre-recession budgets. Another \$2.2M for the two organizations in the Making Institution category allows for very modest growth. Combined this is \$5.5M. It does not account for needs field-wide. Nor does this amount allow for growth—essential for these organizations’ development and field prosperity.

Building up and greatly expanding resources for the feminist gender justice media community is not solely about building a media movement, though that is core. It is also about feeding, with real and truthful information, a starving audience. Millions of women, and men, too, across the United States hunger for more affirming imagery and positive stories based on women and girls’ authentic lives. All people need this realistic information to make better sense of and decisions in their own lives. This is a human right called for in Article 19 of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

From reading “Catalyst 2009 Evaluation”, Media Equity Collaborative has discovered another important funding model. What makes the Catalyst Fund at Tides Foundation so vital is that it formed in 2007 from efforts of the Women of Color Working Group of the Funders Network on Population, Reproductive Health and Rights. By 2009 this new fund was able to direct an additional \$4.2M into the field of Reproductive Justice organizations.

Savvy vision and focused resources are necessary to enable the FGJM field to grow. No one organization or outlet alone can sufficiently serve the magnitude of the problem—the absence or inaccuracy of women’s issues within MSM and before the US public. That effort needs a cacophony of voices, viewpoints and venues. Especially with the end of the Media Justice Fund, it is necessary now that leadership in both the media and the women’s funding communities step forward to ensure the vital movement building of FGJM.

“Without feminist gender justice media, there will be no gender justice progress” to paraphrase what Donna Allen, founder of **Women’s Institute for Freedom of the Press**, stated in the 1977.

WRITTEN BY ARIEL DOUGHERTY, © MAY & JUNE 2010 MEDIA EQUITY COLLABORATIVE

During July 2008 – July 2009 **Media Equity Collaborative** was funded by Social Science Research Council, with support from the Ford Foundation, to 1) conduct a survey of the field of feminist gender justice media; 2) explore possible funding models; and 3) convene a meeting of the field. A preliminary, short public report on that project is available. Additional support to bring representatives from the field together was provided by Ms. Foundation, Third Wave Foundation, *On the Issues*, Free Press and Women Make Movies.



Media Equity Collaborative thanks and acknowledges contributions from the participating organizations in providing their fiscal information and further input in shaping this report. MEC gives a special thanks to Becky Lentz for her feedback.

Please credit Media Equity Collaborative in any use of this material.

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Chart: Foundation Support for Feminist Gender Justice Media

KEY:
V=Volunteer
R=Radio
Bg=Blog
Ad=Advocacy
Fv=Film/Video
iT=Internet/Technology
Ns=News Service
iP=Internet Publication
Pp=Print Publication
Pr=Prior Yr

METHODOLOGY

The below data, compiled May & June 2010, is from organizational websites, and augmented via emails/telephone. In one case there is no funding data (capacity!), but the organization is still on the list representative of breadth and geography of media activity.

Over all the chart it is not comprehensive, as 5.7% is not a sufficient sample. Funders listed are not necessarily of the current year. The intent is to provide *a snapshot*. Earned income and other sources of support are not a part of this data.

Media Equity Collaborative works to ensure better, comprehensive funding for the field of an estimated 350 feminist gender justice media (fgjm) organizations.

	Projects, Volunteer, Startups & Activism					Middle Ground													Making Institution	
	\$ 0 to \$ 50k est. ~ 58%* field					\$ 50+k to \$500k 33.2%* of field (*data from MEC Spring '09 Survey)													\$500+K 8.8%*	
current annual budget	V	V	~80k	V	na	50k	na	na	na	175k	na	165k	na	265k	280k	300k	330k	335k	525k	900k
Feminist Gender Justice Media organization/outlet/project	<i>Issues for Your Tissues</i>	<i>Women's Magazine</i>	<i>Uprising</i>	<i>WomanSpeak</i>	<i>MobileHomeComing</i>	<i>Women In Media&News</i>	<i>Chica Luna Productions</i>	<i>Digital Sisters</i>	<i>Women News Network</i>	<i>Tx Media Empowerment</i>	<i>On the Issues</i>	<i>Women and Girls Can</i>	<i>WOC Int'l Film Festival</i>	<i>Queer WOC Media Arts</i>	<i>Making Contact - NRP</i>	<i>RH Reality Check</i>	<i>Reel Grrls</i>	<i>Beyondmedia Education</i>	<i>Bitch magazine</i>	<i>GRITtv with Laura Flanders</i>
form of media	R	R	R	R	Bg	Ad	Fv	iT	Ns	Ad	iP	Ad	Fv	Fv	R	iP	Fv	Fv	Pp	TV
Foundation / Funder	IFYT	WM	U	Ws	MHc	WIMN	CL	DS	WNN	TMEP	OTI	W&G	WOC	QMA	MC	RC	RG	BE	B	Gtv
4Culture																	X			
Adobe Youth Voices																	X			
AED's New Voices Fellowship Fund							X													
Akonadi Foundation													X							
Apple							X													
Arts Work Fund 4 Org Dev																		X		
Astraea Lesbian Fdn 4 Justice							X						X							
As You Sow														X						
Atlantic Philanthropies (The)																				X
Aveda							X													
Avon Fdn (m.Powerment)												X								
Belic Inst 4 Study Wm&G in A&Med					X															
Ben and Jerry's Foundation															X					
Best Buy										X										
Beth Emet Syn. Tzedakah Fnd																		X		
Boston Foundation																	X			
Buddy Fund for Justice							X													
California Arts Council														X						
California for the Humanities													X							
Change to Win Federation																				X
Chicago Fdn for Women												X						X		
Chicago Instructional Tech Fdn																		X		
Chicago Dept of Cultural Aff.																		X		
Choices Women's Medical Ctr											X									
Cricket Island Foundation												X								
Comcast																	X			
Compton Foundation							X													

	IFYT	WM	U	Ws	MHC	WIMN	CL	DS	WNN	TMEP	OTI	W&G	WOC	QMA	MC	RC	RG	BE	B	Gtv
Crossroads Fund												X						X		
Detroit Public TV													X							
Disabled Young People's Collectv					X															
Driehaus Foundation												X								
Duke U, WmC & MultiC					X															
Early to Bed																		X		
Eileen Fisher Foundation																	X			
Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trt																		X		
Fair Economy Action Fund																				X
Free Speech TV																				X
Girls Best Friend Foundation												X								
Google														X						
Grants for Arts - SF Hotel tax														X						
Holton Community Center					X															
Horizons Foundation														X						
Institute for Policy Studies																				X
Illinois Arts Council																		X		
Illinois Humanities Council																		X		
Jewish Communal Fund																				X
Kaplan Family Foundation												X								
Kapor Foundation															X					
Laird Norton Family Fdn																	X			
Lambent of Tides Foundation																				X
Lannan Foundation																				X
Leo S. Guthman Fund												X						X		
Lower Manhattan Cultural Council							X													
Love 4 One Another Organiz								X												
Luther I. Replogle Fdn								X												
MAC AIDS Fund																		X		
MAG-Net										X										
McCormick Foundation																		X		
Media Democracy Fund										X										
Media Justice Fund / FEx						X	X			X		X						X		
Michigan Citizen (The)													X							
Ms. Foundation for Women												X								
Nat'l Ass. of Latino Arts&C							X													
Nat'l Ass. of Wm Business Owners													X							
Nat'l Endowment for the Arts																		X		
Nat/Tx Girls Collabor. Project										X								X		
New Horizons Acad of Excellence					X															
NY State Council of the Arts							X													
New York Women's Fdn							X													X
Northstar Fund (The)							X													
Omina Foundation															X					
Open Meadows Foundation							X													
Oregon Humanities																			X	
Pacifica Foundation				X																
Park Foundation															X					X
Paul G. Allen Family Fdn (The)																		X		
Planned Parenthood	X																			
Polk Bros. Foundation																		X		
Puffin Fund							X													
Queers for Economic Justice					X															
Quixote Foundation, Inc																				X

	IFYT	WM	U	Ws	MHc	WIMN	CL	DS	WNN	TMEP	OTI	W&G	WOC	QMA	MC	RC	RG	BE	B	Gtv
Rainbow Endowment																		X		
Rainbow Grocery Coop													X							
Regional Arts & Culture Council																			X	
Robeson Fund (The) / FEx							X													
Saguaro Fund/ FEx							X													
Sahara Enterprises, Inc																		X		
San Francisco Arts Council													X							
San Francisco Fdn (The)													X							
Seattle (City of) Tech Match Fnd																	X			
Seattle Foundation																	X			
(Seattle) Mayor's Off. A&C																	X			
Sister Fund (The)						X														
Sparkplug Foundation																		X		
Starry Night Fund/Tides Fdn																				X
Stuart Foundation (The)																	X			
Sweet Home New Orleans																				X
Target Foundation																		X		
Third Wave Foundation						X	X													
Threshold Foundation (The)																				X
Tinnon Foundation											X									
Underdog Fund of Tides Fdn																				X
United Nations Foundation																X				
U of Richmond, Wm L&L Progm																				
UT-SA, Am Studies Program					X															
UU Veatch Program															Pr					
Wallace Alex. Gerbode Fdn													X							
Wallace Global Foundation																				X
Washington Area Women's Fdn								X												
Washington State Arts Comm																	X			
Wieboldt Foundation											X									
Weitz Funds																		X		
Wm & Flora Hewlett Fdn(The)													X							
Woods Fund of Chicago											X									
Zellerbach Family Fdn													X							
114 Total Foundations/ Funding sources	z <i>Issues for Your Tissues</i> is on hiatus until May 2011 + knowledge of the approx. \$80k budget of <i>Uprising</i> came too late to alter its position in chart																			

Collection of this data and creation of this chart are a part of the on-going work of Media Equity Collaborative to bring awareness to a larger public about the feminist gender justice media community. The long term goal is to vastly increase the resources available to this community. These critical communications outlets and media entities are a vital lifeline for the entire feminist gender justice community, providing information and outreach to the general public about a whole range of issues confronting women and girls.

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Media Equity Collaborative is currently in Phase Two of Research and Development of its initiative to broaden support for the feminist gender justice media community of organizations, outlets and projects. A proposal, with a \$60k budget and other supporting documents, is available for consideration.



Media Equity Collaborative is a sponsored project of International Media Project. All contributions are tax-deductible.