



**GRANTMAKERS IN
FILM + ELECTRONIC MEDIA**

Philanthropy & Media Summit
Tuesday, May 6, 2008
10:30 AM – 5:00 PM

Prepared by Alyce Myatt
Grantmakers in Film + Electronic Media
April 10, 2008

Overview

Media, whether print, television, radio, or the Internet, are in an unprecedented state of change. The technological developments of the past decade have turned traditional financial models and the policies that govern media on their heads, the methods of making and consuming media have changed, and the impact that media is having on the very nature of society is without parallel.

The aim of this day is to provide the philanthropic community with an awareness of the changing nature of media, the role that media play in strengthening or weakening democracy and, in turn, the impact that strategic philanthropic funding at the community, state, regional, national and international levels can have on preserving civil society. Yes, we have entered a “brave new world” and it is essential to have navigational tools to effectively meet the philanthropic goal of improving the human condition. Arguably, the most effective tool of all is knowledge—knowledge conveyed through media.

The 2008 Philanthropy Summit offers a unique opportunity to position members of the philanthropic sector as key leaders in preserving and fostering democracy within the U.S. and abroad. The day-long mini summit on media described below is designed not to entertain, although many of the speakers are entertaining; it is not intended to give technical assistance or provide professional development for grantmakers, although grantmakers will be better equipped after attending; its purpose is not to showcase particular media entities nor particular foundations. All of the speakers, however, are leaders within their sector and juxtaposed and placed within the larger context of the Philanthropy Summit, they can serve as a catalyst to spark new thinking within the philanthropic sector.

Commercial television and radio stations are rapidly being bought up by a handful of corporations; public radio seems to be holding its own financially, but the role of public television has been greatly diminished—and we are about to undergo a digital transition in both radio and TV, the consequences of which are unknowable. In the meantime, electronic media providers utilize the public’s right-of-way while lobbying to limit their public interest obligations.

Major newspapers are also consolidating, making localism and investigative journalism—the very types of coverage that hold corporations and elected official accountable—the first victims of the new “bottom line.”

Some believe hope lies with the Internet; however, how do we insure there are policies in place that guarantee unfettered, universal, high speed, affordable access for all Americans? Compared with the rest of the developed world (and, in some cases, developing world), the United States has fallen woefully behind in providing its citizens with universal broadband.

Where, in mainstream media, is the quality news and information content, coverage of the arts and culture, programming and articles that reflects the diversity of interests, ideas, and people that make up today's America and the world?

What are the ramifications of a limited media environment? What impact are these limits having on education... healthcare... economic and social development... politics... the fundamental underpinnings of our society? And what role can the philanthropic sector play in helping to forge a new media culture—a culture that understands and supports a free and independent media, one that is responsive to the needs of the public, one that ensures we have open, knowledgeable, healthy, and democratic society?

The desired outcome of the day is for the attendees to take new awareness and knowledge and fashion it into a lens through which they can view their work and their world differently. Equipped with an understanding of the current and projected media-saturated environment, funders will be better able to lead more effectively. By understanding media, they will be able to support the creation and implementation of new paradigms for positive change during what is undeniably a dynamic moment in history.

Panel # 1 10:30 – 11:30

The Role of Philanthropy in Preserving a Democratic Media

A free society is an informed society, what policies and practices are in place to ensure we have open access to information or what must we do to craft and enforce new ones; what is the quality of the information we receive and how can we sustain the very best content; and where and how are we getting our information and how are platforms evolving?

This first panel addresses those questions and provides thinking needed to lead us towards solutions.

Panelists:

- **Michael J. Copps**, Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission (FCC)
- **Charles Lewis**, President, The Fund for Independence in Journalism
- **Ernest James Wilson III**, Dean and Walter Annenberg Chair in Communication, USC Annenberg School for Communication

Panel # 2 11:40 – 12:40

Media to Promote Mission

In a media-saturated environment it is not enough to simply fund a media project, it has to be accompanied by a strategy for dissemination and engagement. Who you target is as important as how you target. What strategies work for using media to get your issues to the public? How can you effectively use media to move a policy agenda? Does a comprehensive media strategy require unlimited resources or are there opportunities to partner with other funders to facilitate a broad-based approach to solving the dilemma of cutting through the clutter? Public media vs. commercial media; documentary vs. dramatic narrative – does it matter? This panel will demonstrate singular and group strategies that have changed the national dialogue and moved the public and policy makers to action. They will also outline achievable opportunities for the future.

Panelists:

- **Orlando Bagwell**, Director of Media Arts & Culture, Ford Foundation
- **Alberto Iburgüen**, President and CEO, John S. & James L. Knight Foundation
- **John Schreiber**, Executive Vice President, Social Action & Advocacy, Participant Productions

LUNCH 1:00 – 2:30

A Facilitated Conversation on Media and Civil Society

Panel #3 2:40 – 3:40

Breaking Through the Media Saturated Environment

Where are we getting our information, how are we using it and how is it affecting our behavior; is there empirical evidence to support our attitudes or do we simply react based on what we see and hear in mainstream media; who's watching, listening, participating - and how? This panel looks at trends and draws on research, advocacy and action and offers a glimpse of how media moves us to action from the grassroots to the general population.

Panelists:

- **Malkia Cyril**, Director, Center for Media Justice
- **Elspeth Revere**, Vice President, General Program, John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
- **Anthony Riddle**, General Manager, WBAI
- **Tom Rosenstiel**, Director, Project for Excellence in Journalism

Panel #4 3:50 – 4:50

Communications as an Advancement of Philanthropy

How well do the general public, elected officials and key stakeholders understand the role of philanthropy; are there examples of funders who effectively communicate through the media; does philanthropy pass along their knowledge of media and support its use by their grantees?

- **Joel L. Fleishman**, Professor of Law and Public Policy, Duke University
- **Stephanie Strom**, Journalist, The New York Times
- **Ruth Wooden**, President, Public Agenda