

Minutes
IRE Board of Directors
June 18, 2020
Video Meeting

With IRE Board President Cheryl W. Thompson presiding, the meeting of the IRE board of directors was called to order at 2 p.m. EDT on June 18, 2020.

In addition to Thompson, the following board members were present: Vice President Lee Zurik, Secretary Jill Riepenhoff, Treasurer Jodi Upton, Nicole Vap, Steven Rich, Matt Dempsey, Jennifer LaFleur, Norberto Santana Jr., Jodie Fleischer, Bethany Barnes, Cindy Galli, Brian Rosenthal.

Staff members in attendance: Executive Director Doug Haddix, Deputy Executive Director Denise Malan and Director of Partnerships Chris Vachon.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Motion and second by Jill Riepenhoff and Lee Zurik, respectively, the board approved the minutes from the June 9, 2020 board meeting with the following corrections:

- **Jodi Fleischer's name was not included among those voting in favor of joining a letter. It was an email vote and her name was omitted, but her vote was not.**
- **Chris Ingalls' name, one of the Don Bolles Medal recipients. was misspelled.**

Executive Director Doug Haddix welcomed the approximately 40 people joining the first IRE virtual board meeting via the Zoom webinar platform.

Jodie Upton noted that because the Endowment report (see reports) it should go earlier on the agenda. Will be moved to after governance.

BUDGET

Haddix welcomed members and noted this is the first virtual board meeting and to refer to the board packet.

Denise Malan monitored chat/questions.

Haddix noted the work of Heather Feldman Henry in developing the budgets. Budget report is included with the board packet.

Haddix reported that he and IRE's financial officer prepared three budgets for fiscal year 2021 due to the pandemic. The budget scenarios are as follows:

- A) All IRE trainings are virtual
- B) A limited amount of IRE trainings are in-person
- C) Most IRE trainings are in-person

In each scenario, it is forecasted that the organization will break even or have a small surplus.

For fiscal year 2020, the organization is ending with a tiny surplus thanks to unanticipated revenue, cost-savings and the loan from the Payment Protection Plan. He referred to a [blog post](#) outlining the budget details.

Haddix explained the columns in the budget report.

In preparing the fiscal year 2021 budget, Haddix sought advice from the past two IRE executive directors, Brant Houston and Mark Horvit. Not only do they offer historical perspective, but they were also managing the organization during challenging times. Houston after 9/11 and Horvit during the 2008-09 recession. "We had a very fruitful video meeting."

Budget scenarios summary as follows (see budget report for full details): A: All virtual training, B: Combination virtual/in-person, C: Mostly in-person (that scenario is not going to happen). Under each scenario IRE will break even or come out a bit ahead.

The budgets include three national conferences in one fiscal year because the 2021 conference was delayed to later in the calendar year. Not the norm for IRE. After the 2020 virtual conference, IRE will have a better view of membership numbers and conference participation in order to hone in on the budget numbers. IRE also is waiting to hear back on some grant renewals.

Bethany Barnes said the board typically has input into the conference registration rate because of fiduciary responsibility and affordability for members. She said she was surprised to see in the announcement today the \$250 registration after early-bird registration and asked for an explanation

Haddix said that IRE typically has a conference tiered pricing structure and that the suggested base rate of \$200 was shared with the board last week. He went on to say that the tiered pricing was added afterward to follow suit with IRE's traditional tiered pricing model. They usually go up by \$50 from early bird to later to on-sight registration. He also explained that IRE is open only to members so it is focused only on journalism. Haddix explained that because people would not have travel expenses, he did not see it as a problem. He said he did not realize the board wanted to see the tiered pricing levels too. He explained the early bird deadline will help IRE with behind the scenes logistics such as verifying memberships and having enough "seats" in the virtual platform. In addition, a virtual conference/platform is a first for the organization and staff wants to be sure it is a positive experience for the members.

Barnes expressed concern that the board had not heard about the \$250 rate previously.

Haddix apologized and explained that conference registration is always a tiered rate and he did not think it would be a problem.

Brian Rosenthal said that the issue was not "why do we have an early bird rate?" Rather, the issue is that the board was told the rate was \$200 and that the early bird rate would be less than that. He said he wished there had been discussion. We have members for whom \$250 is a lot of money and we need to make sure they can access the conference. He asked that the board reopen that discussion..

Haddix responded saying the rate could be changed; however, it would affect the proposed budgets. He added that he thinks an early bird cut-off is necessary to incentivize members not to wait until the last minute to register. He plans to open registration by mid-July and have most people registered by the end of August. Having an incentive to sign up early. In addition, Haddix shared that he sought input from inside and outside the organization regarding the registration rate and input landed in the \$200-\$250 range. He also pointed out that the conference will have high values for members because they can go to all of the sessions. We feel strongly that there needs to be an incentive to register early to help with planning.

Jodi Fleischer commented that she believes a number of members will be paying out of pocket, for the IRE conference, for the first time. As a result, we should keep the cost as low as possible and consider a financial hardship fee waiver or discount.

To provide some perspective, Haddix added that the recent IRE virtual mini-bootcamps (two days) were priced at \$250 and they sold out quickly. We heard from people in smaller markets that they thought it was affordable for the training they were getting.

Matt Dempsey said the board sets the rate and the board was told \$200, not \$250. The idea is that the board approves the final rates. He said he felt there were several instances this year that his choice was to agree or cause a problem.

Haddix apologized and said registration is not open yet so the registration rates can be changed.

Norberto Santana added that diversity equals affordability. He suggested that IRE offer tiered pricing based on the size of a news organization.

Haddix responded that it is difficult to determine because membership data does not include newsroom size. It would have to be checked by hand.

Jennifer LaFleur said there is a cost for the platform which needs to be taken into consideration. She encouraged IRE to explain what is included in the registration rate to members and potential attendees. She suggested an action item to form a group of board members to make a recommendation regarding the conference registration rate.

Cindy Galli said she appreciated the context. She thought the \$200 rate – we need to get the word out about the value of that. I would like to consider a middle ground, something that is less of a jump.

Rosenthal said several of us were surprised. It's an exciting opportunity for IRE. We have an ability to bring in new people and they may stay with IRE. He also suggested creating a working group and reporting back.

Zurik said the board didn't express concerns last week about the \$200 and if the rate is changed, it will have an overall budget impact. He noted that the virtual conference provides new opportunities. He thought studying it further and coming up with a good plan was the path forward.

Motion and second by Brian Rosenthal and Jennifer LaFleur, respectively, the board approved the creation of a working group of board members, to include the treasurer, to decide on a reasonable conference rate and report back by July 1.

Upton said that if the IRE 2020 conference rate is dropped \$50, it's a loss of \$30,000 per conference. The current proposed budgets include a small surplus and small raises for staff. IRE should track liability when it comes to staff vacation/sick time as that is a liability for a nonprofit organization. Haddix said that IRE does monitor that. He also said that the University does limit vacation accrual.

Zurik said that staff raises (a 2% pool) will be evaluated based on budget performance over the year. The two percent pool equals about \$18,000. Since the staff are employees of Mizzou and since Mizzou has a hiring freeze, the possible raises would be paid as a one-time payment. In addition, the possible raises would take place toward the end of the year in order to evaluate budget performance.

Motion and second by Jodi Upton and Jennifer LaFleur, respectively, the board approved the preliminary fiscal year 2021 budget.

Rosenthal noted that the virtual conference cost on the budget has a cost of \$158,000. He asked for clarification of those costs. Henry said that the bulk of the cost is for Pathable, the webinar platform, with additional costs for tech support. Haddix noted that the platform cost goes up if we have more attendees. That budget line does not include staff.

Fleischer asked if we could know the threshold when the price increases. Malan said that is 3,000 and said we would have to get a new proposal.

Dempsey said that knowing the increased costs helps inform the decision on setting conference rates.

BOARD-DESIGNATED FUND

Haddix reported the auditors have asked the board to adopt language for board-designated funds in order to have something in writing stating what funds will be used for.

Motion and second by Jill Riepenhoff and Cheryl W. Thompson, respectively, the board approved the following:

Funds received from corporations, foundations, organizations and individuals for the IRE Journalist of Color Reporting Fellowship will be used to support expenses of the program. Those expenses for selected Fellows include, but are

not limited to: IRE membership fees; data services fees; and registration fees, travel and lodging for an IRE data journalism boot camp, the annual NICAR data journalism conference and the IRE national investigative journalism conference.

CONTEST COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee chair Jennifer LaFleur presented proposed rule changes, communication updates and questionnaire which are outlined in the attached Contest Committee Report.

Motion and second by Jennifer LaFleur and Matt Dempsey, respectively, to approve the contest committee report with the exception of the recommendation to limit the number of finalists put forth to the judges and the amendment to question #8 about disqualification, which will be discussed at the October board meeting. The board approved the motion.

Discussion:

Galli asked whether we had more entries this year. Lauren said there were fewer entries in the 2019 conference. The large text/online had more than 100 entries and six screeners. That is why they sent so many put forth. They didn't want things to fall through the cracks.

Zurik noted that sometimes screeners send stuff forward because they want another set of eyes on it. He said he feels like five finalists and one winner is a better number. It's good if we can encourage and recognize good work. He also noted that fewer finalists could discourage people from entering.

Fleischer suggested the possibility of renewing the innovation category.

Riepenhoff said she wasn't sure what the right number of finalists should be. This is the chance for small news organizations to get recognized. She said she wanted additional discussion on the disqualification language. Where do you draw the line?

LaFleur noted that it provides an educational opportunity for helping others overcome pushback.

Rosenthal noted that we need more specific language about pushback.

Barnes noted that screeners had issues with putting partnerships into the proper categories.

Fleischer noted the need to clarify to screeners that their decision-making is important. LaFleur noted that those disputes should be elevated to contest coordinator or chair. Fleischer also suggested adding a category for COVID coverage.

Zurik proposed adopting the full report and moving the question about the number of entries and disqualification to the October board retreat.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE REPORT (see the attached full committee)

Committee chair Lee Zurik discussed a suggestion to the executive director's evaluation process in which IRE conducts the executive director's evaluation in January/February before the Mizzou evaluation which is done each spring.

Upton suggested including some wording related to salary comparisons.

Motion and second by Jodi Upton and Lee Zurik, respectively, the board approved to adopt the following for 2021:

IRE REVIEW – The President, Vice President, and Treasurer prepare a review. The full Executive Committee will sign off on that review. The review is then sent to the full board and the Executive Director. The full board is able to comment, but not change the review. This review takes place at least one month prior to the date the Executive Director's Missouri review is due and includes a salary comparison. The Executive Director will be presented with the review by the full IRE Board in Executive Session.

MISSOURI REVIEW - The IRE review is used as a guide for the Missouri review. IRE will present the minimum amount of information needed to Missouri in that review. The President prepares this review and the full Executive Committee needs to sign off on it.

Zurik said the committee discussed the possibility of creating a board travel policy. The organization does not want to lose good board candidates due to travel money challenges. He asked if there is currently a budget line item for such support or if a "board of directors travel" line item would need to be added to the budget.

Thompson added that past practice is that if someone needed financial support, they could ask the executive director. It did not apply to events without a board meeting, such as NICAR.

Fleischer asked if criteria should be created.

Zurik said it would be difficult to ask for proof of need. We hope the honor system will work.

Rich noted that right now, no one uses it. He suggested that this practice be routinely evaluated regularly to be sure it is not abused.

Rosenthal asked if conference registration would be included.

Zurik said they could add that. We need to consider adding some language if there is a budget line for this.

Nicole noted that the intent was to make sure people can attend meetings. The expense of trips is the biggest issue for people running for the board.

Dempsey noted that the language is not clear whether conference registration should be included. Adding a budget line item would make it easier to track.

Thompson said it was for official business, which would not include NICAR. Haddix said it was generally past practice. Zurik added that if funds are available it also could be available for NICAR.

Riepenhoff said it would be important to tell new board members each year. It doesn't put Doug in an awkward position.

LaFleur said they don't want to make cost a deterrent for people running for the board.

Thompson said it would be helpful to journalists of color and those who work for smaller organizations.

Upton shared she is more comfortable with a cap on the amount. She suggested creating an endowment for this in order to not drain the budget. If we use an endowment \$25,000, the minimum required by the University of Missouri for an endowment, would generate \$1,000/year. We have several small accounts that are still quite small.

Rosenthal asked that registration be included in the funding.

Motion and second by Lee Zurik and Cheryl W. Thompson, respectively, the board approved that if a board member's employer won't support travel and/or conference registration for IRE business, and there's a need for a full or partial subsidy, that money is available to members. Board members do not need to prove there is a need - this is an honor system. The request goes to the President. The President, Vice President, and Treasurer will determine if the funding request is fulfilled. If so, the President will communicate with the financial officer. Money will be available for board members for the Annual Conference and fall board retreat. If the budget allows it, funds would also be available for the NICAR Conference.

The staff and treasurer will come back in the fall with a budget and plan to be discussed at retreat.

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

See the full report [here](#).

Committee chair Jodi Upton reported the endowment sits at \$4.3 million. IRE typically has access to approximately \$180,000 annually in investment earnings, but we can access only \$140,000 due to what is going on with Knight fund (see below). The committee met with the investment advisor and he shared that it is difficult to find time high yielding funds at this time. Due to market instability and COVID-19, IRE is earning 2.5-3%. The organization typically invests in conservative, slow growth funds. IRE has never drawn on the principal.

Zurik asked for more clarification on what the advisor recommended. Upton said that because we are conservative, we are seeing slow growth.

Upton went on to discuss the Knight Endowment. There is a formula for the endowment which is set by the auditors. Some years ago, the formula was "off" and as a result, IRE plays catch-up each year with the endowment in order to hit a certain mark. The parameters of the endowment seem unclear to the committee and they would like some clarification from the Knight Foundation; however, there are other grants from the Knight Foundation which need their attention first.

The committee is looking for a directive from the board and as a result a **motion and second by Jodi Upton and Lee Zurik, respectively, the board approved to:**

- 1. Continue the current investment strategy with a re-evaluation in six months.**
- 2. Move \$637 in 'orphaned' donations to Pulliam to either the endowment or investment fund to support the resource center**
- 3. Investigate internally with university officials, or speak to the Knight Foundation, about the inflation adjustment requirement which prevents us -- year over year -- from using the fund.**
- 4. The Committee is tasked with protecting IRE's Endowment, but the definition of the endowment and the spending protocol between the reserve fund and the previously earned income is unclear. The Committee is to research the following:**
 - a. What is the endowment fund? Is it only the original principle, or does it include reinvested income from previous years?**
 - b. What is the spending protocol between the Reserve Fund and the earned income from previous years (reinvested in the endowment)? That is, if the earned income is not part of the endowment, which fund is used first?**

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS

The board was asked to consider the president's nominations for two-year terms on the Endowment Committee. As per IRE bylaws, the IRE treasurer serves as chair of the committee, which can include only one additional IRE board member. The bylaws set the committee at five members.

Rosenthal asked why the committee was the same except for the change of one person.

Motion and second by Lee Zurik and Nicole Vap, respectively, the board approved to accept Thompson's nominations of: Norberto Santana Jr., Laura Frank, Corey Johnson and Zaneta Lowe.

Note: July 6, the board approved adding Jennifer Forsyth to the committee and moving Lowe to another committee.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Thompson said it was a challenging year and as long as we continue to work together, we can accomplish great things. She commended staff for pivoting so quickly to webinars and virtual bootcamps. She praised the fact that IRE will end the fiscal year with a small surplus. Finally, she thanked Nicole Vap for her six years on the board and

Vap said a few words including her recommendation that members should strongly consider running for the board.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Haddix thanked the staff for their efforts to quickly pivot after the pandemic hit to create webinars and online boot camps for members.

Haddix highlighted new initiatives such as:

- IRE webinar series which trained 4,300 people during 16 webinars since March 25th (7,300 registered for these webinars). IRE could not have trained this many people in-person in this same time frame. The series is sponsored by Inasmuch Foundation.
- Virtual mini-bootcamps (two days) debuted during the pandemic. The first one sold out so quickly that another one was added to the schedule. The second one also sold out quickly. As a result, IRE is planning to offer one mini-bootcamp per month for the foreseeable future.
- IRE's annual bootcamp training of the Dow Jones News Fund (DJNF) moved to a virtual format with much success.
- Before the pandemic, IRE conducted training in 10 small newsrooms on data tools. This program is supported by Google News Initiative.
- After the pandemic began, IRE kicked off a membership campaign to help with membership numbers since many join when they sign up for the annual conference or other in-person trainings.
- A dramatic overhaul of NICAR-Learn took place during the pandemic. As a service to all journalists, it is now being offered for free for members and non-members alike. 330 people signed up in the first month of it being available at no cost.
- An updated version of the Investigative Reporter's Handbook has been published. The authors are past IRE executive directors Brant Houston and Mark Horvit.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit Committee

Committee chair Steven Rich reported that IRE has never had a bad audit and that the 2019 audit was the best audit for the organization. One deficiency from the auditors, IRE finances run through one person and there should be more checks and balances incorporated into the organization's financial processes by adding an additional layer. All deficiencies from the previous audit have been remedied or are in the process of being remedied. IRE will be getting a new auditor at the same firm.

Conference Committee

Because of conference delay, work will be moved to the next committee.

Member Services Committee

Committee chair Jill Riepenhoff asked committee members Barnes and Rosenthal to share their initiatives. The committee decided it did not want anyone who was running for the board to send out emails. They have been emailing recently lapsed members asking them to renew their memberships. They sent about 1,300 emails and felt their messages were well received. Bethany said they discussed developing a remote mentoring program. Rosenthal asked that the committee explore a member survey.

Public Engagement Committee

Committee chair Matt Dempsey reported on the committee's activities such as:

- Creating a response template
- Signing on to several statements
- Nominating and confirming the Don Bolles recipient

Dempsey feels the next committee and board should discuss the signing on to amicus briefs in the future in terms of the cost for the lawyer to review them and ways to reduce the amount of time it takes to work through amicus briefs.

The function of this committee will move to the Governance Committee in the future.

NEW BUSINESS

Dempsey said he'd like to see an improvement in board/staff communication as well as board/member communication. He feels there is a lag time between meetings and the approval/posting of board meeting minutes. In addition, he feels there were times when the board was brought in at the end of an issue rather than at the beginning. He indicated this is not a reflection of the staff. He said he believes the IRE board is a governing board, not an advisory board. He asked if this issue should be taken up by the governance committee.

Santana suggested the governance committee is the appropriate place for this discussion. Rosenthal said these are unprecedented times, there are lots of decisions being made and there is still work to be done in the areas of transparency and communication. Barnes inquired if the best place for this discussion is the retreat, the governance committee or the next board meeting. Zurik agreed with Santana and Rosenthal that this topic should go to the new governance committee.

LaFleur suggested Governance take up the communication issues. Zurik said the committee could then present something at the October retreat. Riepenhoff said that she believes the topic should go to the membership committee. Upton said the issue can go to multiple committees.

LaFleur asked that the Governance Committee discuss adding one or more appointed members to the board in cases where we need expertise or to increase diversity.

Fleischer asked about joining the working group on conference rates. Thompson asked for emails from those interested in participating. Rosenthal said he was interested.

Zurik also said he was in favor of discussing adding appointed members and that they also discussed the previous topic of lengthening board terms.

Nicole said a goodbye and closing remarks. Board members and Haddix reminded her that one never really leaves IRE.

Motion and second by Nicole Vap and Cheryl W. Thompson, respectively, the board approved adjourning at 5:10 p.m.

The video of this meeting is available [online](#).

AGENDA: IRE Board of Directors meeting

2-5 p.m. EDT June 18, 2020 | Zoom video meeting

ACTION ITEMS

- **BUDGET for fiscal 2020-21** -- IRE Executive Director Doug Haddix & IRE Financial Officer Heather Feldmann Henry
 - **ACTION:** Adopt preliminary fiscal 2021 IRE budget
- **Board-designated fund**
 - **ACTION:** Consider this motion requested from IRE staff (via IRE auditors):
 - Funds received from corporations, foundations, organizations and individuals for the IRE Journalist of Color Reporting Fellowship will be used to support expenses of the program. Those expenses for selected Fellows include, but are not limited to: IRE membership fees; data services fees; and registration fees, travel and lodging for an IRE data journalism boot camp, the annual NICAR data journalism conference and the IRE national investigative journalism conference.
- **CONTEST COMMITTEE** -- Jennifer LaFleur, chair
 - **ACTION:** Consider rule changes, communication updates and questionnaire changes detailed in the committee's annual report.
- **GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE** -- Lee Zurik, chair
 - **ACTION:** Consider proposal for performance evaluation of IRE executive director detailed in the committee's annual report.
 - **ACTION:** Consider proposal for a process to consider paying travel expenses for IRE board members who need full or partial financial assistance.
- **ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS** -- Cheryl W. Thompson, board president
 - **ACTION:** Consider the board president's nominations for two-year terms on the Endowment Committee. As per IRE bylaws, the IRE treasurer serves as chair of the committee, which can include only one additional IRE board member. The bylaws set the committee at five members.

➤ **NEW BUSINESS**

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- **PRESIDENT'S REPORT** -- Board President Cheryl W. Thompson

- **IRE STAFF REPORTS** (highlights) -- Haddix

- **OTHER COMMITTEE REPORTS** (written and/or verbal)
 - **Audit** -- Steven Rich, chair
 - **Conference** -- Nicole Vap, chair
 - **Endowment** -- Jodi Upton, chair
 - **Member Services** -- Jill Riepenhoff, chair
 - **Public Engagement** -- Matt Dempsey, chair

AUDIENCE COMMENTS / QUESTIONS

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1		Approved Budget FY20	Actual 5.31.20	Estimated 6.30.20	Scenario A: all virtual training	Scenario B: limited in-person	Scenario C: mostly in-person
2	REVENUE						
3							
4	MEMBERSHIP						
5	New Membership	\$80,000	\$77,045	\$80,000	\$60,000	\$65,000	\$75,000
6	Membership-student	\$15,000	\$21,675	\$22,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$12,000
7	Membership-international	\$10,000	\$6,450	\$7,000	\$5,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
8	Membership renewals	\$141,000	\$117,275	\$124,000	\$85,000	\$90,000	\$115,000
9	Renewals-student	\$6,000	\$5,525	\$5,500	\$3,000	\$4,000	\$5,000
10	Renewals-international	\$4,000	\$4,200	\$4,500	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$4,000
11	Membership revenue	\$256,000	\$232,170	\$243,000	\$165,000	\$178,000	\$217,000
12							
13	IRE SALES & SERVICES						
14	Data analysis/visualization & database sales	\$15,000	\$14,968	\$15,000	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500
15	IRE Journal subscriptions/advertising	\$4,000	\$4,814	\$5,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
16	Book sales and royalty	\$30,000	\$21,853	\$23,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
17	Story/tipsheet sales & Research Desk	\$12,000	\$2,574	\$3,000	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
18	Award Contest fees	\$40,000	\$40,850	\$41,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000
19	Web ads/services	\$40,000	\$38,521	\$41,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
20	Fiscal Agent fees	\$12,000	\$13,800	\$15,000	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1		Approved Budget FY20	Actual 5.31.20	Estimated 6.30.20	Scenario A: all virtual training	Scenario B: limited in-person	Scenario C: mostly in-person
21	Other	\$1,000	\$1,618	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
22	IRE Services / Products revenue	\$154,000	\$138,998	\$145,000	\$106,000	\$106,000	\$106,000
23							
24	CONFERENCES						
25	Registrations and fees (IRE & NICAR)	\$605,000	\$275,800	\$276,000	\$390,000	\$560,000	\$663,000
26	Hands-on training classes	\$30,000	\$30,511	\$30,000	\$20,000	\$23,000	\$29,000
27	Other revenues	\$40,000	\$15,350	\$15,000	\$3,000	\$30,000	\$43,000
28	Sponsorships	\$325,000	\$66,250	\$66,250	\$348,000	\$445,000	\$460,000
29	Conference revenue	\$1,000,000	\$387,911	\$387,250	\$761,000	\$1,058,000	\$1,195,000
30							
31	Program Revenue						
32	Watchdog workshops	\$35,000	\$15,325	\$15,000	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$20,000
33	TV watchdog workshops	\$5,000	\$3,225	\$3,000	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$4,000
34	Data in Local Newsrooms	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
35	Custom newsroom training	\$65,000	\$67,796	\$68,000	\$40,000	\$55,000	\$60,000
36	Boot camps	\$35,000	\$51,135	\$52,000	\$96,000	\$96,000	\$96,000
37	Program Revenue	\$140,000	\$137,481	\$138,000	\$148,000	\$169,000	\$180,000
38							
39	GRANTS / FOUNDATIONS Released						

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1		Approved Budget FY20	Actual 5.31.20	Estimated 6.30.20	Scenario A: all virtual training	Scenario B: limited in- person	Scenario C: mostly in- person
40	Google News Initiative: Data in Local Newsrooms (restricted)	\$165,000	\$149,000	\$149,000	\$16,000	\$16,000	\$16,000
41	John S. and James L. Knight Foundation: TV initiative (restricted)	\$137,000	\$74,779	\$75,000	\$142,000	\$142,000	\$142,000
42	Kohlberg Foundation: TNT (restricted)	\$150,000	\$83,000	\$83,000	\$67,000	\$67,000	\$67,000
43	Excellence and Ethics in Journalism: Watchdog workshops (restricted)	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
44	Lumina Foundation: IRE On Campus (restricted)	\$57,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$94,000	\$94,000	\$94,000
45	Dow Jones Newspaper Fund: intern data boot camp (restricted)	\$43,000	\$21,625	\$22,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
46	Arnold Ventures (unrestricted)	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
47	Jonathan Logan Family Foundation (unrestricted)	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000
48	Park Foundation (unrestricted)	\$0	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
49	Grants / Foundations revenue	\$877,000	\$694,404	\$695,000	\$644,000	\$644,000	\$644,000
50							
51	INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS						
52	Unrestricted/temporary restricted	\$54,000	\$62,709	\$64,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$30,000
53	Perm. Restricted -Endowment	\$50,000	\$10,904	\$11,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
54	Individual donations revenue	\$104,000	\$73,613	\$75,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$55,000
55							

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1		Approved Budget FY20	Actual 5.31.20	Estimated 6.30.20	Scenario A: all virtual training	Scenario B: limited in-person	Scenario C: mostly in-person
56	INVESTMENT INCOME						
57	Income released-fellowships,administrative	\$135,000	\$0	\$152,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
58	Income not released	\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
59	Investment income revenue	\$135,000	\$0	\$152,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
60							
61							
62	Reserve for website FY20, carryover from FY19	\$40,000	\$22,250	\$40,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
63	Reserve fund				\$0	\$0	\$0
64	PY investment income released	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
65	Paycheck Protection Program		\$233,400	\$233,400	\$0	\$0	\$0
66	TOTAL REVENUE	\$2,706,000	\$1,920,227	\$2,108,650	\$2,024,000	\$2,355,000	\$2,547,000
67							
68	EXPENSES						
69							
70	PERSONNEL						
71	Salaries: full-time staff	\$920,000	\$827,608	\$903,046	\$951,000	\$951,000	\$951,000
72	Benefits: full-time staff	\$322,000	\$284,077	\$311,000	\$322,000	\$322,000	\$322,000
73	Part-time wages	\$78,000	\$67,178	\$72,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000
74	Student wages	\$52,000	\$36,784	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1		Approved Budget FY20	Actual 5.31.20	Estimated 6.30.20	Scenario A: all virtual training	Scenario B: limited in- person	Scenario C: mostly in- person
75	Personnel expenses	\$1,372,000	\$1,215,647	\$1,326,046	\$1,358,000	\$1,358,000	\$1,358,000
76							
77	IRE SALES & SERVICES						
78	Membership	\$5,000	\$1,950	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
79	Data Library	\$3,000	\$818	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500
80	Journal	\$34,000	\$33,068	\$33,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
81	Book costs	\$20,000	\$12,085	\$14,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
82	Resource Center	\$13,000	\$10,071	\$11,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
83	Contest (judges' travel, plaques, other)	\$18,000	\$2,480	\$3,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
84	Web services	\$2,000	\$2,780	\$3,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
85	Other	\$1,000	\$1,726	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
86	Sales/Products	\$96,000	\$64,978	\$69,000	\$66,500	\$66,500	\$66,500
87							
88	PROGRAM EXPENSES						
89	Conferences	\$600,000	\$296,852	\$297,000	\$158,000	\$436,000	\$647,000
90	Watchdog workshops	\$39,000	\$26,681	\$27,000	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$25,000
91	TV watchdog workshops	\$35,000	\$4,099	\$4,000	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$15,000
92	Data in Local Newsrooms	\$30,000	\$16,127	\$16,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
93	Total Newsroom Training (TNT)	\$23,000	\$9,956	\$10,000	\$9,000	\$12,000	\$16,000

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1		Approved Budget FY20	Actual 5.31.20	Estimated 6.30.20	Scenario A: all virtual training	Scenario B: limited in- person	Scenario C: mostly in- person
94	Lumina-IRE on Campus	\$0	\$409	\$500	\$5,000	\$8,000	\$10,000
95	Custom newsroom training	\$25,000	\$25,691	\$27,000	\$15,000	\$18,000	\$20,000
96	Boot camps	\$20,000	\$20,823	\$21,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$10,000
97	Fellowships/scholarships	\$85,000	\$35,650	\$36,000	\$48,000	\$48,000	\$48,000
98	Program Expenses	\$857,000	\$436,288	\$438,500	\$255,000	\$552,000	\$791,000
99							
100	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES						
101	Investment management fees	\$18,000	\$16,840	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$18,000
102	Accounting	\$23,000	\$25,020	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
103	Legal	\$10,000	\$0	\$0	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
104	Professional services expenses	\$51,000	\$41,860	\$43,000	\$48,000	\$48,000	\$48,000
105							
106	BOARD OF DIRECTORS						
107	Retreat-audio/visual, room rental, facilitator	\$12,500	\$12,433	\$12,500	\$0	\$0	\$0
108	Election software	\$2,500	\$2,060	\$2,100	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
109	Board of directors expenses	\$15,000	\$14,493	\$14,600	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
110							
111	GENERAL OFFICE						
112	Telephone and fax	\$6,000	\$4,490	\$5,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1		Approved Budget FY20	Actual 5.31.20	Estimated 6.30.20	Scenario A: all virtual training	Scenario B: limited in- person	Scenario C: mostly in- person
113	Postage	\$4,000	\$4,935	\$5,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
114	Office supplies	\$6,000	\$2,092	\$3,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
115	Photocopying	\$3,000	\$1,485	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
116	Insurance	\$20,000	\$17,788	\$18,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
117	Computer supplies	\$2,000	\$2,580	\$3,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
118	Credit card service fees	\$45,000	\$38,278	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
119	Dues/fees/subscriptions	\$2,000	\$2,247	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
120	Office Travel/Executive Director Travel	\$15,000	\$8,327	\$9,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
121	Marketing/promotions	\$9,000	\$8,405	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$9,000
122	Staff retreat / professional development	\$6,000	\$9,267	\$9,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$6,000
123	Software/equipment/maintenance/hosting	\$20,000	\$33,305	\$34,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
124	Web design/updates	\$40,000	\$25,250	\$25,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
125	Office relocation expenses	\$10,000	\$0	\$0	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
126	Other office expense	\$5,000	\$3,766	\$5,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000
127	General office expenses	\$193,000	\$162,215	\$169,500	\$178,500	\$178,500	\$181,500
128							
129	Fundraising expenses	\$15,000	\$8,782	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
130	Depreciation	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1		Approved Budget FY20	Actual 5.31.20	Estimated 6.30.20	Scenario A: all virtual training	Scenario B: limited in- person	Scenario C: mostly in- person
131							
132	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,609,000	\$1,944,263	\$2,080,646	\$1,928,500	\$2,225,500	\$2,467,500
133							
134	Reinvested Investment Income	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
135	Permanently restricted-Endowment	\$50,000	\$10,904	\$11,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
136	PPP loan payoff			\$0	\$47,000	\$47,000	\$47,000
137							
138	REVENUE MINUS EXPENSES	\$47,000	-\$34,940	\$17,004	\$23,500	\$57,500	\$7,500
139	PERCENT OF TOTAL REVENUE	1.7%	-1.8%	0.8%	1.2%	2.4%	0.3%

IRE Contest Committee Report

June 9, 2020

IRE Contest Committee: Alison Young, Carrie Levine, Jennifer LaFleur, Jodie Fleischer, Kameel Stanley, Norberto Santana and Ron Nixon

Based on our experiences with judging, the committee proposes the following rule changes, communication updates and questionnaire changes. Some of these changes would eliminate extra work by staff and judges to research entries or contact entrants for verification. We will be happy to provide any additional information or answer questions.

Proposed rule changes or clarifications

- **Limit the number of finalists in all categories.** There has been finalist creep in recent years that adversely affects the operation and impact of the contest. This year it was commonplace for screening panels to have sent up four or more entries as potential finalists. Having more than a winner and two finalists in a category dilutes the award. This also requires much more time for judges to review content.

Proposed fix: Screeners should be instructed to send only three finalists up to the committee for final judging. Only in an **extraordinary** case – and with approval of the contest coordinator/committee chair – should a committee send a fourth potential finalist.

- **Text entries should be submitted in pdf format and with a link to the online version**

Discussion: Several online text submissions had issues with passwords and popup ads. Video and audio submissions require submissions to be edited to remove ads, so the committee did not see this as too burdensome for entrants and feel it would make the process easier for screeners and judges. Also, many websites delete content. Having pdfs in addition to links would preserve the entries in the Resource Center for future use.

- **Addition to disqualification language: What actions would result in a disqualification?**

Judges may disqualify any entry with an incomplete questionnaire. **Failure to disclose known challenges to the accuracy or fairness of an entry may**

result in disqualification or other penalties. Work that included a significant role by a current IRE contest judge may not be entered. Entries disregarding the rules, such as including ads in video or audio will be subject to disqualification.

Discussion: The committee feels strongly that we need to reinforce the importance of this issue as many entries simply say “no.” In some cases, judges were able to find challenges to the work.

Messaging and information

Clarify contest category names to be publisher agnostic: Based on the committee’s experience this year, IRE needs to address confusion caused by some contest category names (and the shorthand names that IRE uses for some of those categories). The video categories should not be called “broadcast”—since it is a category that judges video investigations regardless of whether they are published by a broadcaster, a digital online platform or in some other platform. The text story categories should not be called “print” – not only is print an archaic publishing medium, the focus of the category is to honor storytelling through the written word, whether done by a TV or radio station on their website, a magazine in print or online, or a legacy newspaper that now primarily published on digital platforms. Audio categories should not be referred to as “radio” – since the investigations can come from entrants – from independent podcast producers to legacy newspapers and TV stations and networks -- that have nothing to do with radio. The board several years ago, in acknowledgement of how journalism now is multiplatform, sought to make the categories agnostic of the legacy type of news organization creating the content. It looks like IRE changed the category names since that time and introduced potential confusion.

Add to FAQ:

What qualifies as work for the calendar year?

Entries that include significant investigative findings that were previously published or aired during a prior contest year are subject to disqualification unless accompanied with a detailed explanation of which findings are new.

Screeners training

- If an entry contains language that is offensive to one or more screeners, they may elevate the discussion to include the contest coordinator and/or contest committee chair for further discussion.

- While the impact of an investigation is important and the reason many of us do investigative reporting, it often comes later or incrementally. While this is one consideration in deciding the best work, lack of impact within the contest year should not disqualify an entry.

Questionnaire

Additional Breaking News question: “What was the breaking event and date that triggered the 30-day window?” This would help determine whether an entry fits this category. For some of this year’s entrants, it was difficult for judges to determine what the event was.

Amend question 5: “Was your work in any way based on another news organization’s **or other group’s** previously published or aired report? **Other groups include but are not limited to nonprofits, academics and government.** If yes, please provide the name and publication or air date.”

Amend question 8: “Have you run a correction or clarification on the report? **Has your reporting received any pushback? Or** has anyone come forward to challenge its accuracy **or fairness, even if a correction or clarification was not published or aired?** If so, please explain **the challenge and how it was resolved.**”

Discussion: A driving force behind the creation of the IRE contest is to collect and make available to members a unique educational resource: Detailed contest entry forms that require entrants to candidly and accurately share details about their reporting process so that our members can learn from their work. To be sure, it’s not surprising that the subjects of investigations would complain about the accuracy or fairness of a report. That goes with the territory. But sometimes those complaints have merit. Unfortunately, some news teams will seek to avoid formal corrections or clarifications on potential prize pieces. The IRE Contest Committee needs to be aware of challenges so that it is not blindsided in awarding prizes and has the opportunity to ask the questions if necessary.

It is troubling that we had at least two entries this year that were sent up to the committee as potential finalists that we discovered had failed to candidly disclose challenges to the accuracy/fairness of their work on their entry forms. And those are only the ones we know about.

In one case a national news organization failed to disclose a 12-page retraction demand it received from lawyers for the subject of its investigation. The letter, among other

things, alleged failure to include exculpatory information in the story. Even if editors felt the complaint was without merit, they had a duty to share that determination and disclose the challenge on their entry questionnaire. Instead the committee learned of it through a Google search that revealed another news organization had published information about the retraction demand.

In the second case, a regional news organization submitted an oddly phrased answer to this question: “No corrections were sought. Nor did we learn of anything on our own that needed to be corrected.” It was the kind of answer one might expect from a lawyer typing up interrogatories designed to meet the letter of the law while obscuring what happened – not the candid response that IRE expects of its members on these entry forms. Only after the committee asked for clarification of the answer did the entrant offer up that the news organization was aware of efforts to discredit the report among officials doing business with the organization. While there may not have been any legitimate challenge in this case, the news organization’s lack of candor combined with its effort to obfuscate on its questionnaire are troubling.

Reference: current questionnaire

1. Title of story(ies) or series and names of people, including and identifying freelancers, who worked on this story.
2. Date(s) published, aired, or posted.
3. Topic and synopsis of story or series, including major findings.
4. How the story got started (tip, assignment, etc.)?
5. Was your work in any way based on another news organization's previously published or aired report? If yes, please provide the name and publication or air date.
6. Results (if any).
7. The following questions deal with any documents and/or data you used; answer any that apply to your work:
 - a. List any websites that were useful in obtaining documents and/or data.
 - b. Did you file any state and/or federal requests for documents and/or data?
 - c. Did you have any difficulties obtaining information electronically from that state or federal agency? If so, how did you resolve it?

- d. If you obtained data, did you build any databases? What data did you use and what was its source? What was the cost, if any?
 - e. Did you have difficulties with the data itself? How did you overcome them?
 - f. Was data analysis done by your own staff or was outside assistance used? Who?
 - g. What specific software did you use?
- 8. Have you run a correction or clarification on the report? Has anyone come forward to challenge its accuracy? If so, please explain.
 - 9. Difficulty, uniqueness of effort, or other special circumstances related to this subject.
 - 10. Length of time taken to report, write and edit the story.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

JUNE 18,2020

The Governance Committee has crafted two policies up for full board consideration.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EVALUATION

The Executive Director should receive two annual reviews, one for IRE and one for Missouri. Starting in 2021, we propose the following:

IRE REVIEW – The President, Vice President, and Treasurer prepare a review. The full Executive Committee will sign off on that review. The review is then sent to the full board and the Executive Director. The full board is able to comment, but not change the review. This review takes place at least one month prior to the date the Executive Director's Missouri review is due. The Executive Director will be presented with his review by the full IRE Board in Executive Session.

MISSOURI REVIEW - The IRE review is used as a guide for the Missouri review. IRE will present the minimum amount of information needed to Missouri in that review. The President prepares this review and the full Executive Committee needs to sign off on it.

PAYING BOARD TRAVEL

If a board member's employer won't support travel for IRE business, and there's a need for a full or partial subsidy, that money is available to members. Board members do not need to prove there is a need - this is an honor system. The request goes to the President. The President, Vice President, and Treasurer will determine if the funding request is fulfilled. If so, the President will communicate with the financial officer. Money will be available for board members for the Annual Conference and fall board retreat. If the budget allows it, funds would also be available for the NICAR Conference.



STAFF REPORTS

June 2020

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR | Doug Haddix

Management/leadership:

- 10/19-20/19: Board retreat in Chicago; researched facilitators, resulting in special all-day workshop featuring Karyn Nishimura Sneath
- 11/5-6/19: Led IRE staff retreat in Columbia, Missouri
- IRE branding/communication initiative with Hoot Design Co.
- IRE website full redesign and replacement of back-end system set for July.
- Implemented a staff reorganization in January 2020 to improve operations and better position IRE for future success. Included promotion of Denise Malan as deputy ED.
- Hired Madison Fleck as Editorial Director upon the promotion of Sarah Hutchins.
- Directed staff during NICAR20 in New Orleans with more than 1,100 attendees
- Led the organization through tumultuous COVID-19 fallout:
 - Managed crisis communications after two positive tests after NICAR20
 - Worked with board to change the IRE20 conference dates to late August
 - Made budget adjustments quickly to save money during the current fiscal year
 - Negotiated with funders to redeploy grants
 - Led staff initiatives to pivot to online training during travel bans
- Coordinated IRE membership drive during May/June 2020

Training:

- 9/25-29/19: Global Investigative Journalists Conference; hands-on training & moderating -- Hamburg, Germany
- 10/24/19: Indiana University symposium on Wikileaks and media legal ramifications -- Bloomington, Indiana
- 3/25/20: Webinar: How journalists can fight stress during COVID-19
- 5/20/20: Webinar: Tracking federal stimulus money

Fundraising:

- 9/12-14/19: Online News Association conference; multiple meetings with funders and potential funders
- Oversee and contribute as needed (writing, revising) grant applications and reports

PARTNERSHIPS | Chris Vachon

Grant Management:

- *Arnold Ventures*: IRE received a two-year \$300,000 general operating support grant.
- *Inasmuch Foundation* (formerly Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation): IRE continues to receive annual funding, in the amount of \$100,000, for Watchdog Workshops. Due to COVID-19, the foundation is allowing IRE to pivot the unused portion of the grant to webinar sponsorship.
- *Kohlberg Foundation*: IRE continues to receive annual funding, in the amount of \$150,000, for the TNT program. Due to COVID-19, the foundation is allowing IRE to pivot the unused portion of the grant to general operating support.
- *Knight Foundation*: IRE is in the third year of a three-year grant, total of \$390,000, for the TV Watchdog Workshops program (in addition to workshops, it includes scholarships to boot camps and NICAR along with data services hours for the scholarship recipients). Due to COVID-19, the grant is being extended an additional six months, and the IRE staff is preparing a proposal for Knight's review to offer a virtual training program for broadcast journalists.
- *Lumina Foundation*: IRE received a \$95,000 grant for a new initiative called *IRE on Campus* which includes training programs on a HBCU and a HSA campus as well as scholarships for educators of color to the educator bootcamps.
- *Park Foundation*: IRE received a \$40,000 grant for general operating support.

Journalist of Color Fellowship fundraising:

- *CNN*: Expressed interest in funding the program again in 2020 (funded it for \$5,000 in 2019)
- *Disney*: IRE received a \$5,000 grant on behalf of ABC and a \$2,000 recurring grant on behalf of ESPN.
- *Gray TV*: IRE has a commitment for \$3,000 for 2020 and another \$3,000 for 2022.
- *Hearst Foundation*: IRE received a \$50,000 grant.
- *Individual donations*:
 - FY20: \$16,258 (most of which came from IRE19 fundraiser)
 - Initial funding from four members (prior to FY20): \$11,000

Individual fundraising:

- *End-of-year Campaign*:
 - 2019: \$32,288 (256 donors)
 - 2018: \$32,530 (211 donors)
 - 2017: \$21,145 (129 donors)
 - 2016: \$23,872 (152 donors)
- *Overall Contributions*:
 - FY20 (as of 5/29/20): \$65,637 (484 donors)
 - FY19: \$172,620 (421 donors)
 - Includes a \$118,235 bequest gift
 - FY18: \$128,145 (346 donors)
 - Includes a \$67,278 bequest gift
 - Includes a \$25,000 donation from a donor
 - FY17: \$103,178 (175 donors)
 - Includes a \$25,000 donation from a donor
 - Includes \$16,500 in donations to establish Napoli scholarship
 - FY16: \$53,111 (111 donors)
 - Includes a \$25,000 donation from a donor
- *Board Giving*: FY20, 92% of the board donated
- *Staff Giving*: FY20, 93% of the staff donated

Fellowships/Scholarships

In a typical year, IRE awards about 85 scholarships/fellowships totaling about \$130,000. Due to COVID-19, some IRE fellowships/scholarships are in flux.

Conference Sponsorships

- *FY20 Budgeted* (NICAR & IRE): \$325,000
- *FY20 Actual* (NICAR & IRE): \$302,000 (a few potential sponsors have not committed yet, delayed to rescheduling of IRE20, and at least one sponsor is waiting to hear if IRE will be in-person or virtual before committing)

MEMBERSHIP | Amy Johnston

End of May 2020

May ended with 5,327 members, which is down 13.8% from the same time last year.

				Diff	Perc Diff	Diff	Perc Diff
Month	2018	2019	2020	20 to 19	20 to 18	19 to 18	19 to 18
May	5,941	6,178	5,327	-851	-13.8%	237	4.0%

Beginning of June 2020

June started with 4,993 members, which is down 13.2% from the same time last year.

				Diff	Perc Diff	Diff	Perc Diff
Month	2018	2019	2020	20 to 19	20 to 19	19 to 18	19 to 18
June	5,455	5,750	4,993	-757	-13.2%	295	5.4%

Membership revenue (fiscal) YTD: \$232,170

Support a Journalist Program (as of June 1, 2020)

Donations: \$3,490

of Memberships Donated: 49

Membership Breakdown (as of June 1, 2020)

Membership Type:

- Professional: 3,179
- Student: 1,304
- Academic: 306
- Associate: 175
- Retiree: 29

Media Type: (Members choose all that apply)

- Newspapers: 1,856
- Online: 1,845
- Television: 999
- Other: 735
- Freelance: 699
- Magazine: 649
- Radio: 624
- Education: 554
- Books: 328
- Wire service: 227
- Trade publication: 129

Location:

- United States: 4,582
- International: 367

Gender:

- Female: 2,228
- Male: 1,913
- Prefer not to answer: 320
- Non-binary: 27

Race/Ethnicity:

Race/Ethnicity (select all that apply)	Members	Pct of Members*
American Indian / Alaska Native only	9	0.2%
Contains American Indian / Alaska Native	16	0.3%
Asian only	327	6.5%
Contains Asian	66	1.3%
Black / African American only	229	4.6%
Contains Black/African American	26	0.5%
Latino/Hispanic only	247	4.9%
Contains Latino/Hispanic	310	6.2%
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	4	0.1%
Contains Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	6	0.1%
White only	2,718	54.4%
Contains White	174	3.5%
Blank	660	13.2%
Decline to specify	538	10.8%
Contains Decline to Specify	9	0.2%
Not specified/Other	73	1.5%
* This percentage was figured using the total number of members (4,993)		

Free Tool Subscriptions

- Tableau Desktop / Tableau Prep: 2,277
- Cometdocs: 1,474
- *PacerMonitor: 272

** Starting August 1, 2020, PacerMonitor will no longer offer free one-year subscriptions to IRE members. Instead, they will offer a 50% discount, which for IRE members; will be \$24.50/mo for their Plus plan and \$49.50/mo for their Professional plan. Members who currently have free subscriptions will find those subscriptions ending July 31. They have the option of converting to a discounted plan.*

TRAINING | Denise Malan, Stephanie Klimstra, Patti DiVincenzo, Charles Minshew, Dylan Sinn, Francisco Vara-Orta, Cody Winchester, Sarah Hutchins

Staff updates: The training team grew again this year with the addition of Sarah Hutchins as a full-time trainer. Sarah had been training at bootcamps and other events for several years in addition to her duties as editorial director, and we're excited to have her on the team full time.

We ended our contract agreement with Susie Likovic, who worked 20 hours a week on events. When in-person training returns at full capacity, we will revisit this position.

Watchdog Workshops: We hosted seven Watchdog Workshops for the 2019-2020 cycle, with solid attendance and feedback. Three workshops that were slated to complete the cycle were canceled because of the virus. We will work to reschedule in-person workshops in those locations or with the same partners when it becomes safe to do so.

Our funder, the Inasmuch Foundation, converted the remainder of the grant to support our coronavirus webinars this spring rather than hosting in-person meetings (more about the webinars below).

Date	Location	Host	Attendance
Aug. 29, 2019	New Orleans, LA	In conjunction with the NLGJA Conference	42
Sept. 14-15, 2019	Hampton, VA	Hampton University	54
Sept. 28-29, 2019	Boise, ID	Boise State Public Radio & Boise State University	66
Oct. 5-6, 2019	Lexington, KY	University of Kentucky	46

Oct. 26-27, 2019	Chicago, IL	Columbia College Chicago	85
Oct. 26-27, 2019	Tampa/St. Petersburg, FL	USF St. Petersburg Campus	52
Feb. 7-8, 2020	San Juan, Puerto Rico	Interamerican University of Puerto Rico	49
March 20-21, 2020	Salt Lake City, UT	BYU - Salt Lake City Center	Canceled
March 21-22, 2020	Pittsburgh, PA	Point Park University	Canceled
April 3, 2020	Nashville, TN	In conjunction with NABJ Region III - Vanderbilt University	Canceled

Knight broadcast workshops: We hosted two of three workshops in person for the 2019-2020 cycle, with the final workshop canceled by coronavirus. Staff is working with program funders Knight Foundation on a virtual or hybrid model for hosting the remaining four workshops under the grant (which lasts through June 2021).

Date	Location	Host	Attendance
Sep 7, 2019	Denver, CO	KUSA 9News Denver	45
Oct 19, 2019	Detroit, MI	WDIV and Graham Media Group	39
Apr 4, 2020	Miami, FL (Hollywood)	WPLG Local 10	canceled

Also as part of this grant, our trainers spoke at several conferences with large broadcast contingents last summer and fall, including SPJ, NAHJ, NAJA and NABJ.

Total Newsroom Training (TNT): Ten newsrooms received free custom training this year through our TNT grant. Trainers completed in-newsroom workshops in three of the locations before the coronavirus delayed the others. We are working with those newsrooms to visit them when it's safe. The selected newsrooms:

- CalMatters: Sacramento, California
- Indiana Public Broadcasting News: Indianapolis, Indiana
- LNP Media Group: Lancaster, Pennsylvania
- The Maine Center for Public Interest Reporting: Hallowell, Maine
- Napa Valley Register: Napa, California
- Naples Daily News/News-Press: Fort Myers/Naples, Florida
- The News & Observer/The Herald-Sun: Raleigh, North Carolina

- VTDigger: Montpelier, Vermont
- WCSC: Charleston, South Carolina
- WSAW/WZAW-TV: Wausau, Wisconsin

Data in Local Newsrooms Training Program (DILNTP): This was our first year running this program, which was underwritten by the Google News Initiative and provided two days of free data training to small newsrooms in the U.S. and Canada. Ten newsrooms were selected:

- *The Capital Gazette*: Annapolis, Maryland
- New Hampshire Public Radio: Concord, New Hampshire
- Searchlight New Mexico: Santa Fe, New Mexico
- *Waterloo Region Record*: Kitchener, Ontario
- Torstar Corporation, York Region: York, Ontario
- WUWM 89.7 (local NPR affiliate): Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- *Corpus Christi Caller Times*: Corpus Christi, Texas
- Spotlight PA: Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
- NewsChannel 5: Nashville, Tennessee
- Centro de Periodismo Investigativo: San Juan, Puerto Rico

All trainings have been completed, and feedback was overwhelmingly positive. We have submitted a grant report and funding request for the 2020-21 grant cycle.

Custom Training: Nearly all of our custom training events have been on hold since March because of the coronavirus. Some have moved online, while other clients prefer to wait for in-person training. Despite the near halt of custom training in March, we are projected to nearly meet the projected revenue for this fiscal year from custom training.

We have conducted custom training for the following organizations since the last board report:

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Jamaica Observer | • Global Ties KC |
| • The Virginian-Pilot | • Aspen Journalism |
| • San Antonio Express-News | • IEEE |
| • Iowa State University | • Medill School of Journalism - Northwestern University |
| • University of Central Florida | • Scripps Howard Foundation |
| • Maynard Institute | • LawandCrime.com |
| • Atlanta SPJ Chapter | • Gannett |
| • Graham Media Group | • New Jersey Advance Media |
| • Center for International Media Law and Policy Studies / Indiana University | • KTVK 3TV/KPHO CBS 5 |
| • Community Impact Newspapers | • Orlando Sentinel/Florida Sun-Sentinel |
| • WOAI-TV (NBC) | • Media Institute of the Caribbean |
| • College Broadcasters Inc | • WGXA-TV |
| • Latin/South America investigative | • Alfred Friendly Press Partners |

Coding bootcamps: Our spring coding bootcamps -- R in New York and Python in Austin -- were postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We plan to host them online in the next fiscal year (dates TBD).

Data journalism boot camps: The March bootcamp in Columbia was canceled, and we are working with paid attendees and fellowship winners to move them to future camps. The August camp has been moved online and trainers are working to adapt our training model to the online setting.

In addition, we have created a new online mini-bootcamp that teaches fundamentals of spreadsheets and Tableau data visualization in two days. The first camp, June 15-16, sold out in less than two weeks, as did the second camp set for June 29-30. We plan to host online mini-bootcamps throughout the next fiscal year to continue to build data skills among our members throughout the pandemic.

Conferences: After a successful NICAR20 in New Orleans with 1,100 attendees.

Webinars: IRE's series of webinars on covering coronavirus have been a huge success. As live events were being canceled soon after NICAR, we released a survey asking journalists what they needed help with (and continue to receive ideas months later). We have used that feedback to guide our series of webinars, and we also made these free and open to all journalists, thanks to funding from the Inasmuch Foundation (converted from remaining money for our Watchdog Workshops).

Our trainers have planned and conducted 18 webinars through the Zoom platform, reaching thousands of journalists across the U.S. and the world. In addition to conducting the live session, IRE staff also:

- compile a tipsheet of tips, resources and links from every session
- record each session and close caption it for later viewing
- send all those resources to every person who registered
- send an evaluation form to every attendee.

These webinars and tipsheets have received overwhelmingly positive responses. A sample of the feedback we've received:

- "Keep doing this! Terrific content and opportunities."
- "I will immediately renew my IRE membership to support online training."
- "Just continue the great work!"
- "Thanks for including me in this session. It was without a doubt the best webinar in which I've ever participated." (From the session moderator)

Here is a listing of every topic and the reach of the webinar sessions we've conducted:

Date	Topic	Partner org	Registered	Attended live	Video views (as of 5/28)
3/25/2020	How journalists can fight stress from covering COVID-19		322	215	19
3/28/2020	TV broadcasting from home	RTDNA	399	238	19
4/1/2020	Fighting for open records during the COVID-19 crisis	RCFP	860	560	27
4/3/2020	Finding data about COVID-19 and using it ethically	RJI	967	571	n/a (hosted by RJI)
4/9/2020	Fact-checking coronavirus info	SPJ	511	254	21
4/15/2020	Covering layoffs and economic fallout from coronavirus		474	288	26
4/22/2020	Investigating higher ed amid COVID-19		374	200	37
4/27/2020	Behind the story: Covering populations vulnerable to COVID-19		394	236	66
4/29/2020	So you manage a remote team now	News Leaders Association	222	116	27
5/1/2020	For students: How to best prepare for summer and beyond with or without an internship amid COVID-19	College Media Association	454	298	121
5/7/2020	Behind the story: Government accountability		412	220	38
5/12/2020	Behind the story: Tracking COVID-19 in nursing homes		334	152	44
5/19/2020	Sourcing during the time of covid		456	243	42
5/21/2020	Investigating the stimulus		445	250	43
06/04/2020	Why creating an inclusive newsroom in the time of COVID-19 is urgent	Maynard Institute	717	525	
06/17/2020	Staying organized and motivated during the pandemic	OpenNews			
06/25/2020	Avoiding the journalism "summer slide:" how journalists investigating education can keep up with vital work in a COVID-19 era	Education Writers Association			
		Totals	7,341	4,366	530

NICAR-Learn: As part of our free coronavirus training, we relaunched our data journalism training site, [NICAR-Learn](#). All existing members (about 250) received free one-year extensions. New users get free access for a year. More than 330 new subscriptions came in in the first month. We also released new training videos on Python, R and Tableau, updated old videos and put plans in place to develop more content in the coming months.

DATA SERVICES | Charles Minshew

Data sales: Data sales have continued to slide as agencies continue to make some popular datasets easier to maintain, thus removing the advantage to IRE selling that data. In the past year, we've sold \$435 worth of data. We should continue exploring opportunities to sell data to non-members as a way of boosting revenue and supporting other data services.

Data services: COVID-19 has presented both an opportunity and a challenge for our data services work. The greatest opportunity has been the chance to help newsrooms with the overwhelming amount of data on the virus that comes into their newsrooms. One example of work completed is Gray TV's daily COVID-19 case tracker map. At 8.5 million views so far, it is one of the most viewed data visualizations that IRE has worked on.

A challenge has been budget restraints being felt by newsrooms in the United States. Our hope is to continue to push fellowship recipients to use their hours, resulting in more revenue for Data Services.

Total revenue for the Data Library so far this fiscal year: Thanks to support from the Knight Foundation and the Google News Initiative, we have been able to complete data work for fellowship recipients. Fellowship-funded work accounts for \$4,300 of the completed and currently in-progress revenue of \$21,915.

With \$21,915 in revenue from data services and \$435 from data sales, current and in-progress work revenue totals \$22,350.

EDITORIAL | Madison Fleck

The IRE Journal:

We continue to receive great feedback on the IRE Journal. The Q1 2020 issue focused on diversity in journalism and the work that still needs to be done within the industry. We made the issue available online to all (including nonmembers) and received great feedback on social media. The issue was also mentioned in a [Poynter article](#) on diversity in the industry.

- ❑ The 2019-2020 Journal issues covered immigration, local investigations, comforting the afflicted/afflicting the comfortable and elections. The Third Quarter 2020 issue will focus on mental health in journalism, and Quarter Four will focus on coverage of COVID-19.

IRE Radio Podcast:

We produced fewer episodes than anticipated this year, largely a result of the pandemic. Because podcast production involves Mizzou students using equipment based on campus, we had to temporarily pause production for the spring and summer. We plan to produce a couple of episodes in 2020 utilizing archival conference audio.

- ❑ 35,600 total plays
- ❑ Subscribers: Ranged from 1,400 to 2,500 over the last year. Subscriber numbers have fallen with the show on hold.

Social Media:

- ❑ We continue to see growth across most social media platforms. We recently began posting on our Instagram page, which has received great feedback from younger journalists. Facebook followers have slightly fallen.
 - ❑ Twitter: 31,100 followers (4% increase)
 - ❑ Facebook: 19,500 followers (2% decrease)
 - ❑ Instagram: 146 followers (since March)
 - ❑ LinkedIn: 4,860 followers (131% increase)

Newsletters:

- ❑ Quick Hits: 17,762 (8% increase)
- ❑ Local Matters: 4,630 (22% increase)
- ❑ I-Team Toolkit: 1,607 (0.4% increase)
- ❑ Conference-specific newsletters: NICAR 20 had 1,081 (93% increase), and IRE 20 has 972 (12% decrease)

RESOURCE CENTER | Lauren Grandestaff

Archives: Once the new IRE website is launched, we will be able to start uploading resources again. As of today, the archive is still missing the 2019 contest entries and tipsheets from the 2019/2020 workshops and NICAR20. Because of the COVID shutdown, we have temporarily lost access to our historical archive, all stored at a warehouse on Mizzou's campus.

Contests: The Philip Meyer and IRE Awards contest moved to a temporary entry and judging platform composed of Wufoo forms and DropBox storage. Feedback was great from entrants but less than ideal for admin, screeners and judges. Philip Meyer received 38 entries. IRE Awards received 470 entries.

IRE Awards: IRE Award judging took place completely virtually for the first time. We had two full days of great discussion and debate. Also new this year, we've compiled contest entry questionnaires into packs for purchase.

Research Desk: Aside from the occasional one- or two-hour job, FIRE Virtual Newsroom is the only work that has come in with some consistency.

Beat Books: The sixth edition of the Investigative Reporter's Handbook went on sale June 1. For the first time ever, there will be an ebook for sale as well, plus online digital resources pegged to each chapter that will be maintained and updated by IRE.

Course Packs: Sales continue to do well. Trainers have taken on the task to update and add to the existing course packs so that we may be able to serve more journalism courses' needs.

Book sales and contest revenue breakdown (by fiscal year):

Product/Service	2020	2019	2018	2017
Books	\$11,381	\$10,865	\$12,236	\$12,541
IRE Contest entry fees (including questionnaire packs)	\$37,715	\$38,705	\$25,410	\$26,675
Philip Meyer entry fees	\$2,850	\$2,255	\$1,815	\$2,255
Course packs	\$6,240	\$5,280	\$7,440	\$5,940
Total	\$58,186	\$57,105	\$46,901	\$47,411

Public Engagement Committee report-

Highlights of the public engagement committee in the last year (post June 2019 board election)

- Decided that IRE will not sign on to any amicus briefs due to the cost in time and money for IRE.
- Created a response template to make it easier to sign on to letters from other organizations.
- Signed on to RCFP notice and comment on FOIA regulations
- Issued a statement of support for Beninese journalist Ignace Sossou, who was sentenced to 18 months in prison for reporting a public meeting.
- Brought support of a letter calling for federal assistance for local news outlets to the full board. Board did not approve.
- Nominated Chris Ingles, A.C. Thompson, Jeremy Jojola, and Leonard Pitts Jr. for the Don Bolles Medal for extraordinary courage in their coverage of white supremacists movements in the U.S.
- Issued a statement from IRE calling for an end to violent tactics deployed by government against journalists and the public during protests against racial injustice.

Endowment Committee Report

Committee: Jennifer Forsyth, Laura Frank, Corey Johnson, Norberto Santana and Jodi Upton (chair).

All meetings attended by Executive Director Doug Haddix and Budget Director Heather Feldmann Henry except the June 11 meeting

Date: June 18, 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic has added uncertainty to the economy and IRE's budget; it also inserts a degree of unknown for many of our members. The good news: IRE is in much better shape going into this recession than either 9/11 or the 2008 recession thanks to \$4.36 million in endowment funds. In spite of the turbulence, that's up compared to its \$4.17 million value in April 2019.

The endowment committee met in the fall, then three times after the pandemic started (April 30, May 14 and June 11). Discussions in the spring centered on investment strategy for the funds and included a meeting with IRE's investment advisor Garry Banks.

Investment strategy:

Below is the current market value of the three endowment funds which, per board policy, are invested in a balanced income/conservative risk profile. So far this year (through May 31) the funds collectively lost about \$300,000 or around 4.18% in value, though the fund is up over the year.

As per board policy, committee (and Board) members are blind to specific company funds. Currently the funds are invested primarily in fixed income with a small amount in cash and equities. Collectively the funds are expected to generate annual income of about \$181,000 per year, though only about \$140,000 is available for the annual operating budget because the Knight fund is currently below its required principle.

Our investment advisor expects the current economic strain to continue for several years. Our bond investments were previously able to get a 5% return but are now at a 2.5-3.5% return. He has moved some money to blue chip stocks, but points out that finding a conservative income stream is getting increasingly difficult. Additional economic fallout or a change in federal reserve policy could further reduce income. While he did not recommend an immediate change, he noted that IRE's investments may need to take on more risk or settle for less income until interest rates rise in the next two to five years.

Available funds:

For the past several years, IRE has been able to increase its budget security by 1) reinvesting income earned on the endowment funds and 2) adding half of the annual budgetary surplus to the reserve fund, which is currently valued at \$642,000 (as of April 30) and invested largely in

short-term treasury bills. (The Board voted in fall 2018 to move the reserve funds from a money market account, with the transition completed by July 2019). Spending these funds requires Board approval.

In addition to the reserve fund, there are caveats to the individual endowment funds (as of May 31):

Pulliam Fund: valued at \$547,000 this fund is earmarked for the resource center. The fund is expected to generate about \$23,000 this year.

- Asset Allocation: 15% Cash – 72% Fixed Income – 13% Equity

General Endowment: valued at \$2.9 million, this fund is expected to generate about \$124,000 in income this year.

- Asset Allocation: 12% Cash – 60% Fixed Income – 28% Equity.

Knight Foundation: valued at \$828,000, the fund should be at \$855,000 (based on inflation adjustments to the original \$600,000 principle). Until that value is regained, we can't touch that fund and the \$42,000 in expected generated income is restored to the fund.

- Asset Allocation: 9% Cash – 74% Fixed Income – 17% Equity

One year comparison, 2019 vs. 2020

Nickname	Account Value 05/31/19	Interest	Deposit	Withdraws	Market Change	Account Value 05/31/2020	Percent chg
General	\$2,739,635	\$124,164	\$125,900	\$0	(\$44,207)	\$2,945,492	7.51%
Knight	\$820,932	\$41,689	\$0	\$0	(\$34,248)	\$828,373	0.91%
Pulliam	\$543,112	\$23,722	\$0	\$0	(\$20,204)	\$546,630	0.65%
Total	\$4,103,679					\$4,320,495	5.28%

Finally, here's a look at the [full endowment picture](#), including the restricted funds and the smaller 'orphan' funds the committee previously advised the board to consolidate or eliminate.

Spending:

IRE's Endowment Fund is also guided by the Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (UPMIFA) under Missouri law effective Aug. 28, 2009. That includes a spending policy when the endowment was created:

The Endowment Committee of the Board of Trustees is responsible for the establishment of a balanced endowment spending policy to: (a) ensure that over the medium-to-long term, sufficient investment return shall be retained in the endowment to preserve and grow its economic value as a first priority; and, (b) to provide funds for the annual operating budget in an amount which is not subject to large fluctuations from year to year to the extent possible.

Banks also said that if additional monies are needed for IRE operations, up to 4% of the endowment fund could be tapped with minimal long-term risk. For the 2019-20 budget year, we are using about 3.6%, which is our max projected return (2.5-3.5% based on Banks' projections).

To provide some perspective, here's how IRE has spent its endowment earnings over the past 12 years. To date, IRE has never drawn principle from the funds:

Year	Knight	Pulliam	General Endowment	Total
2007-08	\$ 5,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 110,000	\$ 145,000
2008-09	\$ 5,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 80,000	\$ 91,000
2009-10	\$ 74,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 98,000	\$ 202,000
2010-11	\$ 40,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 90,000	\$ 160,000
2011-12	\$ 80,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 90,000	\$ 195,000
2012-13	\$ 30,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 90,000	\$ 145,000
2013-14	\$ 40,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 80,000	\$ 150,000
2014-15	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 90,000	\$ 150,000
2015-16	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
2016-17	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ 20,000
2017-18	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
2018-19	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
2019-20*	\$ -	\$ 45,000	\$ 110,000	\$ 155,000
	\$ 314,000	\$ 261,000	\$ 838,000	\$ 1,413,000

*estimated amounts, will finalize by June 15 and withdraw upon executive director's approval

Recommendations:

1. Continue the current investment strategy with a re-evaluation in six months.
2. Move \$637 in 'orphaned' donations to Pulliam to either the endowment or investment fund to support the resource center
3. Investigate internally with university officials, or speak to the Knight Foundation, about the inflation adjustment requirement which prevents us -- year over year -- from using the fund.
4. The Committee is tasked with protecting IRE's Endowment, but the definition of the endowment and the spending protocol between the reserve fund and the previously earned income is unclear. The Committee requests the board clarify the following:
 - a. What is the endowment fund? Is it only the original principle, or does it include reinvested income from previous years?
 - b. What is the spending protocol between the Reserve Fund and the earned income from previous years (reinvested in the endowment)? That is, if the earned income is not part of the endowment, which fund is used first?