2023 Global Fact Check Fund Grant
ENGAGE Application Guidelines

THE IFCN GLOBAL FACT CHECK FUND GRANT PROGRAM

The International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) at the nonprofit Poynter Institute, a global leader in journalistic excellence, announced a partnership with Google and YouTube on November 29, 2022, to support fact-checking initiatives worldwide and reduce the harm of misinformation.

The Global Fact Check Fund will award grants in an open competition for programs to support third-party organizations in strengthening the capabilities of fact-checking organizations across the world.

The $12 million Global Fact Check Fund will support Verified Signatories of the IFCN Code of Principles fact-checking organizations, as well as proposed partner organizations, over a three-year period. As of April 2023, there are 154 IFCN Verified Signatories from more than 60 countries.

The mission of the Fund is to strengthen and develop the operational, production and engagement capacities of local and regional media organizations to increase the quality, volume, frequency, scale and impact of fact checking abilities and activities. This Fund will support eligible organizations to increase the level of professionalism in fact-checking associated with media outlets, as well as improve target audiences' ability to critically assess mass media and social media.

Applications are open from December 1, 2023; 9:00 am EST to January 8, 2024; 11:59:pm EST, for grants from the Fund's third phase, called ENGAGE 2023. This phase will provide 20 individual grants of $100,000 per award, originating from the $2 million total allocation for ENGAGE 2023.

A. THE GLOBAL FACT CHECK FUND GRANT PROGRAM SPECIFICS
Program Description

1. ENGAGE Program Objectives
   This program will seek to fund a diverse range of projects reflecting independent news, information media outlets and organizations whose operations can be used to effectively advance fact-checking, that are committed to objective and thorough fact-checking.

   ● ENGAGE: Applicants will be seeking to obtain funding support in order to invest in scaling audience/stakeholder engagement in local and regional spaces. This may include, but not be limited to, sustainability measures, increasing staffing, expanding or creating programs designed to boost content visibility, training, cross-pollination across technology channels, exploration of new target markets, audience research metrics and analytics, digital media, community engagement, innovation and experimentation to develop tools for fact-checking.

2. Program Proposal Expectations
   ● Interested organizations will construct a plan that develops some of the above stated priorities into a comprehensive and coherent development strategy.
   ● Successful proposals will contain implementation plans and clear explanations of how the project goals will be achieved and sustained beyond the performance period.
   ● Successful proposals will include an assessment plan.
   ● Successful proposals will match the funding request to a specific and coherent development project, rather than listing a series of unrelated expenditures.

3. Reporting
   ● Award recipients will be required to track and report on output and outcome indicators, as shared in their application.
   ● Reporting will include financial and narrative reporting at regular intervals, stipulated in contract agreements.

B. AWARD INFORMATION
   1. Performance Period and Award Amounts
      ● Award amounts: Up to $100,000 per award, disbursed in three equal payments.
      ● There is no limit to the number of applications an organization **may submit** across all categories (BUILD, GROW and ENGAGE). However, each successful applicant may not be **granted** more than one award, per 12-month period. For example: Primary organizations would only be able to accept one award for the year of 2023-named grants; one award for the year of 2024-named grants and one award for the year of 2025-named grants.
      ● A maximum of 20 applications will be funded at $100,000 USD for each awarded application.
      ● An application may consist of one IFCN signatory organization; OR a non-signatory organization underline partnering with, or underline endorsed by, an IFCN signatory organization.
      ● The most that an organization can be awarded over the entire term of the grant is 3 awards - one for each year that the IFCN grant program will be in operation. There is an exception: If a **previously** awarded primary organization is partnering with another organization in the new ENGAGE application AND is NOT the primary applicant in the application, then, if awarded for the partnership project, the previously awarded organization may also receive grant funding as the secondary partnering organization.
      ● An endorsing signatory organization is eligible to apply to the ENGAGE opportunity.
      ● Should the ENGAGE category fund not be exhausted through the standard award process, considerations for redistribution of the funds will be made with the guidance of the Steering Committee.
      ● Funding instrument type: Grants
      ● Grant funds must only be used within the primary and/or secondary applicant's home country or country of operation, unless otherwise approved in writing
      ● Program performance period: Proposed programs should be completed within 12 months.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

   Cost-sharing or matching is not required. However, it is encouraged that applicants consider leveraging the grant award to provide cost-sharing, directly or indirectly, from additional sources in support of the project.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION
   1. The following organizations are eligible to apply:
      ● Verified signatories of the IFCN Code of Principles
      ● Other fact-checking organizations **partnered with**, or **endorsed by**, an IFCN verified signatory. Non-signatory organizations may include regional fact-checking networks, not-for-profit organizations, NGOs, for-profit organizations, research organizations, and academic institutes whose operations can be used to effectively advance fact-checking.
   2. The Fund cannot support:
      ● Organizations with affiliations to elected officials, political parties or religious groups
      ● Humanitarian or charitable activities, including direct social services to populations
      ● Political or partisan activities
      ● Individual trips abroad
      ● Health services or materials (excluding staff mental health initiatives)
      ● Construction costs
      ● Pre-award costs

D. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS
   1. Organizations will be asked to provide all submission information electronically, including budget and timeline attachments.
      ● Application Narrative, *may* include
         ○ Organization Background
         ○ Problem/Need to be Addressed
         ○ Description of proposal's alignment with the ENGAGE Grant priorities
         ○ Proposed Activities
         ○ Project Timeline in templated MS Excel format
         ○ Sustainability, or Future Funding Plans
      ● Endorsement letter, if applicable
      ● Partnership letter, if applicable
      ● Primary/Partner Organization's Annual Operating Budget
      ● Budget in templated MS Excel format
      ● Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (*may* include monitoring, evaluation table and narrative).

E. APPLICATION SUMMARY
   1. This third application period opens on December 1, 2023.
   2. Additional information will be shared during a subsequent virtual *Question and Answer* session. Refer to the grant announcement website for date and registration.

3. There is no limit to the number of applications an organization **may submit** across all categories (BUILD, GROW and ENGAGE). However, each successful applicant may not be **granted** more than one award, per 12-month period. For example: Primary organizations would only be able to accept one award for the year of 2023-named grants; one award for the year of 2024-named grants and one award for the year of 2025-named grants. (*See B. Award Information; 1. 5th bullet, for more information*)
4. The decision of awards will be made by a selection committee comprised of professionals in the media space who bring diverse skills, experiences, perspectives and expertise.
5. Issuance of this announcement does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the IFCN Global Fact Check Fund Grant Program, nor does it commit the IFCN Global Fact Check Fund Grant Program to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals.
6. Questions? Please send all questions to info@ifcn.org, using "**ENGAGE Grant**" in the subject line.