

Empowering Colorado

Nonprofit Journalism Funding Proposal

January 2021

Project Title: Covering Colorado Energy News, Research and Technology

Organization Overview:

Colorado's vast energy resources, energy research institutions and energy policy debates provide the backdrop for an information ecosystem in which fact-based journalism focused on energy development can thrive. Energy impacts the health, economy and lifestyle of all Coloradans and citizens need quality journalism to make informed decisions. However, the business models available to most for-profit media no longer allow news organizations to dedicate sufficient resources to cover a topic layered with elements of science, business and public policy. Empowering Colorado presents an opportunity to change this dynamic and serve citizens, business leaders and public policy makers with quality journalism focused on all facets of Colorado energy development.

As a 501(c)3 nonprofit news organization backed by national organizations such as the [Institute for Nonprofit News \(INN\)](#) and [Local Independent Online News Publishers \(LION\)](#), Empowering Colorado represents not only evidence of Colorado's changing media landscape, it also serves as a cutting-edge solution to the problem of declining local media and inadequate coverage of energy issues. Quality news content developed by Empowering Colorado ensures citizens have access to fact-based information necessary to balance the aggressive and often non-factual information distributed by advocacy organizations.

Project Summary:

Empowering Colorado seeks to create news bureaus in three locations across Colorado where journalists can easily interact with energy professionals, researchers, technologists and academic institutions who are driving the future of energy development. The journalists would work virtually in or around the Energy Institute at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Golden and Colorado State University in Pueblo.

The journalists would contribute multi-platform coverage for Empowering Colorado's Energy Insider newsletter and a vertical publication dedicated to coverage of energy research and technology. The journalists would also cover energy issues in their respective regions and participate in special projects requiring in-depth reporting.

Project Staff:

Empowering Colorado will ensure all journalistic content is developed by a diverse set of reporters and editors necessary to ensure balance, insight and fairness. Empowering Colorado will be transparent about its reporting process and the staff members who contribute to the content.

Project Goal:

If citizens have access to quality, independent journalism produced by experienced journalists, they will not be reliant up advocacy information when making policy decisions. Empowering Colorado will make accurate, unbiased energy information and data readily available across multiple platforms and improve the dialogue and information ecosystem surrounding this often-polarizing topic. A more-informed citizenry will encourage balanced policy decisions and ensure Colorado is a leader in the development of safe and dependable energy development.

Funding Request:

Empowering Colorado requests \$200,000 in funding to facilitate the hiring of three journalists to provide energy coverage in three news bureaus in Fort Collins, Golden and Pueblo and cover associated operating costs over a period of two years.