



**THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP**  
Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Public Interest News Gathering Program opens for business**

The Morrison Government has today opened applications for the \$50 million Public Interest News Gathering (PING) program to support commercial television, radio and newspaper businesses in regional Australia during COVID-19.

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, called on all eligible news outlets to apply.

“We know that public interest journalism keeps communities informed and connected, and it is especially important for people living in regional and remote areas.

“PING will provide support to media businesses so they can continue to deliver quality news to the communities they serve.

“Many Australian media companies are doing it tough right now, especially in regional areas, and the challenges have been amplified by COVID-19,” Minister Fletcher said.

Funding under PING can be used for a broad range of activities that relate to the production and distribution of public interest journalism, such as staff wages, training and technology or website upgrades.

Applications will be considered through a demand-driven grant process. Organisations that satisfy the criteria – producing Australian public interest journalism with a commitment to accuracy, accessibility and broad relevance – will be eligible.

“The PING program is one of several relief measures the Government is delivering to support journalism, particularly as media organisations face increased challenges due to COVID-19. We’ve also fast-tracked \$5 million of funding from the Regional and Small Publishers Innovation Fund, temporarily suspended content quota obligations for commercial and subscription television, and provided spectrum tax fee relief for 12 months for commercial television and radio broadcasters,” Minister Fletcher said.

Applications for the PING program will close on 29 May 2020. The guidelines and application process is available on the Government’s central grants website: [grants.gov.au](https://grants.gov.au)

Regional newspaper publishers who have separately applied for funding under the latest round of the [Regional and Small Publishers Innovation Fund](#), administered by the Australian Communications and Media Authority, are also free to apply for funding under the PING program.

**Media contact:**

Brad Hatch | 0448 162 679 | [Brad.Hatch@communications.gov.au](mailto:Brad.Hatch@communications.gov.au)

Rebecca Papillo | 0439 892 771 | [Rebecca.Papillo@communications.gov.au](mailto:Rebecca.Papillo@communications.gov.au)