



REIMAGINING SOCIAL CHANGE

BOSTON GENEVA SAN FRANCISCO SEATTLE WASHINGTON, DC FSG.ORG

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

Journalism and Media Enduring Commitment (2015-2020)

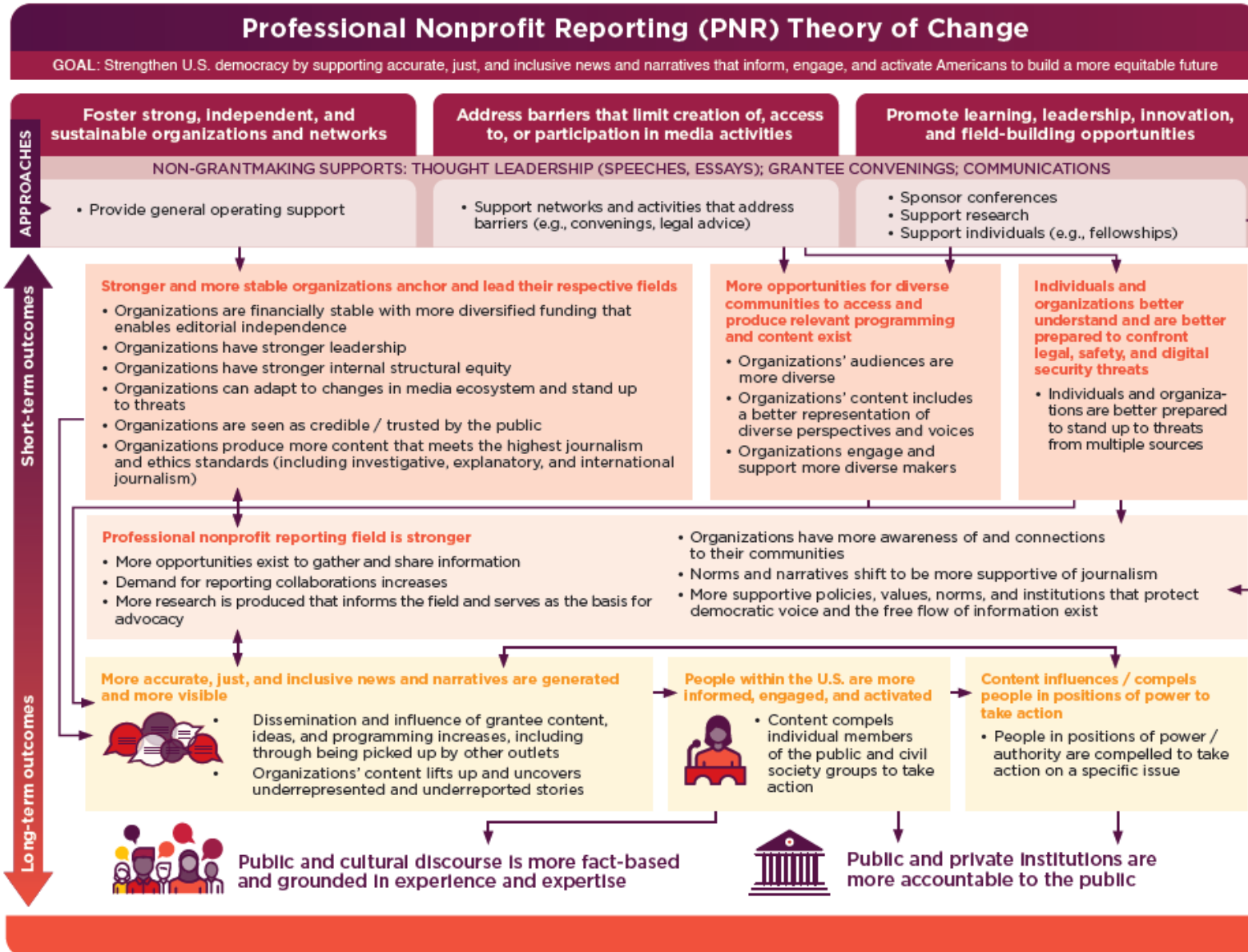
Annex 1: Data Collection Methods

Submitted to MacArthur Foundation Board November 2020
Published April 2021

CONTENTS

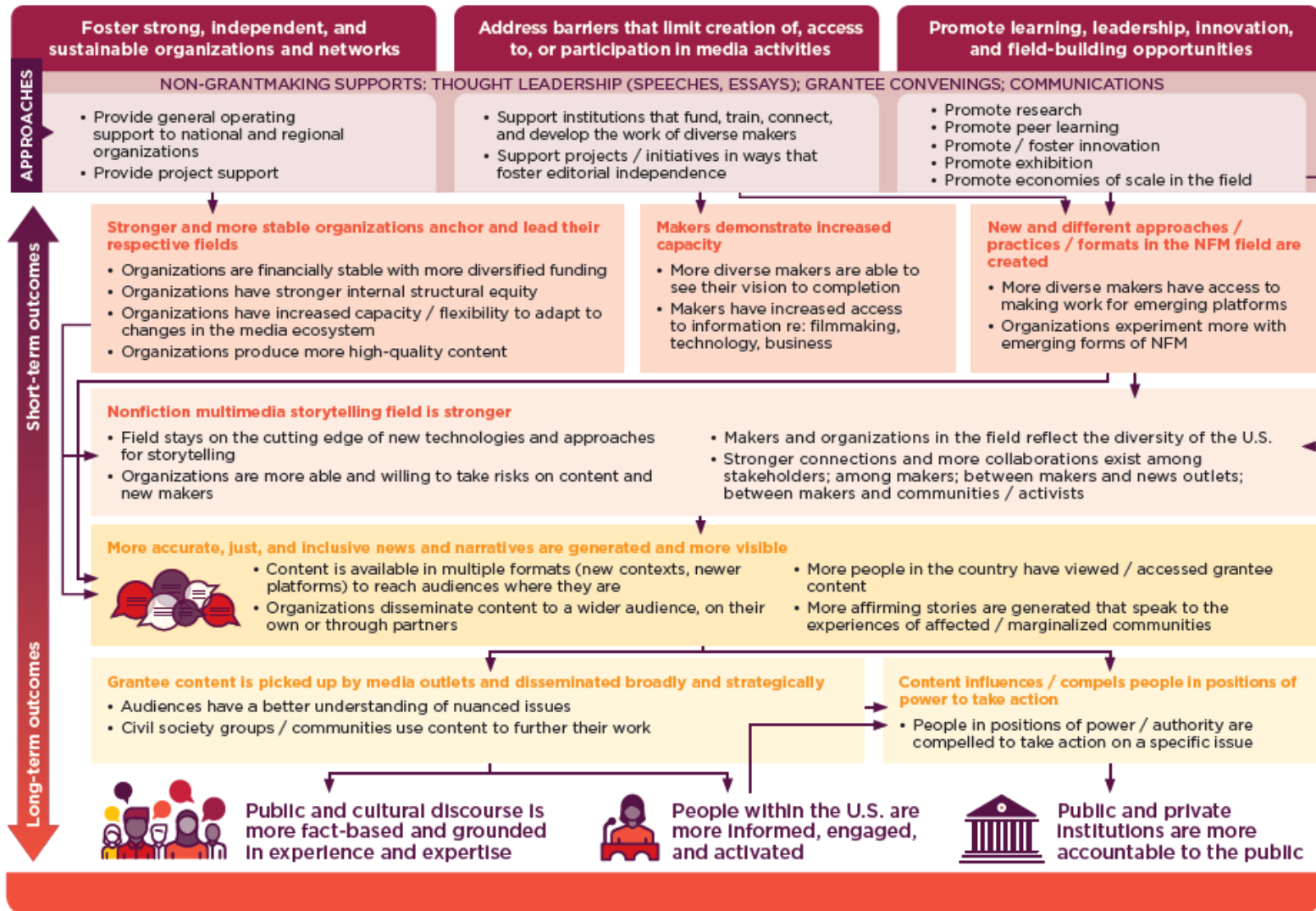
- A. Annex 1.1: Module-Level Theories of Change 3
- B. Annex 1.2: Assumptions, Challenges and Enabling Factors, and Known Unknowns 6
- C. Annex 1.3: Learning and Evaluation Timeline 10
- D. Annex 1.4: Complete List of Evaluation Questions..... 11
- E. Annex 1.5: Details on Data Collection Methods 15
- F. Annex 1.6: Data Collection Targets and Participation Rates 17
- G. Annex 1.7: Analysis Plan 19
- H. Annex 1.8: Limitations and Considerations 22

A. ANNEX 1.1: MODULE-LEVEL THEORIES OF CHANGE



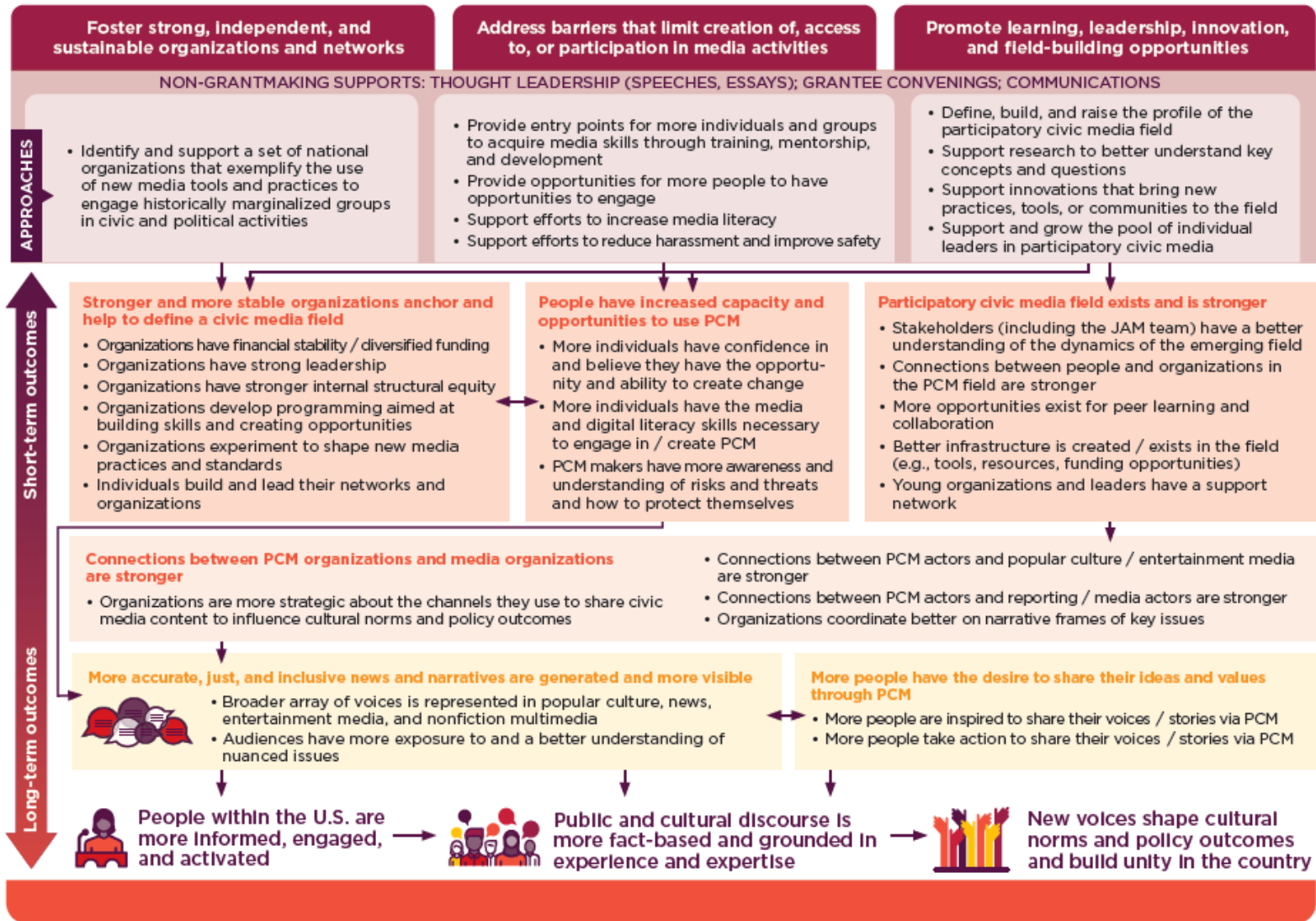
Nonfiction Multimedia Storytelling (NFM) Theory of Change

GOAL: Strengthen U.S. democracy by supporting accurate, just, and inclusive news and narratives that inform, engage, and activate Americans to build a more equitable future



Participatory Civic Media (PCM) Theory of Change

GOAL: Strengthen U.S. democracy by supporting accurate, just, and inclusive news and narratives that inform, engage, and activate Americans to build a more equitable future



B. ANNEX 1.2: ASSUMPTIONS, CHALLENGES AND ENABLING FACTORS, AND KNOWN UNKNOWNNS

ASSUMPTIONS

Underlying the Journalism and Media (JAM) strategy is a set of assumptions about how change happens. These assumptions need to hold true for the theory of change to be valid. By collecting both qualitative and quantitative data, this evaluation tested these assumptions to see if they held. Information on the current status of these assumptions is included in the “What We Are Learning About the Theory of Change” section of the Synthesis Report.

Assumptions within the Full Strategy

- The three modules **cohere and complement one another** to collectively influence change in journalism and media.
- Organizations that receive Foundation support will focus on building their **internal structural equity**.
- Stronger and more stable organizations – in particular, those that demonstrate internal structural equity – are better positioned to **build the capacity of and support diverse makers**.
- By supporting the work of diverse makers, **more accurate, just, and inclusive narratives will be generated** and more visible.
- The **public trusts journalism and media content** and will be informed, engaged, and activated by it.
- More accurate, just, and inclusive narratives **hold private and public institutions accountable**.

Assumptions within the Professional Nonprofit Reporting Module

- Professional nonprofit reporting (PNR) organizations will **build stronger connections with communities** in order to better tell their stories from their perspective, including working with journalists from the communities.
- **Research produced by grantee organizations** will be used by organizations in the field to further strengthen and stabilize their organizations, and serve as the basis for advocacy.
- Promoting **learning, leadership, innovation, and field-building** opportunities will contribute to shifting norms and narratives to be more supportive of journalism, as well as more supportive policies, values, norms, and institutions that protect democratic voice and the free flow of information.

Assumptions within the Nonfiction Multimedia Storytelling Module

- Grantee organizations provide the **types of support** that makers – particularly makers from historically underrepresented and marginalized communities – most need.

- By fostering strong, independent, and sustainable organizations and networks, nonfiction multimedia storytelling (NFM) organizations will become **stronger and more stable** and will lead their respective fields.
- Supporting **individual grantee organizations' capacity** and efforts to foster connections between grantee organizations will, together, contribute to a stronger NFM field.

Assumptions within the Participatory Civic Media Module

- Grantee organizations reach, engage, and are led by **people from historically underrepresented and marginalized groups**, supporting them with skill-building and tools to use participatory civic media in their communities.
- Promoting **learning, leadership, innovation, and field-building** opportunities will help a participatory civic media (PCM) field coalesce around shared practices.
- **Media organizations are willing to work with PCM organizations and makers** and share / provide a platform for their content in order to shift narratives.

CHALLENGES AND ENABLING FACTORS THAT MAY INFLUENCE THE STRATEGY

Contextual factors, including both challenges and enabling factors, have the potential to influence the success of a strategy. FSG reviewed these challenges and enabling factors through the evaluation. Information on these challenges and enabling factors is included in the landscape section of the synthesis report.

Challenges

There are a number of challenges within and related to the journalism and media sector that had the potential to influence the extent to which, when, and how progress has been made on JAM's strategic goals and desired outcomes. FSG noted the following challenges:

- The economics of the news and media business does not adequately support the amount of original, deeply researched, and well-crafted journalism and media that is necessary for a healthy democracy.
- Public trust in media – especially national media companies – is declining.
- News consumption is polarized, and people within the United States turn to a few media echo chambers. The purveyors of disinformation and media manipulation are multiplying and becoming increasingly sophisticated.

Enabling Factors

Other contextual factors had the potential to support the JAM strategy's progress toward goals and desired outcomes. As part of the Evaluation Framework, FSG reviewed these enabling factors to determine whether and how these factors supported the strategy. These factors included:

- Emerging social media and other technology tools have significantly reduced barriers to participation in public dialogue and have created pathways for greater citizen engagement in

civic and political affairs, particularly among people from historically underrepresented and marginalized groups and youth.

- There is increasing recognition that a free and independent press is a vital component of a working democracy, providing the information people need to exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens, illuminating the actions of institutions and people in power and their impact on the public, and creating a full and accurate record of events.
- The proliferation of new formats and platforms for creating and delivering media content has opened new pathways and increased demand for the types of media funded through the JAM strategy.

KNOWN UNKNOWNNS

In addition to assumptions that undergirded the JAM strategy and its modules, a number of unknown factors had the potential to influence the strategy's implementation and progress towards its desired outcomes. MacArthur defines "known unknowns" as contextual factors for which the strategy does not have information, but may influence the success of the strategy (positively or negatively). As part of the Evaluation Framework, FSG collected data and information about these "known unknowns" so that the JAM team has a better understanding of the extent to which and how these factors might be influencing the strategy. The following section describes "known unknowns," segmented into three categories: media consumption and behavior, media supply, and the impact of threats to media makers. FSG reviewed these categories due to their potential influence on the strategy. Information on these challenges is included in the "What We Are Learning About the Theory of Change" section of the synthesis report.

Media Consumption and Behavior

How and in what ways are younger people consuming and producing media? Most young people engage in media consumption and creation in ways that are markedly different from those of previous generations, often using corporate-owned platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. This information climate also affects how many people in the United States think about and engage in politics and culture.

How and in what ways is the media's credibility among the public changing? According to a 2016 Gallup poll, Americans' trust in the media "to report the news fully, accurately, and fairly" has fallen to its lowest levels since the survey started in 1972. Only one-third of respondents said they had a great deal or fair amount of trust in the media.¹

Will audiences continue to segregate themselves into echo chambers that reinforce their own beliefs? The proliferation of social media has made it easier for individuals to distance themselves from viewpoints that differ from their own. The Pew Research Center found that these echo chambers are

¹ Swift, A. (2016, September 14). Americans' Trust in Mass Media Sinks to New Low. Gallup. Available: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/195542/americans-trust-mass-media-sinks-new-low.aspx>.

created by individuals' desire to avoid confrontation in a negative political climate and a refusal to consider opposing viewpoints.²

Media Supply

What role do / should technology firms play in filtering what news their users see? Platforms and algorithms designed and controlled by corporations are increasingly dictating and influencing what people see and know about their community and world. In light of mis- and disinformation spreading on social media platforms, some are clamoring for these companies to perform verification or a fact-checking function. Advocates for freedom of expression argue that this would be a dangerous transfer of even more power to these largely opaque companies.

How will collapsing business models continue to affect media outlets? Legacy media, particularly newspapers and television news, find themselves in an increasingly competitive and commercial environment, often leading to business decisions that move them away from fulfilling the public service watchdog functions of a free and independent press.

Impact of Threats to Media Makers

What threats will journalists, media makers, and civic media organizations continue to experience (e.g., legal, physical, digital security)? Journalists and civic media organizations worldwide are being harmed and even killed for their reporting and sharing of views. In the foreword to the Committee to Protect Journalists' annual report, Christiane Amanpour describes the multitude of threats: "From government surveillance and censorship to computer hacking, from physical attacks to imprisonment, kidnapping and murder, the aim is to limit or otherwise control the flow of information — an increasingly complicated effort, with higher and higher stakes."³

² Duggan, M., & Smith, A. (2016, October 25). *The Political Environment on Social Media*. Pew Research Center: Internet, Science & Tech. Available: <http://www.pewinternet.org/2016/10/25/the-political-environment-on-social-media>.

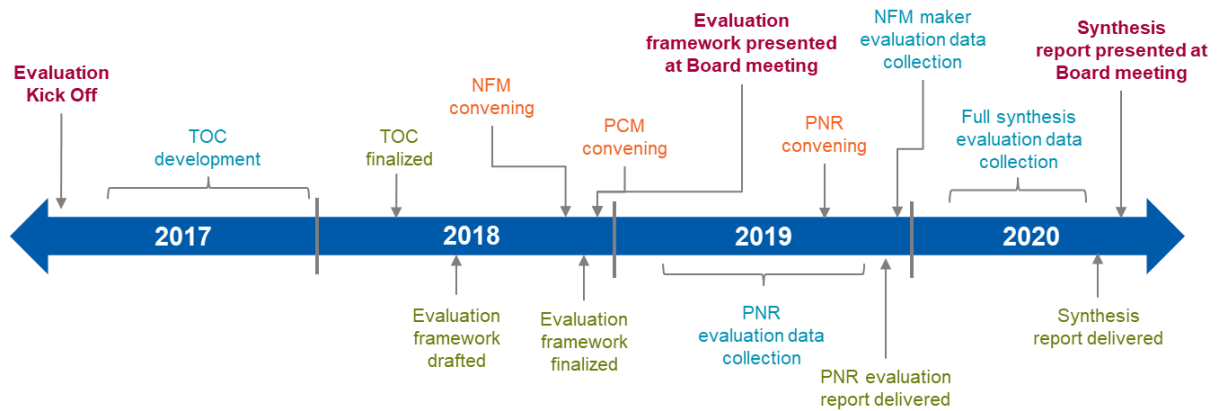
³ Gladstone, R. (2015, April 27). Journalists Facing Biggest Threats in Recent Times, Advocacy Group Says. The New York Times. Available: <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/28/world/middleeast/journalists-facing-biggest-threats-in-recent-times-advocacy-group-says.html>.

C. ANNEX 1.3: LEARNING AND EVALUATION TIMELINE

LEARNING AND EVALUATION TIMELINE

FSG began its role as the JAM team’s Evaluation and Learning Partner in January 2017 and spent the majority of 2017 and early 2018 developing and finalizing the JAM team’s theory of change. The Evaluation and Learning Plan was drafted in mid-2018 and finalized in December 2018, prior to being presented to the Board later that same month. A first round of data collection activities took place from February to September 2019 (PNR maker, expert, and funder data) followed by a second round from December 2018 to January 2020 (NFM maker data), and finally, a third round of data collection from May to July 2020 (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Evaluation and Learning Timeline



D. ANNEX 1.4: COMPLETE LIST OF EVALUATION QUESTIONS

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

A set of evaluation questions were developed using JAM's theory of change that address the **external landscape, feedback on implementation, and outcomes** of the JAM strategy. Sub-questions specific to each module were also developed to ensure the evaluation answered questions relevant to the strategy as a whole, as well as the each of the strategy's specific program areas. Ultimately, the evaluation and analysis were organized around the three guiding questions included in the synthesis report, but the complete list of evaluation questions was considered when designing the evaluation and associated data collection tools.

LANDSCAPE

1. *Landscape:*

To what extent and where in the external context is there a window of opportunity for this work and a role for MacArthur's investments to add value in this area?

Landscape questions sought to better understand the context of the JAM strategy so that the JAM team could understand how various contextual factors may influence their work. They included:

All Modules

- What is the broader media environment within which MacArthur's journalism and media work is situated?
- What is the funding landscape for journalism and media? Who are the key funders? How much and what do they fund? What are the key trends? To what extent is philanthropic support still needed into the future?
- What is the role of professional nonprofit reporting, nonfiction multimedia storytelling, and participatory civic media in a democracy? Why are they important? How do they influence the public, civic action, and policy and cultural change?
- How has technology impacted the production and distribution of professional nonprofit reporting, nonfiction multimedia storytelling, and participatory civic media?

Professional Nonprofit Reporting

- What are the major challenges currently facing the nonprofit journalism sector in these changing social, economic, and political contexts? How are funders responding to these challenges?

Nonfiction Multimedia Storytelling

- What is the nature of the support system for nonfiction media makers, and how does it influence the demographics of who becomes a maker? Where are there structural inequities in this support system?
- What is fundamentally different about visual and auditory narrative storytelling from print- / text-heavy reporting or storytelling? To what extent do these different modes translate into a different kind of awareness, understanding, empathy, or engagement?
- What is the demand for nonfiction media? What do we know about the demand and growing popularity of documentaries, podcasts, etc.?

Participatory Civic Media

- What types of organizations and groups are using participatory media as a means of engaging civically or politically (across the political spectrum)? In what ways do they engage and for what reasons?

FEEDBACK ON IMPLEMENTATION

2. Feedback on Implementation:

To what extent and in what ways are the JAM team's grantmaking and non-grantmaking activities supporting grantees in their work and contributing to building the field? What else might JAM consider doing to support grantees and to build the field?

Feedback questions explored strategy implementation and whether there were ways to improve internal processes and procedures. They included:

All Modules

- What types of funding strategies and vehicles have been most effective in supporting grantees' success and impact?
- To what extent are non-grantmaking activities helping grantees and the field to achieve outcomes? What else might JAM considering doing?

OUTCOMES

3. Outcomes:

What progress has been made to date towards the outcomes in the theory of change? To what extent is the progress suggestive of sustainable change in these outcome areas? What barriers or challenges exist that may inhibit sustainable change? What does this progress suggest regarding the viability and plausibility of the theory of change, including its timeline? To what

extent does that progress suggest that the current areas of media MacArthur is investing in are viable levers for strengthening and protecting U.S. democracy?

Outcome questions delved into the extent to which progress was made against the outcomes in the JAM theory of change. The included:

All Modules

- To what extent and in what ways has grantee capacity (e.g., financial stability, internal structural equity, preparedness for threats, etc.) changed during the timeframe of MacArthur's support?
- To what extent and in what ways did JAM contribute to changes in grantee capacity and field-level outcomes?
- To what extent is progress within and across modules suggestive of the long-term changes we expect to see in democracy in the United States?

Professional Nonprofit Reporting

- How are grantees becoming more aware of and connected to the communities on which they report? How has this changed their editorial / reporting process and content?
- To what extent and in what ways is the PNR field changing in terms of connectedness, collaboration, learning, and supportive norms, narratives, policies, and values?
- To what extent does grantees' content contribute to the generation and visibility of more accurate, just, and inclusive narratives in the media and in public discourse?
- To what extent and in what ways are grantees' audiences and the public becoming civically and politically engaged and active?
- To what extent and how is grantee content contributing to increased accountability of institutions and power-holders, both public and private?

Nonfiction Multimedia Storytelling

- To what extent and in what ways do grantee organizations acting as intermediaries contribute to building the capacity of diverse makers? What supports do makers still need?
- To what extent and how are organizations connecting to and collaborating with one another to support makers? Towards what goals are they working together? How are MacArthur's efforts contributing to this?
- How do grantees and filmmakers see themselves contributing to more accurate, just, and inclusive narratives, civic engagement, and the accountability of institutions? What are some examples of how they have been successful?

Participatory Civic Media

- How are grantee organizations activating and supporting everyday people as civic media makers, particularly those from historically underrepresented and marginalized groups? What

has been successful, and what capacities do organizations need to better support individuals with to become makers, particularly those from historically underrepresented and marginalized groups?

- To what extent and in what ways have grantee organization leaders' capacity changed? How connected do they feel to a network of other leaders? What forms of support do they still need?
- To what extent and in what ways is a field for PCM emerging? How are organizations connecting and collaborating with one another? How are the JAM strategy's efforts contributing to this?
- How do grantees see themselves and the makers associated with their organizations contributing to more accurate, just, and inclusive narratives, civic engagement, and the accountability of institutions? What are some examples of how they have been successful?

E. ANNEX 1.5: DETAILS ON DATA COLLECTION METHODS

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Primary Data

- **Key informant interviews:** FSG conducted semi-structured interviews with grantees, media makers,⁴ experts in fields relevant to the JAM strategy, funders of journalism and media, and MacArthur Foundation staff.
- **Grantee survey:** FSG administered two online surveys to grantee organizations during the evaluation period. The first survey was administered in April 2019 to a subset of 16 PNR grantee organizations. The second survey was administered to a subset of 19 PNR grantee organizations (no overlap with those surveyed in 2019), 25 NFM grantee organizations, and 25 PCM grantee organizations in March and May of 2020. The survey was first administered in March, but was paused as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. After much consideration, the JAM team requested data collection activities be reactivated in May. The survey was sent to grantees who had not completed the survey in March. The survey questions asked grantees about their current state, and the extent to which it had changed since the strategy refresh in mid-2015. Response rates to both surveys are included in **Annex 1.6**.
- **Convening observations:** FSG attended one in-person grantee convening per module during the evaluation period (NFM in September 2018; PCM in December 2018; and PNR in June 2019). FSG did not conduct formal data collection at any of the convenings, but took notes to inform our understanding of each module, grantees' engagement with JAM staff and one another, and the overall strategy. FSG also presented findings from the 2019 survey of PNR grantees at the PNR convening in June 2019.

Secondary Data

- **Secondary research:** To better understand the JAM landscape during the baseline period, as well as the external factors influencing the implementation and success of the JAM strategy during the strategy period, FSG conducted extensive research online (reviewing articles, websites, book chapters, transcripts and / or video of speeches / talks).
- **Grant report review:** FSG analyzed data from grantee annual and final reports submitted to the Foundation during the strategy period to understand grantee-level progress towards outcomes, and reviewed other documents (e.g., 2015 strategy memo) as appropriate. FSG also analyzed grantee applications and supplementary Grants Management System data to assess the strategy's implementation.
- **Media monitoring:** FSG hired Protagonist, a media monitoring consulting firm, to conduct an analysis of grantee-supported makers and content. The analysis included an assessment of the type of content created by grantees, the location of grantee-supported makers, quantity of

⁴ NFM makers only.

grantee-supported makers' connections with other grantee-supported makers, an analysis of grantee-created narrative frames, and the development of a measurement plan for "just and inclusive news and narratives."

F. ANNEX 1.6: DATA COLLECTION TARGETS AND PARTICIPATION RATES

GRANTEE INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Table 1: Grantee Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

2020 Grantee Interviews	All active grantees as of 3/1/2020; with exceptions made for grantees with grants expiring in late 2019; some exceptions were also made per JAM's request; groups interviewed in 2019 were generally excluded
2019 Grantee Interviews	Content-producing national and international newsrooms identified by the JAM team
2020 Grantee Surveys	All active grantees as of 3/1/2020; with exceptions made for grantees with grants expiring in late 2019; some exceptions were also made per JAM's request; groups interviewed in 2019 were generally excluded
2019 Grantee Surveys	Content-producing national and international newsrooms identified by the JAM team
Media Monitoring	All grantees with active grants from 1/1/2019 to 3/1/2020; some exceptions were also made per JAM's request
Grant Reports	All grants started or active between 2015 and June 2020; with x-grants excluded from majority of analyses

TARGET SAMPLE AND PARTICIPATION RATES

The following tables reflect targets and response rates that were influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic and civil unrest resulting from the police killing of George Floyd. These events delayed the start of data collection. As a result, 2020 targets were reduced by approximately 50 percent. Interviews with makers and civil society organizations were eliminated completely. Additionally, the complexity of the moment – reduced staff capacity, threats to funding, and active engagement on the frontlines of the racial justice movement – hampered response rates from grantees.

Table 2: Survey Targets and Participation Rates

Module	Total Grantees	2019			2020			Total Percent Target
		Target	Actual	% Target	Target	Actual	% Target	
NFM	31	0	0	N/A	25	10	40%	40%
PCM	35	0	0	N/A	25	9	36%	36%
PNR	41	16	16	100%	19	9	47%	71%
Grand Total	107	16	16	100%	69	28	41%	52%

Table 3: Interview Targets and Participation Rates

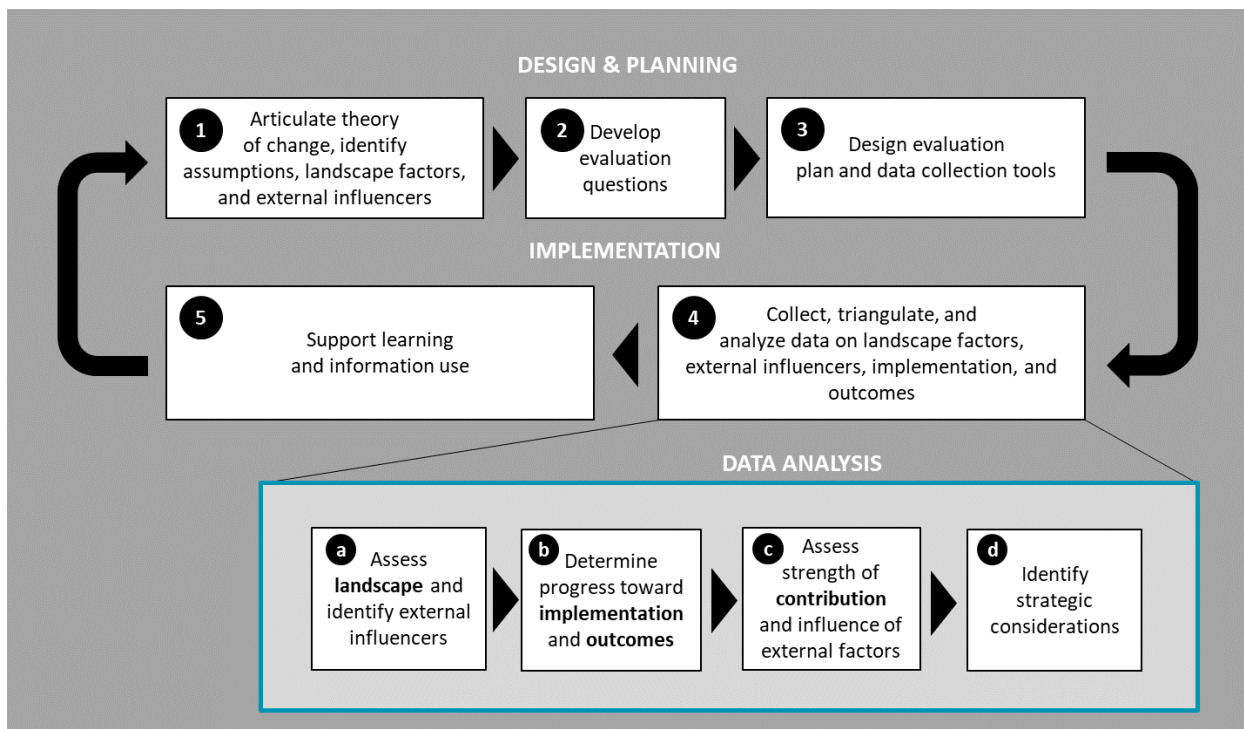
Module	Respondent Category	2019			2020			Total Percent Target
		Target	Actual	% Target	Target	Actual	% Target	
NFM	Expert	0	0	N/A	1	3	300%	300%
	Funder	0	0	N/A	3	3	100%	100%
	Grantee	0	0	N/A	8	5	63%	63%
	Makers	15	14	93%	0	0	N/A	93%
	<i>NFM Total</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>93%</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>92%</i>	<i>93%</i>
PCM	Expert	0	0	N/A	2	3	150%	150%
	Funder	0	0	N/A	2	1	50%	50%
	Grantee	0	0	N/A	8	6	75%	75%
	Makers	0	0	N/A	0	0	N/A	N/A
	<i>PCM Total</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>83%</i>	<i>83%</i>
PNR	Expert	4	4	100%	1	0	0%	80%
	Funder	8	8	100%	0	0	N/A	100%
	Grantee	16	15	94%	4	0	0%	75%
	Makers	0	0	N/A	0	0	N/A	N/A
	<i>PNR Total</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>96%</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>82%</i>
Grand Total	Expert	4	4	100%	4	6	150%	125%
	Funder	8	8	100%	5	4	80%	92%
	Grantee	16	15	94%	20	11	55%	72%
	Makers	15	14	93%	0	0	N/A	93%
	Total	43	41	95%	29	21	72%	86%

G. ANNEX 1.7: ANALYSIS PLAN

FSG's approach to analysis and interpretation followed four steps as outlined in **Figure 2**:

- a. Assessment of the landscape and identification of external influencers
- b. Determined progress toward outcomes, and strengths and challenges of implementation
- c. Assessment of strength of contribution and influence of external factors
- d. Overall assessment of progress and contribution

Figure 2: Journalism and Media Evaluation Process



Steps 4A and 4B: Assessment of the landscape, identification of external influencers, and assessment of progress toward implementation and outcomes

Analytic Methods

As part of steps 4a and 4b, FSG analyzed data using the following methods described below and summarized in **Table 8**:

- **Thematic analysis:** The majority of qualitative data (e.g., interview transcripts, grantee reports, grantee convening observation notes, other secondary data) were analyzed using thematic analysis.⁵ The FSG evaluation team coded qualitative data in Dedoose,⁶ a qualitative analysis software, using an a priori approach. FSG developed a codebook based on the evaluation's

⁵ Patton, M.Q. (2014). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice*. Sage Publications.

⁶ Dedoose Version 8.3.17, web application for managing, analyzing, and presenting qualitative and mixed method research data. (2020). Los Angeles, CA: SocioCultural Research Consultants, LLC www.dedoose.com.

questions and theory of change. Transcripts were divided among members of the evaluation team and cross-checked at regular intervals to ensure inter-coder reliability. FSG used the coded data to identify primary themes and sub-themes for the final analysis.

- **Descriptive statistics:** FSG analyzed quantitative data (e.g., survey responses) using SPSS, a statistical analysis software package.⁷ Data were cleaned using pre-determined data cleaning rules (e.g., omitting partially completed survey responses) and then analyzed using relevant descriptive statistics.
- **Topical, volume, and social media engagement analysis:** Media monitoring data were analyzed using machine learning models for topical analysis. Relevant metadata on content was pulled to conduct a volume and social engagement analysis, including a combination of narrative and relational analyses, as relevant, by Protagonist, an experienced narrative analytics firm.

Table 4: Summary of Analytic Methods

Data Source	Methods		
	Thematic analysis	Descriptive statistics	Topical, volume, and social media engagement analysis
Key informant interviews	X		
Grantee surveys	X	X	
Secondary research	X		
Observation of grantee convening	X		
Document review	X		
Media monitoring			X

Triangulation

FSG synthesized our data across the various data collection methods used to answer each evaluation question. The analysis included triangulation, such that data from multiple sources about the same topic or outcome were compared to surface themes across various methods.

Steps 4C and 4D: Assessment of strength of contribution, external factors, and overall assessment of contribution

Contribution

FSG assessed contribution for short-term and intermediate outcomes where **direct** contributions were expected based on JAM’s theory of change – namely organizational strength and stability. The

⁷ IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows (IBM Corp., Armonk, N.Y., USA)

importance of grantee connection and convening was also identified by grantees through thematic analysis. We did not conduct this analysis for long-term outcomes, where contributions were more **indirect**.

FSG utilized a process designed for complex contexts in which numerous factors (including those external to MacArthur) contributed to bringing about change. In these contexts, trying to demonstrate that one particular factor or strategy “caused” an effect is not appropriate. Rather, the aim of such analyses is to show if or how a program is an important influencing factor, and in what context, relative to what other factors.

H. ANNEX 1.8: LIMITATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

While data collection was rigorously planned for and conducted, there were certain limitations that may have influenced the amount of data collected. **Most notably, the COVID-19 pandemic and racial justice movement greatly influenced data collection and are discussed in detail in the methods section of the synthesis report.**

Primary Data: Key Informant Interviews and Grantee Surveys

- **Bias towards leadership perspective:** For the most part, leaders of grantee organizations were the participants in FSG’s interviews and respondents to grantee surveys. It is possible that leaders brought particular perspectives about their organization that may not have been representative of the views held by others at their organizations, particularly among those at the staff level. This may have been especially true for questions regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion with grantee organizations. FSG asked each interviewee for their role within the organization to determine whether they were sufficiently informed to provide information (e.g., leadership about staff experiences or vice versa), and to note any potential concerns about the validity of data collected (e.g., interviewee had a short tenure at the organization and did not have access to information). Triangulation with other sources allowed FSG to dig deeper and to help mitigate any such bias expressed by leaders during interviews or in response to the survey. In addition, FSG maintained confidentiality of all interview transcripts and survey responses, which likely encouraged more candid responses.
- **Recall bias or inability to speak to change over time:** For questions that asked about baseline periods, interviewees’ responses and survey respondents’ answers may have been subject to recall bias. FSG attempted to mitigate this bias through interview probes and the phrasing of survey questions (e.g., by asking questions about change over time rather than a particular instance in time in the past) and triangulation among sources. It was also possible that survey respondents were not part of the organization at the beginning of the strategy period; FSG included a “don’t know” response option for this possibility and excluded these answers from analysis. Similarly, some organizations may not have existed at the beginning of the strategy period; FSG included a “not applicable” option and excluded these answers from analysis.
- **Participant choice to include or omit information:** Another limitation was that interviewees chose what to mention about their own and their organizations’ experiences, work, and influence. They may have chosen to respond in ways that put themselves and their organizations in a positive light. This was a potential limitation to the validity of survey data as well. Interview probes and triangulation among sources allowed FSG to mitigate this bias to a certain extent.

Secondary Data: Secondary Research, Convening Observations, and Document Review

- **Availability, quality, and accuracy of data:** The main limitation for secondary research and document review (which was primarily focused on grantee report data) was that the availability,

quality, and accuracy of data were out of FSG's control. For secondary research, the limitations varied by source; for example, the availability and age of data included in the source or potential biases in reporting or the author's perspective. FSG attempted to mitigate these limitations by searching for a diverse set of sources that represented multiple perspectives. As for grantee reports, grantees provided these data to the Foundation rather than to FSG, and the contents of reports were in response to a different set of questions than FSG was pursuing through the evaluation. While both secondary research and reviewing grantee report surfaced potential themes, triangulation of data through other methods (e.g., grantee survey) was required in order to meet our levels of rigor. Data availability was also a potential limitation for FSG's observations of grantee convenings. While FSG used an observation rubric with questions to guide our convening observations, the availability of data was limited to what grantees shared, as we did not systematically ask questions of or collect data from grantees. Thus, while this method helped to surface some potential themes related to grantee organizations and the landscape, triangulation of data through other methods (e.g., interviews) was required in order to meet levels of rigor.