INNovation Fund Application Round 3 - March 2nd, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Submission Date</th>
<th>2015-03-02 14:48:22</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization Name</td>
<td>Wyofile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tax-exempt status</td>
<td>501(c)(3) organization</td>
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<td>EIN of organization (or of fiscal sponsor's organization)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Website address</td>
<td><a href="http://www.wyofile.com">www.wyofile.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone Number</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applicant's name</td>
<td>Lorena Garcia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>executive director</td>
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<td>Contact email</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposed Project Start Date</td>
<td>05-01-2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anticipated Project End Date</td>
<td>12-31-2015</td>
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<td>Total estimated budget for the proposed project</td>
<td>30,192</td>
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<td>Request amount from the INNovation Fund:</td>
<td>20,000</td>
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**What is the total annual budget for your organization or, if you are a fiscally-sponsored project of another organization, the total annual budget for your fiscally-sponsored project.**

415,737

**In two or three sentences, describe your organization's purpose and audience.**

WyoFile is an energetic and vibrant independent digital news source committed to providing in-depth quality reporting about the people, places and policy in Wyoming. It is our mission to inform and engage Wyoming through in-depth reporting in the public interest. Our primary audience consists of individuals living in Wyoming, are in some other way connected to Wyoming, or who have an interest in Wyoming politics, energy and natural resources.

**Describe in detail the business experiment for which you are requesting funds. How does it fit with your sustainability plans? Explain the need for this project, and how you expect it to increase revenue and/or audience engagement.**

Often times, the most innovative ideas can come from the most basic methods of growing buy-in and followers. This is not a new application, or a new data management system. WyoFile is proposing an on the ground effort to build our subscriber base which will in turn be monetized in to a growing donor base. Over the last year, WyoFile has successfully doubled our revenue from individual donors and has more than tripled the number of individual donors from our subscriber base. With the decrease in funder support for non-profit journalism, it is imperative that WyoFile focus its development efforts on building new readership that will be converted into donors. WyoFile has an impressive track record of converting 10% of our subscriber base to donors. This experiment will focus on five key counties in Wyoming where we have identified both strong readership growth potential and donor potential. These counties include: Campbell, Fremont, Laramie, Natrona, Park, and Sheridan. We will continue our outreach, which has translated into 90% growth rates in Teton, Denver, Sweetwater, and Albany counties.

This experiment will consist of both digital as well as on the ground grassroots tactics. WyoFile will begin by digitally targeting the listed...
Which of the following statements best describes your proposed business experiment?

**Principally a revenue-generating project that is part of a larger revenue-generation plan**

**Is this a new project?**

**New project. We have not done this before.**

**Who will help carry out the project? Describe the key staff and capabilities. If you plan to use outside partners, consultants, or vendors, tell us why you chose them (or how you will select them). Will you need to hire additional fulltime or part-time help to complete your proposed project?**

- This will be an endeavor completely executed by the staff.
- Executive director and editor in chief will lead the planning
- Operations manager will be in charge of the logistics
- Reporters will be part of the tour, provide radio interviews for the local radio stations and continue to write stories from the field.

**How will you measure progress? Please be specific and concrete about the metrics you will use? Suggestion: Keep the number of suggested metrics limited and make sure that they are actually measuring the results of the proposed business experiment.**

**We will measure our progress and success through:**
- County specific newsletter subscriptions
- New users and sessions in each targeted county
- New donors
- Upgraded donors
- Engagement of readers from these counties
  - Newsletter opens
  - Click through rate
  - Comments
  - Low bounce rates

**Using those metrics, how will you know you have succeeded in meeting the objectives for the business experiment. Please be as specific as possible.**

**By the end of 2015, we will have:**
- Doubled the readership in each of the targeted counties
- Increased subscribers by at least 25% in each county
- Maintained 30% open rate among new subscribers
- Converted 10% of the new subscribers into donors
- Upgraded 50% of current donors from the five counties.
- Ensured at least 2.0 page views per visit among new subscribers.

**How will INN be able to validate the metrics and how the project did using those metrics?**

**WyoFile will be happy to present the analytic and donor reports to INN for validation before the campaign and following the campaign.**

**What do you hope to learn from this project, and how do you hope to apply what you've learned over the long term?**

**Wyoming is a large state with a small population. It is both rural and metropolitan with the largest city holding nearly 65,000 residents. There is a lot of space between each city and town. Reaching a statewide audience poses an extreme challenge because of the large distances between the few centers of population. WyoFile hopes to learn more about its potential readership, how to reach them and what issues are important to them. We hope to use this information to inform WyoFile's recruitment and development strategies in the subsequent years.**

**Why are you the right organization and team to do this project?**

**We are the right organization for this experiment because if we are able to achieve our goals, this can be a new and exciting method that other small news organizations that lack marketing budgets can attempt. We have the eagerness to explore new tactics to grow our readership as well as a willingness among the editorial team to meet their readers, and the communities they write for.**

**How is this project similar/different than other**

**WyoFile has conducted a plethora of research around the subject of growing readership and subscriptions. The same “advice” and best**
projects you've researched ahead of this proposal? What can you learn that is different from what others have already tried?

Why is this project timely? Why is now a good time to undertake this project?

Upload your project budget

INNovation-Fund-Project-Budget-Template-WyoFile.xlsx

practices are only repeated blog after blog, article after article. Forbes magazine promotes the same best practices as the Entrepreneur, as does Hubspot. Use Facebook, add catchy headlines, use appealing photos, use twitter, and meet your audience where they are on social media. While all of these tidbits of advice can be useful, many times, social media can only get a campaign so far, especially in a rural state. This experiment will take the best of the social media tactics, digital strategies as well as proven on the ground tactics taken from grassroots organizing best practices.

WyoFile believes that this is the perfect time to conduct this experiment because of our success in growing our readership last year and our dire need of growing our individual donor base. It is becoming even more imperative that WyoFile as well as our fellow news organizations shift our income generating focus to individual donors to supplant the lacking foundation income.