



CALL FOR PROPOSALS – ISWNE/Huck Boyd Competition: Strengthening Community News

The International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors (ISWNE) and the **Huck Boyd National Center for Community Media** at Kansas State University are seeking proposals for papers that provide insight and guidance on general issues and/or everyday problems confronting community newspapers and their newsrooms.

This competition is an extension of the Center’s former “Newspapers and Community-Building Symposium,” co-sponsored by the National Newspaper Association (NNA) and its foundation and presented for 20 years at NNA conventions. It is an effort to promote “conversations in community journalism” between academicians and journalists working for community newspapers, with the goal of strengthening community journalism.

Proposals will be peer-reviewed by faculty with expertise in community journalism and final selection of the papers to be written will be made by a panel of working and retired community journalists who will evaluate the proposals on the basis of their potential value to newsrooms. Completed papers will undergo a final peer review prior to publication in an issue of ISWNE’s quarterly journal *Grassroots Editor*.

One paper will be selected for presentation at the 2019 ISWNE conference in Atlanta, GA. The ISWNE Foundation will provide the author with complimentary registration for that conference, as well as a partial subsidy for travel. Proposals from graduate students are encouraged.

Focus: Papers should deal with topics that are relevant to the newsrooms of community weeklies and provide guidance to those newsrooms on general issues and/or everyday problems they may face. Examples could include ethics issues, whether community newspapers have a role to play in the civic engagement discussion, community reactions to a strong editorial presence, alternative print/digital integration models, successful techniques for growing a successor (for independently owned papers) or models that maximize revenue/contain expenses without sacrificing quality. Please keep in mind that these are only a few of the many areas on which papers could focus. A case study of one or more community papers would be an acceptable topic if it leads to conclusions or suggestions that are then expanded to have general applicability.

Note that ISWNE members have access to the organization’s Hotline, where topics of current interest to weekly newsrooms are regularly discussed. Non-members may request temporary access by contacting Executive Director Chad Stebbins at stebbins-c@mssu.edu.

Most successful proposals will deal with applied research although theoretical papers that provide the basis for further applied research are also acceptable, as are general research papers that establish a tie to newsroom issues. Proposals with an international focus, or reflecting an international perspective on community papers’ newsrooms, are particularly encouraged.

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Criteria for Evaluating Proposals: Proposals should be limited to a maximum of two pages, and shorter ones are strongly encouraged. These proposals should explain clearly and concisely how the papers will be of practical use to community weekly newsrooms. They should note any prior work on which they will build or which they will assess critically.

Proposals will be evaluated on the relevance and importance of the topic and on its value to newsrooms. Other criteria include originality, clarity of the writing, appropriateness of the methodology to be used, the likelihood that valid conclusions will be reached and the choice of materials that will be used to document the paper's conclusions or to support its recommendations.

Suggested Length for the Paper: 2,500 to 6,000 words.

Logistics for submission: Proposals should be submitted electronically to Huck Boyd Center Director Gloria Freeland at gfreela@ksu.edu. The proposal itself should contain nothing that would identify the author. It must be accompanied by a **separate title page** containing full author contact information (name, e-address, mailing address, university and/or professional affiliation and phone number). These two items must be emailed by Jan. 19, 2018.

Other Dates:

- Authors of accepted proposals will be notified by Feb. 20, 2018.
- Completed papers are due to gfreela@ksu.edu no later than June 22, 2018.
- Any changes suggested by the second peer review will be sent to authors by July 30, 2018.
- Final versions of the papers should be sent electronically to ISWNE Executive Director Chad Stebbins at stebbins-c@mssu.edu by Aug. 29, 2018.
- The author of the paper selected for presentation at the 2019 ISWNE conference will be notified by Oct. 1, 2018.

ISWNE was founded in 1955 to promote high standards of editorial writing, facilitate the exchange of ideas and foster freedom of the press in all nations. Its goals are to help those involved in the weekly press improve the standards of editorial writing and news reporting and to encourage strong, independent editorial voices.

Chad Stebbins has been ISWNE's executive director since 1999.

The mission of the **Huck Boyd National Center for Community Media** is to serve and strengthen local newspapers, radio stations, online media and other outlets that play a key role in the survival and revitalization of small towns in the United States. The center, established in 1990, co-sponsored the "Newspapers and Community-Building" Symposium with the NNA and its foundation from 1994 to 2014. It also sponsors an annual lecture series dedicated to community media; works with area news organizations to sponsor workshops; co-sponsors the Great Plains Radio History Symposium; encourages a community media perspective in journalism courses; fosters research benefitting community media; and helps provide development programs for them.

Gloria Freeland has been the Center's director since 1998.