



THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP
Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

MEDIA RELEASE

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Critical funding for public interest journalism in COVID-19

The Morrison Government has today brought forward the release of \$5 million from its Regional and Small Publishers Innovation Fund to support public interest journalism during COVID-19.

The multi-year \$48 million Innovation Fund, which began in 2018, is part of the Government's Regional and Small Publishers Jobs and Innovation Package, designed to boost sustainability and the ongoing production of news in the modern media environment.

The Fund has been enhanced – with more organisations eligible to apply and a greater emphasis on sustainability. This round will be open to regional and metropolitan publishers and content service providers producing public interest journalism.

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, said:

“Following extensive consultation, I have adjusted the Fund so that money is available as quickly as possible to help publishers keep journalists in jobs and local communities informed.

“Many media organisations, particularly those in regional areas, are facing significant financial strain due to the community's necessary response to COVID-19.

“As we face these unprecedented challenges together, the media's role in producing quality news and providing Australians with timely and accurate information is crucial. This provides critical support at a time it's needed most.”

Time frames will be significantly shorter than normal, in view of the urgent need facing many regional and small publishers. The Fund is a competitive grants program independently administered by the Australian Communications and Media Authority. More information on how to apply will be made available in coming days on the [ACMA's website](#).

The Morrison Government is acting decisively in the national interest to address the significant economic consequences of COVID-19. The Government has announced measures totalling \$320 billion across the economy, in support of individuals and businesses.

For more information about the Government's response to COVID-19 visit: www.australia.gov.au

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