



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

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **More funds flow for public interest journalism**

The Morrison Government today announced that 41 publishers will receive a share of \$5 million in the 2020 round of the Regional and Small Publishers Innovation Fund.

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, said the funding will help small metropolitan and regional publishers adapt to unprecedented challenges in the current media environment.

“While the media industry has been going through a significant and sustained transition period, COVID-19 has put the delivery of quality journalism under further pressure,” Minister Fletcher said.

“The grants will help successful recipients continue to generate public interest journalism through investment digital initiatives, technical upgrades and staff training, as well as supporting salaries.”

“Two-thirds of the funding will go to regional publishers and the balance will go to small metropolitan publishers.”

The Innovation Fund, which began in 2018, is administered by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA). It is part of the Government's Regional and Small Publishers Jobs and Innovation Package, designed to boost sustainability and the ongoing production of news in the modern media environment.

Successful recipients include:

- GJ Adams Trust, publisher of *The Shepparton Adviser* in Victoria, which will receive up to \$238,086 to increase the reach and production of public interest journalism both in print and online by developing a website and engaging new staff.
- The Trustee for Parkes-Brown Family Trust, publisher of the *Glasshouse Country & Maleny News* in Queensland, which will receive up to \$108,200 to develop a new website portal, digital content publishing and revenue generation platform.
- Newstate Media Newcastle Pty Ltd, publisher of the *Newcastle Weekly* in New South Wales, which will receive up to \$132,711 to expand its news coverage, employ new staff and conduct sales training for print and digital media.

“In recognition of the significant challenges posed by COVID-19, this round was expedited to help small and regional publishers keep delivering news and information to local communities at this critical time,” Minister Fletcher said.

The ACMA worked closely with an independent advisory committee to assess applications through a

competitive grants process. The ACMA will work with successful applicants to develop and enter into grant agreements as soon as practicable. The full list of recipients is available on ACMA's website at: <https://www.acma.gov.au/regional-and-small-publishers-innovation-fund>.

In addition to the \$5 million Innovation Fund grants, the Government is providing \$50 million to 107 regional broadcasters and publishers through the Public Interest News Gathering (PING) program. Close to one third of grant agreements have been executed. Information on successful PING grantees will be available on the GrantConnect website within 21 days of agreements being executed.

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