

News & Media Ecosystem Landscape Mapping Request for Proposals

June 16, 2024

The San Antonio Area Foundation seeks a consultant/consultancy to carry out an analysis and mapping of the news and media ecosystem landscape across our primary service areas, which include Atascosa, Bandera, Bexar, Comal, Guadalupe, Kendall, Medina, and Wilson counties. The mapping can include other South Central Texas counties, as we seek to create an initial news assessment of the local news coverage or lack thereof, especially in rural communities and hard-to-reach areas (such as Uvalde County).

Proposals are invited from organizations/experts/consultants with relevant experience in news and media mapping and research assessments, community engagement, and movement building.

Complete proposals must be submitted to Jesus Garcia-Gonzalez, Senior Program Officer, (jggonzalez@saafdn.org) by **July 22, 2024, 11:59 CST**. Shortlisted proposals will be invited to a 30-minute interview likely on the 30th and 31st of July 2024.

A. Introduction to San Antonio Area Foundation

As the birthplace of the first Spanish language radio (*KCOR-AM*) and television (*KCOR-TV*) stations in the United States, as well as the home of *La Prensa*, one of the early Spanish-focused newspapers in the country, San Antonio has played a crucial role in informing, entertaining, and empowering our community.

Rooted in the vision of closing opportunity gaps for those who need it the most, for over 60 years the San Antonio Area Foundation has distributed more than \$800 million in grants and scholarships to educate youth, preserve the environment, protect animals, fund research, and provide services that enhance the quality of life for people living in and around San Antonio.

Evidence suggests that participating in our communities, whether through volunteering or joining neighborhood groups, strengthens our social connections and sense of belonging. Civic engagement allows people to influence local values, government priorities, and policy, which can lead to stronger communities and greater trust among all residents. Thus, it is no coincidence that greater health disparities and inequality thrive in neighborhoods and rural areas that lack access to a robust civic infrastructure. We at the Area Foundation believe that access to fact-based information and local news is pivotal to creating Livable, Resilient, and Equitable communities across Texas.

Serving as the home to the first and only [Press Forward](#) Chapter in Texas, we seek to generate a greater understanding of the existing organizations, the gaps and “news deserts”, and areas of opportunity currently existing within our service area and across South Central Texas. This landscape mapping will lay the foundation as we seek to strengthen access to trusted information, especially for marginalized populations in rural and underserved communities.

B. Purpose and Scope

The main goal of this exercise is to support the San Antonio Area Foundation and the broader community in understanding the news and media ecosystem across Bexar and contiguous counties. The report should highlight service providers, the areas of greatest need, and populations at risk of losing access to trusted local news outlets. We believe this mapping tool will help increase a wider philanthropic collaboration across South Central Texas helping increase the support for local news and media organizations, existing and emerging, across the state.

- a. **Mapping and summary:** We seek to deepen our knowledge and understanding of the stakeholders providing access to trusted information and news coverage across the service areas. The summary should stakeholder strengths and the challenges faced and highlight opportunities to help these entities become more sustainable and resilient to adverse changes.

In general, we would like to understand the needs, assets, and deficits of the ecosystem. For example:

- *Who are the main sources of information? Who or what entities are providing fact-based access to news and local information across our service area? Who is receiving the information and in what medium?*
 - *What is missing from the landscape?*
 - *What is working? What is needed to help these initiatives scale?*
 - *Who is being served vs not being served? What can be done to improve services?*
 - *What areas, if any, should be prioritized for support and why?*
- b. **Geographic coverage:** The current service area includes Atascosa, Bandera, Bexar, Comal, Guadalupe, Kendall, Medina, and Wilson counties. The mapping can include other South Central Texas counties, as we seek to create an initial news assessment of the local news coverage or lack thereof, especially in rural communities and hard-to-reach areas.

- c. **Deliverables**

The research consultant/team will be expected to deliver the following key outputs:

- A final report and other knowledge products as mutually agreed. The mapping should include a short summary of each organization engaged, etc.
- We encourage digestible and visual formats where possible, such as infographics, maps of counties surveyed, stakeholder summaries, action plans, or any other similar formats suggested by the research consultant(s).

C. Proposal Requirements

Proposals should include the following:

- a. **Proposer Information**

- Name of consulting firm and principal contact person, including office location, address, telephone number, and e-mail.

- Brief background of the consulting firm.
- b. **Proposed Approach**
- A statement of your proposed approach to the mapping project, including a list of the counties you will include as part of the mapping.
 - Description of the services and activities as they relate to the proposed scope of service.
 - Description of your experience (and the experience of any sub-contractors), if any, with providing similar services for nonprofit organizations.
- c. **Project Team**
- List of team members who will work on the mapping project.
 - Brief resumes of each key team member (1 page for each resume) tenure with your company, and their proposed role on this project.
- d. **Fee Estimate**
- Outline your proposed pricing structure or cost proposal.
 - Provide hours and costs associated with each task.
- e. **Professional References:** Please provide at least one reference from a client(s) you or your firm have provided services for within the past three years for a similar scope of work.
- f. **Submit a statement** describing any potential conflict of interest or appearance of impropriety, relating to other clients of the firm, or officers, directors, and employees of the San Antonio Area Foundation.