SOLUTIONS JOURNALISM NETWORK

# Solutions Journalism: The Present Future




**2025** ANNUAL REPORT

# LETTER FROM THE CEO



**For 10 years, my collaborator Tina Rosenberg and I wrote a solutions-oriented column for The New York Times called "Fixes."** Each spring, I would attend the Skoll World Forum, an annual gathering that brings together social innovators from around the globe. And each time, after speaking with scores of people working on hard problems in creative ways, I would return home with a notebook full of story leads.

The challenge was that "Fixes" was published only once a week. I remember thinking: **What the world needs is not one more column like this. It needs thousands of journalists telling these stories.**

Today, five years after the final "Fixes" column, that vision is a reality.

Every day, journalists around the world are engaged in rigorous reporting that examines how people are responding to problems. These journalists are helping to **build people's agency and sense of possibility** by interrogating ideas and revealing when things are working, when they are not, and, importantly, what we can learn from success or failure.

That progress has changed how we work. In our early years at SJN, we spent much of our energy making the case for solutions journalism — persuading journalists that looking through a solutions lens was a legitimate framework for reporting, and that it could be done independently and rigorously without becoming a form of advocacy. This had to be demonstrated over and over.

Today, deeply reported solutions stories are winning that argument. Solutions journalism is widely recognized as a credible and valuable framework for reporting. And we have moved from legitimizing the practice to supporting the people doing this work in their own contexts and languages: investing in their innovation and experimentation both in the newsroom and beyond; connecting them so they can learn from one another; amplifying and celebrating their reporting; and accelerating the spread of insights that can benefit journalists and communities everywhere.

This report offers a glimpse of what that looks like in practice. You'll see examples of action and impact across issues areas and beats. You'll meet journalists, photographers, educators and students **working together to produce reporting that helps people see pathways to navigate the challenges of our world.**

Solutions reporting has become a refuge for journalists and news consumers alike, united by the belief that it can be a force for social repair and renewal.

It is a privilege to be your co-creator in this process.

— David Bornstein

68K
Journalists Trained & Using SJN Tools

5
University Hubs

144
Accredited Trainers Worldwide

38
Languages Represented in the Solutions Journalism Directory

Because people want news that is genuinely helpful, and a just, equitable and sustainable society demands it, we are:

**CREATING AND CONNECTING NETWORKS** + **SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTORS** + **AMPLIFYING AND DISSEMINATING INSIGHTS**

...so that solutions journalism becomes a global norm, enabling people and communities to better understand and shape their world.

550
News Outlets Trained

110
Self-Paced Toolkits & Courses

16K
Stories in the Solutions Story Tracker

# It's Impossible to Overstate the Value



## GATHERING AROUND CLIMATE SOLUTIONS WITH MATT SIMMONS

The monthly calls of SJN's Climate Peer Network are created to counter the loneliness many climate journalists face, offering them both a group of like-minded people with whom they can connect and a space to have practical questions answered about solutions reporting. Journalist **Matt Simmons** is a freelance reporter from Northwest British Columbia, who contributes regularly to environmental newsroom The Narwhal and other publications, an accredited solutions journalism trainer and a presence at many Climate Peer Network meetings. We talked to him about what climate journalists are seeking and how gathering with colleagues can help.

**What are the common questions and needs you see among climate journalists looking to do solutions journalism?**

The climate crisis is so big and complex, which means, of course, there's no single solution. Add to that a dynamic and challenging media landscape and it can get overwhelming. Finding meaningful skills to deeply report on solutions in ways that don't minimize the scale of the problems is always going to present challenges to journalists working in this field. Because I'm always focused on solutions (surprise, surprise), I love thinking about creative ways to approach reporting, like multimedia, leaning into visuals and using smaller-scale, community-based solutions stories as an entry point to talking about global issues.

**So, what do you see as the value of regularly gathering together climate journalists interested in solutions journalism?**

It's impossible to overstate the value. Not only is there a sense of solidarity, there's so much opportunity for cross-pollination, brainstorming, sharing and just knowing you're not alone. Plus, given all the pressures and so many accountability stories to be reported with dwindling resources, having regular touchpoints to get inspired — and reinspired — to focus on solutions reporting is key. It's so easy to get sucked down into the grind of doing the important work of holding governments and fossil fuel companies accountable, forgetting that there's an equal number of stories about solutions underway to tackle all these problems — and someone needs to tell those stories!

"There's so much opportunity for cross-pollination, brainstorming, sharing and just knowing you're not alone."

**What has going through the training process and becoming a trainer meant to you or added to your journalism?**

Being a trainer means I get to spend more time thinking really intentionally about how we can do this work and spread the gospel, as it were. It's also really validating to be part of an international network of trainers, knowing that in my little corner of the world I'm doing things that are part of something bigger. I'm especially excited to work these days with the next generation of journalists and have had some great opportunities to speak with students and others at the beginning of their careers. I see a lot of interest and excitement in solutions journalism from them, which gives me a lot of hope!

# Climate Beacon Newsroom Initiative



SJN staff and visual coaches in Tahlequah, Oklahoma with the editorial team at The Cherokee Phoenix.

Five newsrooms made up **SJN's 2025 Climate Beacon Newsroom Initiative - Climate Solutions Visuals** cohort. Each was given training and coaching, along with $20,000 to pursue solutions-focused visual reporting, using the funding for visual storytelling equipment, reporting travel, transportation, salaries and freelancer fees and community engagement. These were the cohort members:

**Mongabay**, an internationally recognized environmental media organization, launched three brand-new series: "Hands On," "Against All Odds" and "Then v. Now." The newsroom found that the solutions frame built greater trust as they reported and received significantly higher viewership than other videos. The story "How women protect Mexico City's ancient island farms," produced in conjunction with the Associated Press, won a WAN-IFRA award for "Best Use of Video."

**The Cherokee Phoenix** is the first newspaper published in a Native American language, serving around 500,000 Cherokee Nation citizens. The Phoenix produced two stories focused on poultry farming and its impact on the environment in northeast Oklahoma. The video version of the first story received seven and a half times more comments than the Phoenix's other videos and had nearly three times the average shares. The written version received nearly double the average link clicks on Facebook.

> "Time may be our most limited resource as journalists. But taking the time to tell climate solutions stories through visual storytelling will always pay off."
>
> *— Andrew Kitchenman, former editor, Alaska Beacon*



Photo by Gerard Gaskin, courtesy of NY Amsterdam News.

**Osage News** is based in northeastern Oklahoma, serving the Osage Nation with a monthly print publication and daily digital updates. "Reclaiming Our Water" was the newsroom's first-ever series and included hosting a Water Symposium at the local fairgrounds.

**The New York Amsterdam News** is one of the oldest Black newspapers in the U.S. The newsroom began using an immersive visual storytelling plugin for its solutions stories that it had been considering but not yet deployed.

**The Alaska Beacon**, a digital newsroom based in Juneau and Anchorage, added multiple visually focused stories to its new and ongoing "Alaska Solutions" series.



# Revenue Accelerator

The **Solutions Journalism Revenue Accelerator**, led by SJN and Blue Engine Collaborative, has shown the power of solutions journalism to boost newsroom funding across an array of revenue strategies. Comprising four cohorts spanning 2025 and 2026, Accelerator newsrooms have already seen remarkable revenue growth by increasing internal collaboration and tapping into a widespread desire to support a different type of journalism.

## Cohorts 1 and 2 focused on using solutions journalism to secure sponsorships. Results from newsrooms that completed the program in 2025:

**$2,000,000** raised from cohorts 1 and 2

**88%** of cohort newsrooms reported solutions journalism contributed to sponsor interest or support

**7X–12X** revenue growth compared to baseline

**75%** of cohort newsrooms doubled their solutions reporting

**92%** would recommend the program

- **Dallas Morning News** raised $782K tied to solutions coverage
- **South Dakota News Watch** secured a $100K grant and drove statewide momentum on housing solutions
- **Input Fort Wayne** raised $63,000 and created a playbook for use across the 12 newsrooms in the Issue Media Group.

"The only reason we received major funding is because we're transforming how we tell stories."

*— Carson Walker, CEO, South Dakota News Watch*

# We're Hosting a Good Party



## TRAIN-THE-TRAINERS WITH KYUWON LEE

In December 2025, more than 100 people applied for 15 spots in one of SJN's Train-the-Trainers cohorts. **Kyuwon Lee**, SJN's training & curriculum manager, marked this as a milestone in the demand for solutions journalism training. But he noticed that the applicant pool had shifted, too. "It used to be freelance journalists or people running small, independent newsrooms applying to these programs, as a new way of practicing journalism," Lee says. "Now faculty members at journalism schools are applying. Big newsroom editors are applying. Recently we had someone who is training more than 70 newsrooms in the U.S." When these are the people who want training, it's clear that solutions journalism is moving from an alternative to a standard.

Solutions journalism is an idea that SJN helped define, then worked to spread. The year 2025 may have been the point when it became the direction that journalism is heading.

"This is a change that's already happening," Lee says.

### CONNECTION, ACTION, EXPANSION

The numbers reflect that momentum. By the end of 2025, the program had trained 466 SoJo trainers since its outset, representing 75 countries worldwide, across every time zone in the world. In 2025 alone, SJN ran eight Train-the-Trainers cohorts, certifying 92 new trainers. Those trainers then ran 215 solutions journalism training sessions of their own, reaching more than 4,000 journalists and journalism students worldwide last year.

What Lee didn't anticipate when this program began was that it was a channel that would flow both ways. Trainers don't just spread the news




Kyuwon Lee leads a solutions journalism training workshop for the Malaysian Press Institute.

from SJN; they carry things back to SJN. They bring new contacts, new partnerships, new ideas and new opportunities. They also work to expand the network, often without the need for SJN to mediate the process. Trainers stay connected through their own WhatsApp groups. They invite one another to be guest speakers at events and collaborate on new solutions journalism resources.

Some even create their own programs. In Malaysia, the accredited trainer Su Lin Tan designed a three-day field workshop where she took 15 journalists to an island to combine solutions journalism training with on-the-ground climate reporting. In Africa, trainers organized a solutions journalism summit focused on reframing narratives and building capacity across the region. Results like these are becoming more common in more places, with some impacts popping up months or years down the line.

"When you host a good party," he says, "the guests should be able to connect with each other without the host telling them to."

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# Student Media Challenge

## THE MULTIPLIER EFFECT



Students at University of Wisconsin-Madison partnered with local community organizations to help youth tell their stories.

For the fourth year in a row, SJN supported and coached eight student newsrooms pursuing ambitious coverage of solutions to youth mental health struggles. As more local communities grapple with becoming news deserts, student newsrooms are stepping forward to assume a leadership role in informing the public about news, on campus and well beyond. With solutions journalism training, students are covering social issues more deeply and equitably, as well as gaining valuable experience for internships and jobs.

This past year, students published dozens of solutions stories in print, online and in various formats: written, audio, video and social. Their stories covered responses to the mental health issues affecting a wide range of youth on their campuses and in their communities, including how juvenile hearing boards help youth in the justice system (Roger Williams University), how cohousing addresses loneliness as well as financial stress (University of Wisconsin-Madison) and suicide-prevention programs (CT Community News).

> "Over the past year, The Post has taken a more intentional approach to storytelling through our solutions journalism grant, strengthening both our reporting and our commitment to serving our audience. With the support of the grant, our coverage has explored responses to the opioid epidemic on Ohio University's campus and in the Athens community, examined how both OU and West Virginia University are addressing the crisis, and reported on maternity deserts in Southeast Ohio."
>
> — *Abby Waechter, The Post, Ohio University*

*over >*



Some of the team at The Post at Ohio University.

## SPJ Awards

**The Post at Ohio University** won three awards for "Two Appalachian states bound by one epidemic take different paths forward": second place at the Apple Awards in New York City, first place for in-depth reporting from the Ohio News Media Association and a Society of Professional Journalists Mark of Excellence award.

**CT Community News** (the Connecticut collaborative) won third place from SPJ Connecticut in the health reporting category for "How CT is training college students to help prevent suicide."

"As a journalist, so much of my time is spent covering all the bad in the world — what's going wrong, what's getting worse, what's getting cut. It was refreshing to spend time actively searching for solutions to base my reporting on."

*— Mikayla Bunnell, University of Connecticut*

# Building Confidence and Trust



## HEIDI SHIN AND THE HEAL FELLOWSHIP

**Heidi Shin** first applied to **SJN's HEAL Fellowship** in 2024. An experienced immigration reporter with a background primarily in public radio, Shin initially planned to explore what was working to help undocumented students succeed in U.S. schools. The fellows had just been selected when the 2024 election changed things dramatically.

"Given the sudden shift in immigration policy, we had to quickly reconfigure the way we tell immigrant stories," Shin remembers. "How would we preserve the safety of sources and the organizations that supported them?".

That reconfiguration meant considering even more deeply issues like the safety of those interviewed, the strength of relationships before and after reporting, and what information would be needed in a crisis. It was clear the challenges would be immense, but the fellowship soon began providing her with the space, support and structure to find answers to those questions.

"The biggest gift of the SJN fellowship was a community of journalists to navigate these seismic industry shifts with together."

### NEEDS BEYOND CRISIS

Shin pivoted, turning to immigrant communities who had longer family histories in the U.S., highlighting stories of intergenerational trauma (and how it can be confronted) in Asian American families. Along the way, she doubled down on building relationships rooted in trust, putting out stories that focused on resilience and connection. She also worked toward a live event: "a workshop about intergenerational trauma and trauma-informed student care in classrooms and schools," as she describes it.

To get there, she had to navigate obstacles that once seemed unthinkable.

"With the turn in the White House, this was the first time, actually, that even people I had known long-term were not picking up the phone and not calling back."

But Shin says that explaining the solutions journalism framework to sources helped to build confidence and trust with them: "People who felt like they'd been misrepresented in the media — as victims of a crisis — were eager to tell the story of how they were actually *problem-solvers*."

In the process, Shin was able to practice a different kind of journalism, one that encourages audiences to consider, and perhaps even change their perspectives, particularly around issues as divisive as immigration.

"Headlines often only announce the crisis" she says. "Journalists don't stay long enough to see the nuance and the solutions that emerge in response to the crisis. But doing so would be telling a fuller and more honest story."

> "When explaining the solutions journalism framework to potential sources, I found that it helped to build their confidence and trust."




Shin at a live listening event at the PRX Podcast Garage in Boston, sharing an audio documentary she produced about intergenerational trauma and how music has helped address it among Cambodian Americans in Lowell, MA.

# I Can Do This Because I Am Not Alone



## NINA FASCIAUX ON BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS AROUND THE WORLD

**Nina Fasciaux**, SJN's director of partnerships & fellowships, works with journalists around the world. In 2025 alone, she worked with the SoJo Europe program building climate solutions reporting into newsrooms across the continent; the Media Leaders Climate SoJo Fellowship; the Bridging News Fellowship, which is still ongoing; and helped oversee SJN's Africa Initiative and story funds in Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa.

While every project has its own specific takeaways, there are also surprising common threads among journalists looking to work in new ways. As solutions journalism rapidly spreads, persuading people or enticing them with funding has become less important.

"The financial support is, of course, significant," Fasciaux says. "But I think it's also having an organization that has the credibility that SJN has who will say, 'Yes, here are the resources you can use, and yes, we trust you can do this.'"

### WORKING TOGETHER, DIFFERENTLY

Instead, she increasingly sees people looking to connect with others who have done or are doing the work. While funding allows them the room to work, they are also searching for kinship, validation and belonging.

"I think we are only reaffirming some things that they have understood already," Fasciaux notices. "They see why the news industry is not having the impact it needs. But [a cohort] gives them … this feeling of being part of something bigger. Then they have so many ideas that are being sharpened as they talk to others who are doing the same, even if it's at the other side of the planet."



Fasciaux and the Bridging News Fellows at the program's kickoff event.

That has filtered its way into SJN's programs, with a bigger emphasis being put on cohort learning and shared problem solving. Mentors and buddy systems have increasingly become standard. That companionship, she says, is the secret ingredient that turns funding, enthusiasm and passion into results.

"We are almost open source," she says. "We have so many resources online, so many webinars or toolkits, you can even watch a webinar. But the reason why [journalists] want to be involved is to be with others and to learn from others. That gives them the confidence to change their practice. It's almost like it gives them strength: 'Yes, I can do this, because I'm not alone.'"

Building the spaces for that for journalists who don't often get support or who find themselves feeling more isolated has also brought more joy to her work. Her most fulfilling moments now are "always when I step back and I let them learn from each other," she says.

"The way SJN is structured, its spirit is really to stay behind the curtain, right? You're there to guide a group of people as they walk together so that they can achieve more or less the same goal."

# Gender Equity Story Funds




Adriana Gonzalez's story on the women in El Salvador building more resilient crops, published by Proyecto Lava and one of more than 50 supported by the Solutions Journalism Gender Equity Story Funds.

Throughout 2025, SJN teamed up with local partners to run **Solutions Journalism Story Funds** based in Costa Rica, Egypt, Nigeria, India and Rwanda.

In each location, a journalist designed her own approach to building the capacity of other female journalists — from offering intro training to multi-session webinars and individualized coaching. In addition, journalists received financial support and assistance with story placement.

## SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTORS

In all, more than 50 solutions stories covering gender equity were reported by journalists who often lack access to quality mentorship and publishing opportunities.

Across dozens of interviews with participants, they reported enhanced skills and visibility, leading to career recognition and renewed motivation for journalism. They described reconnecting with their professional purpose, receiving public recognition, and in some cases, earning awards.

"These spaces, which allow us to connect not only with colleagues from our country but from other regions, are quite fundamental for opening the doors to solutions journalism, and more than solutions journalism, to voices that aren't being shared through traditional journalism."

*—Diana Anzora, journalist, El Salvador*

"This approach allows us to cover the climate crisis not from hopelessness, but from collective agency, highlighting how women and Indigenous and Afro-descendant communities are leading alternatives that work. One of the most powerful reflections was the understanding that putting women and their knowledge at the center is not only a question of justice, but also of effectiveness."

*— Yaima, trainee, Cuba*

"Local institutions responded by providing meals for refugees for several consecutive days. The story also reached beyond the local community, as it was shared with organizations in Kuwait and other places, which led to additional support. The president of the Marib Girls Foundation reached out to me, emphasizing how important my work was. I even saw refugees I had photographed recognize me, and it felt great knowing that the initiative I covered had a tangible impact on the ground."

*—Salman Alrubaie*

# About SoJo/ SJN

"Once people realized I was going to produce solutions stories regularly, I gained their trust."

*— Trisha Powell Crain, journalist for Alabama Daily News and Alabama Public Television*

"Their support reinforces what we at The Post have always believed: that journalism can do more than expose problems; it can illuminate the progress being made toward solving them."

*— Abby Waechter, former editor-in-chief of The Post at Ohio University*

"This approach restores the fundamental value of journalism as a seeker of meaning and a problem solver, not just a disseminator of repetitive narratives."

*— Malaysian Press Institute*

"I used to ask what was missing. Now I ask what's working, and that question changed everything."

*— Journalist Sakina Ahmed*

"Intentionally reading solutions journalism inspired my students to become better critical thinkers about the media content they consume and gave them hope that solutions to our problems are possible. They might even become problem solvers themselves."

*— Historian and educator Jennifer Mercieca*

# Reflecting Their Efforts

## SERVING THE HAITIAN COMMUNITY WITH MACOLLVIE J. NEEL



Attendees at the Haitian Community Summit in Indianapolis, Indiana, working together during workshop breakouts on May 2nd, 2025.

In the thick of early 2025's immigration surge, the staff of The Haitian Times was prepared with deep knowledge of and connection to the Haitian community. That knowledge helped them understand that while raids and enforcement were certainly on people's minds, the information needed extended beyond that to housing, childcare, mental health and job opportunities — "what everybody needs," says special projects editor **Macollvie J. Neel**.

So they started sorting out what was true and reliable from what wasn't, pointing people to vetted resources and putting out explainers, while trying to counter what she calls "TikTok University."

But as part of SJN's Advancing Democracy cohort, the Haitian Times team could also cover things differently, delivering other types of information that people could potentially act on.

"A lot of it was tied to having our solutions hat on, right? We don't want to regurgitate the same problems that everybody else was talking about ad nauseam … so I think we've been very mindful about sharing solutions with people," Neel says.

### WHAT'S HAPPENING, AND WHAT CAN BE DONE

One result was a tremendously popular solutions story about Indianapolis' approach to welcoming and supporting an influx of Haitians. While that delivered a different and needed type of news — namely, what was working — the outlet didn't stop there, recognizing that people needed to feel connected to the information as well for it to be truly actionable.

That story emerged, in part, from a listening tour built to understand

more about the types of information Haitian residents need. A few months after publication, The Haitian Times also hosted a community summit in Indianapolis focused on connecting people to one another and to the insights the staff had uncovered in their listening and reporting.

"I built in some of the solutions learnings from our cohort into that agenda," Neel recalls. "The one thing I had asked from each group based on these three … tracks we had for the summit, was to note down just one thing we could work on for the next year as the beginning of a solution or an actual solution underway."

In doing so, The Haitian Times modeled a growing and increasingly important approach to solutions journalism: including the community in deciding what to cover and helping the communities facing the problems access solutions reporting.

That strategy produced impact: The event helped turn an idea for a "federation" of Haitian businesses into reality, thanks to the eventual founder being "really inspired by what he saw and what we were doing in Indianapolis." That collective now has hundreds of businesses participating and announced a partnership with The Haitian Times.

As experienced solutions journalism practitioners, The Haitian Times staff didn't need to be persuaded the value in the practice or of their stories. Neel says the cohort offered something else.

"The solutions cohort participation … just gave us time to kind of see what was in front of our faces, and what we had been reporting on, but with the language to identify what the community was doing and what we've been doing, reflecting [the community's] efforts all of these years."



Macollvie J. Neel, second from left, with service organization leaders from around the U.S.

# Solutions Journalism Is an Excuse Killer




## BUILDING AGENCY AND IMPACT WITH CAROLINE KAROBIA

In 2022, the radio station Gold City FM aired a story about a small thing that was working in its community in northwestern Nigeria: a solar-powered laboratory in a local hospital that spared people from having to travel for hours to get medical tests.

The response was bigger than expected. After the story aired, the government renovated the entire hospital and converted whole facility, not just the lab, to solar power. With the right story, one solar panel had prompted an upgrade in medical care in every room.

Gold City FM developed that story as part of a partnership with SJN's Africa Initiative, and it was characteristic of what we found solutions journalism doing in Africa. Communities that read or heard about handwashing stations, digital tools or maternal health initiatives replicated what they'd learned, often within weeks. Local and state authorities, seeing what was possible, followed up with resources and action. And audience focus groups described solutions stories as an antidote to the daily bombardment of bad news, saying the reporting moved them to organize locally rather than wait for someone else to act. One story might light up a hospital, but many such stories could change how communities saw themselves.

For **Caroline Karobia**, the manager of the Africa Initiative, its impact demonstrates that solutions journalism isn't just about positivity. "It's a very

powerful form of accountability," she says. "You're showing officials that it's actually working in this particular region, so why haven't you taken action?" Solutions journalism is an excuse killer.

> "[Solutions journalism is] a powerful form of accountability. You're showing officials that it is actually working in this particular region, so why haven't you taken action?"
>
> — *Caroline Karobia*

For five years, that insight helped power the Africa Initiative, which concluded in December 2025. It began as a COVID-era experiment to introduce solutions journalism to a part of the world where it was little known, and it grew into one of SJN's longest-running and most ambitious regional programs. Through the Africa Initiative, SJN helped train thousands of journalists, supported more than 70 newsrooms in East and West Africa with integrating SoJo into their way of working, and co-designed a solutions journalism curriculum that was adopted in Kenyan and Nigerian universities. By the end of 2025, more than 200 students in Kenya had taken examinations on solutions journalism.

The initiative may be over, but the work has taken on a life of its own. Twenty-two accredited SoJo trainers are now active across the continent, each of them spreading the idea to many more journalists than SJN could reach directly. And Karobia notes that solutions journalism has an impact not just on those journalists' communities but on the journalists themselves. She heard repeatedly from reporters that covering stories through a solutions lens made them feel lighter. "They did not feel sad or moody or depressed at the end of the day," she says. "It reinforced their sense of agency."

Stories from one cohort won four national journalism awards. A journalist at Nigeria Health Watch got a promotion that he credits to his pivot toward solutions reporting. The Africa Initiative changed journalists' coverage, their outlook, and their careers.

"SJN played a critical role in making all this happen," Karobia says. SJN funded story grants that made reporting possible, worked closely with our regional partners at Science Africa and Nigeria Health Watch, and amplified the reach of many African solutions stories with our Solutions Story Tracker. SJN also taught journalists to track the impact of their stories, to ask not just how many clicks a story got but whether it effected change: spreading ideas, inspiring communities to take action, and holding power to account.

# About SoJo/ SJN

"A piece we wrote about communities responding after ICE raids won the breaking news category of the Asociación de Periodistas de Puerto Rico. ... It showed us we can produce award-winning SoJo that's a quick turnaround."

*— Camille Padilla Dalmau, 9 Millones*

"I could see, taste, hear and feel that community's spirit and willingness to be bold — without leaving residents behind. [My solutions journalism] piece on St. Paul basically went viral (a rarity in public media) as the comments and likes poured in."

*— Elizabeth McGowan*

"AfroLA prides itself as a solutions journalism newsroom. Not every story is a solutions story, but we use SoJo to hold people and entities accountable and show what's possible when we 'widen the lens' to report on a problem."

*AfroLA*

"[T]his project has done what journalism aspires to do at its best: not just report the facts, but move the conversation forward."

*— Anna McEntire of the Janet Quinney Lawson Institute for Land, Water and Air at Utah State University on the SJN-supported Great Salt Lake Collaborative*

# Solutions Insights Lab




Insights Lab chief managing director Ambika Samarthya-Howard, left, and the Livelihood Impact Fund's executive director Abigail Steinberg at the 2025 Skill World Forum.

2025 was a year of major growth for **Solutions Insights Lab,** an initiative of the Solutions Journalism Network that works with social-change organizations to find and spread knowledge about what's working in response to the world's biggest challenges.

**9** total projects running

In 2025, the Lab went deep into the field, traveling across continents to conduct research on the ground and share what we learned at major convenings. We expanded from documenting what works to actively building shared learning ecosystems where knowledge can circulate and take root. We started producing short videos that show our insights in action, first for Digital Divide Data, then for Livelihood Impact Fund. And we mapped entire systems of change, tracing the hidden relationships, power structures and funding dynamics that determine whether good ideas actually reach the people who need them.

### YOUTH MENTAL WELLBEING

Through the Youth Mental Wellbeing Co-Lab, a five-year partnership that launched in 2025 with 25 organizations working to support young people's mental health worldwide, the Lab moved beyond insights and into ecosystem-building.

We conducted over 100 interviews and focus groups with an extraordinarily diverse array of mental-health innovators and with the young people in their programs. And we identified surprising patterns in what helps young people engage, what makes support feel trustworthy and what allows programs to endure. But the work's larger purpose was to help those insights circulate

More than **400** interviews conducted

— sparking connections across organizations, fueling shared reflection and contributing to a community of practice that bridges knowledge and action. In early 2026, we launched the project's public platform, youthmentalwellbeing.org, which is designed to evolve and expand in the years to come and make this learning accessible far beyond the Co-Lab.

### INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP & CLIMATE ACTION

Building on the Lab's long-running partnership with the Skoll Foundation, we launched Insights About Climate Action, a new body of work examining how Indigenous leaders and communities are advancing some of the world's most urgent climate solutions, even as their work remains largely underfunded and overlooked.

The Insights Lab mapped the interconnected pathways through which Indigenous leadership, land governance, regional climate strategies and media shape effective and just environmental action, and distilled nine key insights for policymakers, funders and practitioners. Then we presented the work at COP30 in Belém, the Skoll World Forum in Oxford and the UN's SDG Media Zone.

More than **42,000** visitors to websites produced for SIL research

### EYEGLASSES INITIATIVE

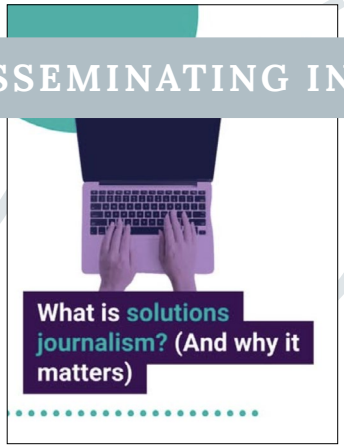
For the Livelihood Impact Fund's work tackling the global problem of presbyopia, the Lab took to the field, conducting on-the-ground research in Nigeria, Laos and India to find out how community health workers and entrepreneurs are getting reading glasses to the roughly 800 million people who need them.

Drawing on dozens of interviews in each country, we created a Road to Scale and a series of scaling playbooks that detail the dynamics of eyeglass distribution and uptake. We produced a series of videos to show the impact in India. And we built the case for near-vision correction as a gateway to broader primary care, an argument that we took to the Skoll World Forum and Spotlight Africa.



Livelihood Impact Fund Eyeglasses Initiative work in action in Nigeria.

# SJN Data





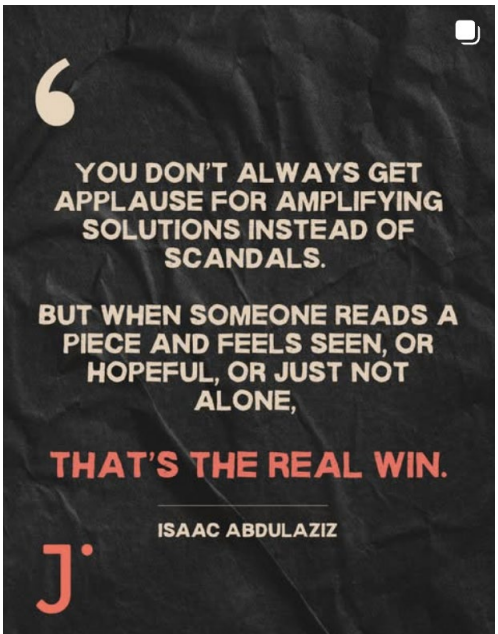


**2,731** workshop attendees, fellows and Train-the-Trainers participants in 2025 alone

**597** solutions journalism directory members representing **65** countries

**20,000+** unique Learning Lab visitors

In 2025, SJN crossed **17,000 stories** in the Solutions Story Tracker covering **2,181** news outlets from **102** countries




**More than 1,500** new newsletter subscribers

Nearly **8,000** new LinkedIn followers and **1,700+** new Instagram subscribers

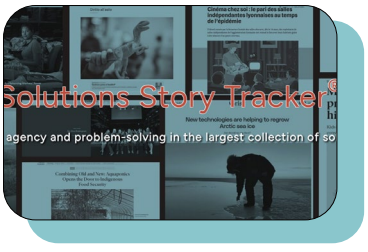
# Want to Turn the Stories Here into Action?




- Attend a Climate Peer Network online meetup
- The Climate Beacon Newsroom Initiative is just one part of our wider work changing how people view climate possibility
- Learn from newsrooms turning solutions journalism to funding



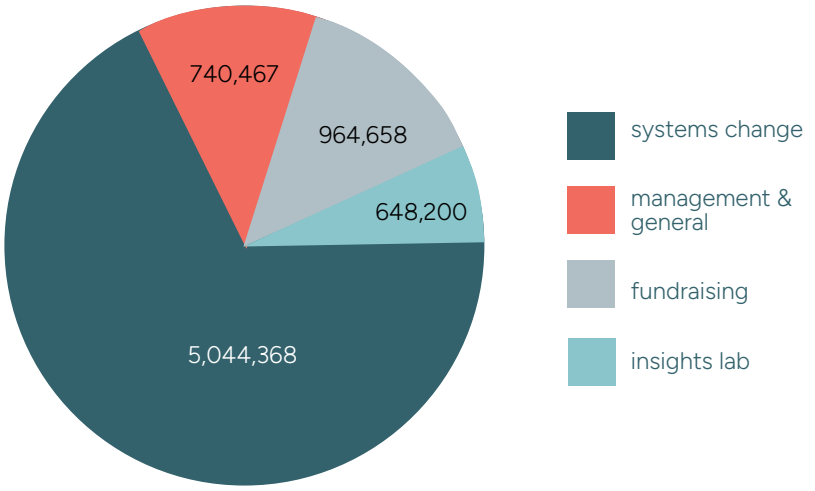

- Find an accredited trainer for your newsroom, organization or event
- The Bridging News Fellows are Complicating the Narrative, and you can too
- SJN's democracy work is rooted in more than just solutions; it's about changing how journalists cover civic life
- SJN's Africa Initiative has lessons for bringing journalists, communities and institutions together
- Discover upcoming solutions journalism trainings, opportunities and events
- There are thousands of solutions journalism examples in the Solutions Story Tracker for you to explore



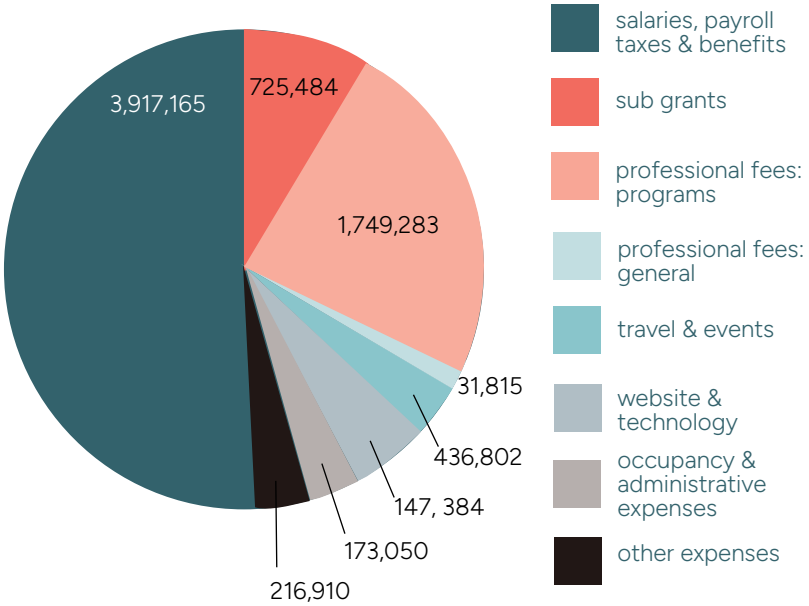

- Get solutions journalism opportunities, tools, resources and stories delivered right to you
- All of this great work would not be possible without generous and supportive funders. Meet them.

# 2025 FINANCIALS

## Expenses by Program Area




## Expenses by Category




In 2025, SJN received $7,224,813 in new grants and revenue. By year-end, SJN reported approximately $8 million in net assets. Total expenses for 2025 were $7,397,693, reflecting a decrease of approximately 7.2% from 2024.

It is important to note that SJN's revenue model includes a significant portion of multi-year, purpose-restricted grants. These awards are often committed for two or more years, with grant revenue generally recognized in the year awarded, while the associated program expenses occur over the life of the grant. As a result, funds from prior years are carried forward to support ongoing programs and grant commitments in subsequent years.

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Trabian Shorters, Board Chair**
Social entrepreneur; founder and CEO of BMe Community; former vice president of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.



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Digital communications executive; CEO of Chris Gee Consulting; former digital leader for Edelman, FGS Global and more



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SJN co-founder and CEO; journalist and author of three books including "How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas"



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**T. Morgan Dixon**
Co-founder and CEO of GirlTrek, former director of leadership development for Achievement First.



**Tina Rosenberg**
SJN co-founder; journalist and author; winner of a Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award for Nonfiction.

"The Solutions Journalism Network is committed to advancing journalism that is respectful, helpful and fair, and that reflects the agency, aspirations and humanity of all people and communities."

SOLUTIONS JOURNALISM NETWORK



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