

Position paper – partnerships and funding

Board request:

- 1. Support exploration of non-profit/university partnerships by exploring types of foundation or sponsorship funds council could seek and their purpose**

Response: Partnerships with non-profits and universities are seen as an effective means of amplifying the NNC's voice and reach.

In that vein, the NNC has partnered with non-profits and universities to co-sponsor an event, as co-signatory to statements about the media, and to address the issue of journalism standards and ethics, including presenting a course module for journalism students.

These initiatives are intended to raise the NNC profile and credibility, increase membership, and may potentially yield a modest revenue stream in terms of future modules for journalism students.

The NNC also explored a variety of news media partnerships during a trip to Ottawa. Staff will continue to seek opportunities - and encourages directors to identify potential partners - that will further the NNC mandate to promote ethical practices within the news media industry and to serve as a forum for complaints against its members.

Foundation or sponsorship funding has potential to offer a revenue stream, but comes with two hurdles. One is the potential to compromise the NNC's independence and neutrality on ethics issues. The other is that the best opportunity for successful applications would require the services of a researcher and grant writer. This is a specialized skill set not strongly developed among the current staff complement.

Identifying a foundation or sponsorship that would be sympathetic to the NNC's mandate and not interfere with the NNC's integrity is a feasible goal, but competing for funding is expected to require time and resources that would have a significant negative effect on staff ability to attend to core business.

As a solution, the Board could establish an ad hoc committee tasked with identifying suitable like-minded foundations or sponsorships and securing funding. The committee could include members with financial, legal and/or corporate background who would lead the funding requests, with staff support.

It is anticipated that foundation or sponsorship funding would take approximately two years to secure, but that it could provide a small to moderate buffer against declining revenue from membership fees.