



Vice President, Strategy & Startups

The American Journalism Project is seeking an outstanding digital media leader with a passion for the nonprofit local news movement to join our team and oversee large-scale, complicated startup projects. This role will steward our efforts in a number of markets to launch anchor nonprofit local news organizations. The VP will lead project teams of 3-5 to conduct market analysis and assess feasibility of launching new enterprises to address identified local information gaps, all in partnership with local civic leaders. This role will also oversee establishment and incubation of startup organizations alongside a coalition of community stakeholders, funders, and management talent.

This role will require the strategic acumen, entrepreneurial leadership, and operating knowledge to manage intensive research initiatives, guide organizational visioning processes, develop sound multi-year business plans, forge coalitions, build partnerships, and to provide ongoing strategic and operational support to organizations in the incubation program. Success in this role requires a broad skill set across business planning and operations, journalism judgement, and coalition building.

This role is a rare opportunity to combine skill sets and interests across business management and journalism—a successful candidate may have deep experience in some aspects of this job description, and a strong interest in learning others. We encourage all people who are excited by the mission and the work, regardless of background, to apply.

We believe a trusted source of verified information forms the connective tissue that brings communities together, facilitates collaboration, and is critical for thriving, civically engaged communities. The American Journalism Project aims to catalyze a movement of nonprofit local news enterprises that rallies our country’s next generation of social entrepreneurs, philanthropists, and community leaders around this vital cause.

| WHO WE ARE | YOUR TEAM | OUR VALUES |
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| <p>We’re an entrepreneurial team working to re-shape the future of local news in our country. We’re passionate about journalism, civic engagement, and how local news plays a unique role in shaping our democracy.</p> <p>We help build and grow sustainable local news organizations all over the country — through financial investment, venture support, and movement building — that are governed by, sustained by and look like the public they serve.</p> | <p>We are a distributed team and strive to maintain a healthy, fun, and productive workplace, working alongside smart, energetic colleagues who enjoy one another and the work.</p> <p>The VP of Strategy & Startups will report to the SVP, Strategy & Startups and oversee a team of 1-2 staff members and numerous deeply embedded consultants, and work in close partnership with our existing VP. The VP will also draw on support from and collaborate with numerous teams across our organization.</p> | <p><i>Local First:</i> We know that local journalism must serve and be led by local communities. We make a practice of listening to, and making decisions with - not for - those communities, and connecting them to find strength in each other.</p> <p><i>Bold Leadership:</i> We understand the severe economic challenge facing local news and thus democracy, and we embrace a sense of possibility with courage, urgency, and perseverance.</p> <p><i>Constant Learning:</i> We recognize the unknown in front of us, and</p> |



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| <p>FAST FACTS</p> <p>Established: 2019 Employees: 19</p> <p><u>Grantmaking</u></p> <p>Since 2019, the American Journalism Project has granted ~\$20M in support of more than 20 civic news organizations across the U.S.</p> <p>Learn about our grantees.</p> | <p>This role will also partner on a continuous basis with our local philanthropic partners as well as the management teams and boards of directors of the startups in our incubation program.</p> <p>Meet our full team.</p> | <p>therefore we operate with humility, a commitment to continuous improvement, and collaboration.</p> <p><i>Commitment to Equity:</i> We commit to creating a better, more diverse, and more inclusive news media that advances human and civil rights. We actively fight against injustice and racism, and that starts with doing the work ourselves.</p> <p><i>Integrity:</i> We accept the responsibility of earning trust every day. We operate with honesty, transparency, dignity, and respect, and without allegiance to party, ideology, profit, or power.</p> |
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YOUR IMPACT

Your leadership will be crucial in our efforts to launch some of the largest local news projects in the country, catalyzed by multi-million dollar investments in the startups that lead to dozens of durable newsroom jobs that wouldn't be possible otherwise. Your role will help materialize a new generation of sustainable, equitable social enterprises that defend our democracy, hold power to account, and build community. Your efforts will culminate in the opportunity to help develop the vision and strategy for startup local news organizations grounded in our research assessment, including leading recruitment of a founding management team for the startups.

THE POSITION

The VP of Strategy & Startups will serve as the lead for a number of the team's projects. We organize our projects in two segments—Local Philanthropy Partnerships and Incubations—and the VP will be tasked with oversight of several projects in both categories.

Local Philanthropy Partnerships: We specialize in market assessments that involve community listening programs to determine information needs, ecosystem analyses to understand the trajectory of local news coverage, and market research to determine the potential for financial support of local journalism. We then propose solutions based on our findings. This work is done in partnership with local partners in the form of place-based foundations, civic leaders, and community stakeholders. Key elements of the role include:

- Lead a project team to deliver rigorous, locally rooted market analyses across our foundational research, community listening, information landscape, and financial modeling workstreams;
- Drive excellence in identifying gaps in community information needs and lead creative visioning processes that result in community-driven, innovative approaches to local news;



- Project scoping and management across complicated, inter-dependent workflows that ensure high quality and on time deliverables;
- Interface with local partners and present the work of your team to stakeholders;
- Management of large-scale project budgets and contracts;
- Together with our existing VP, Startups & Strategy, contribute thought leadership to program design and continued improvement of our work.

Startup Incubations: We provide incubation support to early-stage nonprofit news organizations, including some formed out of our local philanthropy partnerships, and some that begin with promising founding teams. Our incubation support is customized to fit the needs of each project, but often includes organization establishment and governance design, founding team recruitment, organizational visioning and strategic planning, fundraising and coalition building, and other embedded support. Key elements of the role include:

- Design initial organizational vision and business plans;
- Recruit founding management team and key early staff roles and board positions;
- Steward efforts to raise launch capital for the startup;
- Execute announcement and communications plan that build excitement for the projects;
- Support management team once in place with a variety of high-touch strategic, operational, and revenue-generating initiatives;
- Form key strategic partnerships with local and national partners to help set the enterprise up for success.

WHO YOU ARE

This role is a fit if you are...

- **Entrepreneurial:** We are building a nimble and entrepreneurial organization so we are looking for people who thrive in a startup environment and where you're required to think outside the box. You bring the scrappiness required to help build organizations from scratch.
- **Excellent communicator:** You excel at written and verbal communications and are a wizard with pitch and progress decks. You are able to effectively communicate strategy and distill impact in a way that can inspire our board, grantees, and external stakeholders. You have an ability to communicate with ease with local partners and present complex information and local dynamics to a broad audience.
- **Analytically minded:** You are comfortable working in Excel and drawing insights from large data sets. You have a demonstrated ability to lead nuanced research efforts that authentically identify local information needs and assess the current information ecosystems strength in doing so.
- **Committed to equity:** You bring experience of managing across lines of difference. You've worked with organizations led by BIPOC and/or local nonprofits that have a track record of serving diverse communities and bring a fluency that has been shaped by those experiences.
- **Bold and mission-oriented:** You wake up every day terrified about the future of local news in our country but boldly optimistic that we can reimagine our country's local news infrastructure. You work with urgency to get us there faster.
- **Fun and supportive:** We are working hard to reimagine the future of local news and our mission is vitally important to the future of our country. We also love the people we work with and love to laugh.

We believe there are many paths that could make you a great candidate for this multifaceted role:



- We expect candidates will have significant experience in related positions, but are eager to hear from all candidates who would thrive in this role, including, but not limited to, those who have:
 - Been in senior leadership roles either in the newsroom or in media business
 - Been a reporter or editor driven by service to the communities you covered
 - Worked in management or other roles involving strategic business planning, such as management consulting
 - Served as a successful leader in a nonprofit organization
 - Excelled within several different roles at all levels in a media company or nonprofit organization
 - Managed research teams such as in academia or market research

What background and skills do you have? We know not all strong candidates will have all the skills we list. That's OK. What else do you bring to the table? Please tell us!

Please [submit an application](#) through our portal. If you have any questions please feel free to email careers@theajp.org with "VP, Strategy & Startups" in the subject line.

The American Journalism Project is dedicated to equal employment opportunities for all applicants and employees. The American Journalism Project encourages people of all races, colors, national origins, ancestries, creeds, religions, genders, ages, disabilities, veteran status, sexual orientations, and marital statuses to apply.