

Nebraska Journalism Trust

Policy 1: Journalistic Integrity, Donation Acceptance & Transparency

The Nebraska Journalism Trust is committed to journalistic independence and nonpartisanship. Through journalism, the organization helps Nebraskans understand a wide variety of public policy issues, aiming to enlighten public debates and to bring a diversity of viewpoints to those debates. In doing so, the Nebraska Journalism Trust shall not take institutional positions on matters of public policy and shall not expressly advocate for those positions.

Notwithstanding, the Nebraska Journalism Trust relies on the tenets of independent journalism to fulfill its mission. Therefore, the organization is an advocate for nonpartisan press freedoms and protections, including the First Amendment, freedom of information, and transparency in public institutions, as well as the rights of people to participate in the democratic process.

As a nonprofit organization, the Nebraska Journalism Trust shall not conduct lobbying or otherwise attempt to influence legislation (within the meaning of Internal Revenue Code Section 4945(d)(1)), nor shall the organization seek to influence the outcome of any specific public election or to carry on, directly or indirectly, any voter registration drive (within the meaning of the Internal Revenue Code Section 4945 (d)(2)).

Journalistic Integrity

Donations or promises of donations shall not influence the editorial decision-making process. Donors may have the opportunity to sponsor or underwrite specific topic areas, events, or reporting modalities, such as data-focused reporting or watchdog reporting. However, donors and prospective donors shall not have special influence over the content, sources, or tone of the journalism. Similarly, any fiscal sponsor, vendor, or volunteer shall not have special influence over editorial decisions, other than the same opportunity to suggest story ideas that is made available to all Nebraskans.

To the extent possible, the Nebraska Journalism Trust divides work between staff and volunteers primarily responsible for journalism and those primarily responsible for fundraising and other business operations.

Per the organization's bylaws, members of the Board of Directors shall avoid exercising control over journalistic decisions, including, but not limited to, selection of story ideas, publication dates and formats, and publication partners.

Donation Acceptance & Transparency

Accepting financial support shall not constitute an endorsement of donors or their products, services, or opinions. Accepting financial support shall not confer editorial influence. The Nebraska Journalism Trust does not regard financial support as an endorsement of specific editorial decisions.

Building trust with audience members, donors, and partners requires transparency. The Nebraska Journalism Trust:

- Shall not provide confidentiality or anonymity to any institutional or individual donor who contributes more than \$5,000 in a calendar year.
- Shall publish on its website the names of all institutional and individual donors who contribute more than \$5,000 in a calendar year. This public list shall be updated at least annually.
- Donors who contribute \$5,000 or less in a calendar year may choose to give anonymously or confidentially, but without donors making this express preference, donors may be publicly recognized.
- In any calendar or fiscal year, the Nebraska Journalism Trust shall not accept anonymous or confidential donations in aggregate that total more than 5% of its annual revenue.
- The Nebraska Journalism Trust will publish its most recently filed IRS Form 990 on its website. When a Form 990 is not available, the organization will post similarly detailed financial information, including a balance sheet, statement of activities, and statement of functional expenses, within a reasonable timeframe after these documents are finalized.
- The organization will also post online other key corporate documents, including its articles of incorporation, bylaws, and Board of Directors roster.

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