



PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Dan Armstrong
(847) 749-9675 | darmstrong@njhumanities.org

April 6, 2023

Call for applications: Creating noncredit certificates in community journalism at NJ community colleges

(Camden, NJ) – The New Jersey Council for the Humanities (NJCH) and Journalism + Design at The New School (J+D) are announcing a call for applications for a new funding opportunity. Three New Jersey community colleges will receive awards of up to \$40,000 each to serve as partner sites for an exciting new program: co-developing and launching certificate programs in community journalism across the state.

With generous support from the New Jersey Civic Information Consortium, this program will fund the three selected colleges to create free noncredit offerings that equip people with tools to better understand and articulate what's happening in their communities.

"NJCH is thrilled to partner with Journalism + Design on this innovative program, which will support community colleges in providing more high-quality journalism education and nurturing robust news and information systems in New Jersey," said Valerie Popp, director of strategic initiatives for the New Jersey Council for the Humanities.

These community reporting certificates are designed to center community colleges as hubs for local news by expanding access to journalism education, promoting greater media literacy, and offering more people opportunities to get involved in the production of stories that benefit their communities. The opportunity is open to all NJ-based community colleges, regardless of whether or not the institution already offers some form of journalism-related programming.

NJCH and J+D will provide faculty at participating colleges with a foundational curriculum for the certificate, along with funding and programmatic support to adapt the curriculum based on their own expertise and the unique needs of their communities. Participating colleges also will receive funding to support costs for administration and implementation.

The curriculum will challenge participants to explore creative ways to circulate high-quality news and share transferable skills from a variety of disciplines, including journalism, design, the humanities, media literacy, and systems thinking.

"This program has the potential to further strengthen New Jersey's burgeoning civic media ecosystem by activating community colleges as key partners in supporting more informed, engaged, and connected communities," said Cole Goins, managing director of the Journalism + Design lab.

After offering the certificate, colleges will receive additional funds to develop sustainability plans and launch new projects. Funding will also be available to support community and media partners that work with the colleges on helping participants and community members apply their skills and support the growth of the college as a hub for local news.

"The Civic Information Consortium believes that investing in journalism education and promoting media literacy are critical to building a more informed and democratic society. We are excited to see how the new certificate program will advance these priorities," said Ayinde Merrill, program officer for the New Jersey Civic Information Consortium.

Applications for the program are now open. The deadline for applications is Friday, May 26, 2023. Interested colleges can find more information and the application at <https://njhumanities.org/programs/informed-nj/cfa/>.