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Cover: a still from a Solutions Storytelling Project: Asia film by Manuel Alberto Maia and Aghniadi, with Blue Ventures.

Left: Director Gabriela Cavanagh filming artist Becky G for "Rebbeca," which premiered at Tribeca. Cavanagh and the film's Field Producer, Gabriella Canal, found each other through VC.

### A Note from our ED

Time is such a peculiar concept. Like love, it's dynamic; it delights, disappoints, dazzles, drives us to be better, and invariably offers opportunities to evolve. But unlike love (urgently passionate at times, quietly powerful in others), time is fixed: it plods on, even if we want it to pause to relish a moment, or go quicker to speed past a difficulty. Once combined, time and love allow for the greatest of adventures to unfold. Video Consortium is one such example.

When VC was born a decade ago, I never once considered what it would look like two, let alone ten, years in. But here we are, and after much reflection, it's clear that the ingredients that have been most invaluable, that we've been lucky to knead into our foundational recipe, are those very two ineffable concepts:

On time: I vividly remember sitting at my desk at The New Yorker in 2015, staring at my monitor, Premiere open, a C100 camera body on my left and memory cards strewn about on my right, wistfully wondering what all the other video people were doing at all the other media publications. And then, in the blink of an eye (and after my email to a dozen half-strangers), we were excitedly buzzing together at the back of a bar; then we were screening shorts in front of a bigger crowd; then we were in LA; then we were in DC; then we had a website, and 1,000 members, and 2,000 members, and so on.

Today, Video Consortium is a global organization that supports and connects almost 7,000 vetted nonfiction video creators and storytellers across 750+ cities and 80 countries; VC represents the industry's top talent, with robust programs and dozens of local hubs run by inspiring regional media leaders. This generous gift of time has allowed for hundreds of extraordinary people to step up, at just the right moment, to each play a distinct role in moving it forward. It allowed for our community to organically grow, with no pressure and zero budget, for many years.

Time allowed for VC to hit a tipping point of expansion, for us to realize that this really was a thing, and for our initial funder, Knight Foundation, to take a chance on us in 2021 with our first-ever grant, which changed everything. Time allowed for us to partner with so many lauded entities that, in many cases, have now long faded, like Buzzfeed's office with "win" and "wtf" plastered on every office wall and Gawker's dreamy screening room with ambient purple lights. The past ten years of VC are, quite literally, a history of digital media's ups and downs.

So many companies are now gone or absorbed into others, but the people remain. These members, who are our core, have morphed and grown into creatives they never dreamed they'd become, even as the circumstances around them have continued to change. Which leads us to:

On love: we're driven by the magic of documentary journalism and by the unparalleled power that visual stories have to trace an invisible cord from screen to heart—making the viewer realize, and feel, they're not alone. But for us, the medium is not the message; rather, it's the quickest, most visceral way to that message, which is our essential need for deep human connection.

As the world gets noisier, as success gets shinier, as the need for productivity skyrockets, as the tech-ification of our lives overtakes the nuance and natural ability to meaningfully connect, one antidote to all of this is the recollection that we are all indeed interconnected, no matter our background or culture, and want the same things: to love and be loved, to be seen and heard, and to feel that we're part of something bigger than ourselves.

Capturing stories about what it means to be innately human, and then coming together through shared experience to remember our interdependence, allow us to get just a little bit closer to fulfilling those fundamental needs. They both remain central to VC's mission.

But should the trajectory now change, with so much up in the air, and so much uncertainty that pervades every aspect of life? Is it worth it to keep pushing? History shows that crisis brings out the best in people, and we effusively say yes: where there is hope there is light, and the light is always brighter than darkness.

Time will keep ticking on, and love will continue to take us for rides we never thought imaginable; with both, unexpected magic awaits.

On behalf of all of VC, I thank our board, volunteers, staff, colleagues, partners, and friends over the past decade; I thank our funders for continuing to believe in our mission; and I thank YOU: for being present with us during this fascinating moment and for, as the beautiful still on the cover portrays, coming with us across the threshold of VC's next decade to navigate the unknown waters of the industry and world.

With love and time on our side, here's to casting off, together, into decade #2.



Sky Dylan-Robbins
Founder and Executive Director





# What We Do

We're a local first, global nonprofit media network that supports and connects today's nonfiction video creators to inform and inspire audiences everywhere.

We achieve our mission through:

- ► CONVENING

  Local, Regional and Global Community Events
- ► EMPOWERING

  Education and Professional Development
- ► FACILITATING

  Story Production, Distribution, Impact







Right: Video Consortium's community gatherings in action: Washington DC, Pittsburgh, Manhattan, Brooklyn, Wilmington, and New Delhi.









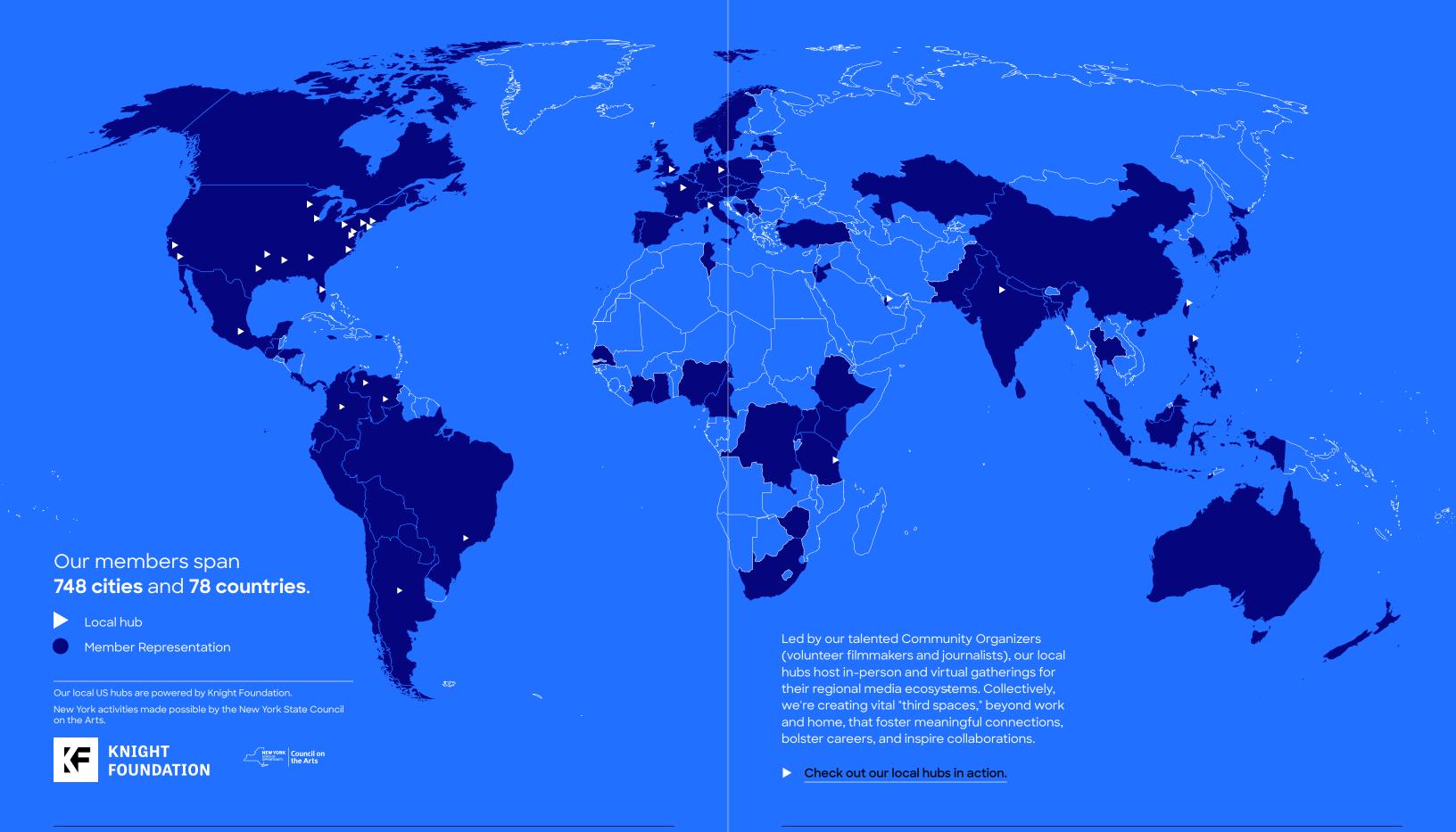












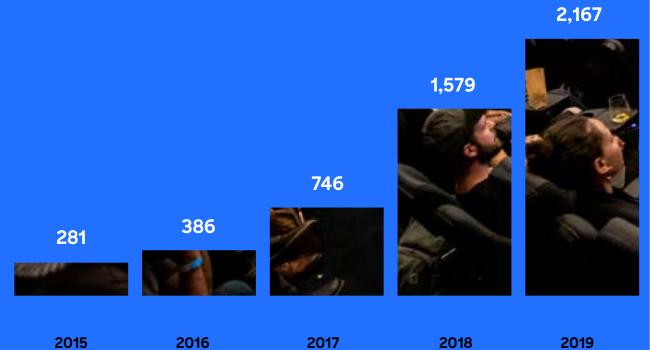
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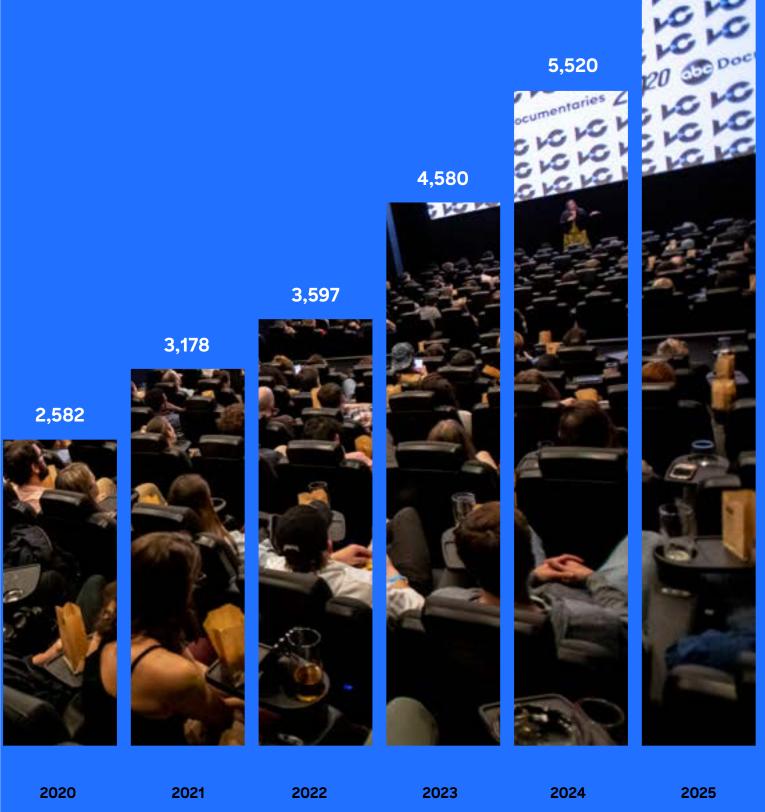
# Membership Growth

Since our first gathering in 2015, which brought together a dozen creatives at the back of an East Village bar in Manhattan, our community's growth has been constant, organic, and just plain magical.

Today, our vetted membership spans 750 cities and almost 80 countries, and includes every role that brings a piece of nonfiction video – short or long – to life. VC members are directors who've won every award you can think of, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists, emerging filmmakers who're just breaking into the scene, studio heads, YouTube creators, department leads, animators, impact producers, inspired media students, and beyond.

Curious? Peruse the Membership Directory.





6,500



By The Numbers

community gatherings hosted

languages spoken by our members

6,535
members
748 78

cities represented

represented

local hubs in motion around the US and world

number of pizzas eaten at local gatherings (so many that we've lost track!)

5,200+

hours spent on collaborative mentorship between VC members

30,192 people served through in-person

and virtual gatherings

student members supported to date

solutions-focused short documentaries produced out of our Solutions Storytelling Project

440+

who've helped us expand our network

2,100+

member films screened and introduced to new audiences

10,000+





MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

### **Emily Strong**

"When I moved to NYC seven years ago, I hardly knew a soul. Video Consortium was the first community I joined and where I made my first new friends and colleagues in the city. The organization's blend of in-person events and online presence played a crucial role in helping me integrate into the documentary industry here.

It was surreal to meet filmmakers I had admired from afar, and I remain forever grateful to everyone I cold-emailed through the database who generously took time from their busy NYC lives to have coffee, talk on the phone, or jump on a video call with a newbie. Being exposed to documentary filmmakers at the top of their game through Video Consortium helped me sharpen

my craft as I directed both my debut film, Tasting Heritage, and my PBS Food documentary series, The Grocery List Show.

Having a community of friends and collaborators to lean on throughout every stage, from grant proposals and rough cuts to production, post-production, and distribution, has been instrumental to my career and my projects success. Video Consortium didn't just introduce me to the documentary world; it provided the foundation for building my career and continues to be an essential source of support."

- EMILY STRONG

Above: Emily Strong directing docuseries "The Grocery List Show." on PBS, with fellow VC member Sebastián Pinzón Silva.

# **Convening Creators: Locally**



### Fostering deep community within local media ecosystems.

Led by incredibly talented Community
Organizers, VC's local hubs form the foundation
of our global network, offering both in-person
and virtual gatherings that cultivate essential
"third spaces" – environments beyond work and
home that foster meaningful connections, bolster
careers, and inspire collaborations.

- 100+ talented filmmakers and journalists lead these Local Hubs
- > 500+ gatherings to date

LOCAL SPOTLIGHT

### Showing up for one another

During the devastating Los Angeles fires, local hub organizers in LA compiled a peer-curated list of portfolios for displaced documentary filmmakers, encouraging donations and work for dozens of people.

Above: one of VC's first-ever gatherings, at a member's backyard in Brooklyn.

Right: local gatherings over the years, in Washington DC, Atlanta,

Brooklyn, Milan, Wilmington, Manhattan, Berlin, Philadelphia.

















# **Convening Creators: Globally**

Annually convening the brightest minds to collectively question what is and isn't working in nonfiction video.

### **Future of Nonfiction Video 2025**

Our inaugural annual unconference, powered by Knight Foundation and hosted at Columbia Journalism School, brought together over four hundred creators, documentarians, media executives, academics, and thought leaders from media institutions both big and small.

Here, the playing field was leveled – media students sat next to department heads, award-winning creators sat next to emerging filmmakers – and we collaboratively discussed solutions for the future. Topics ranged from ethical AI and sustainably leading newsroom video teams to leveraging new formats and navigating the industry after graduation, and more.

Dozens of entities, from traditional to new media, were present, including:



Right: Award-winning director and VC member Nicholas Bruckman is interviewed by VC's Executive Director, Sky Dylan-Robbins, during FONV.







"Even with all of the uncertainties surrounding nonfiction video, FONV is a jolt of 'can-do'ism."

- MICHAEL GUIDRY Editorial Director of Multimedia, Mississippi Today



Top: A panel of YouTube journalists talk about the future and kick off the unconference.

Bottom and right: conversations are happening, inspiration is flowing, FONV is in motion.

















"I attend a lot of conferences, but this was perhaps the single most informative, thought-provoking and fun community gathering I have ever attended. Not only did I learn a ton, but I met dozens of people in the industry who I would never have crossed paths with otherwise--from current students to some of the OGs of video storytelling. People I met have been reaching out to me since and I've been reaching out to others I met at FONV to keep the conversation going. I am so grateful to have had the chance to attend and to the Video Consortium for fostering this"

BETH KNOBEL, PHD
 Journalism Professor, Fordham University

Click to watch FONV's 2025 recap.

Above: FONV breakout sessions and collaborative conversations populated the unconference's second day.

Front top left: Krishna Sharma (The Baltimore Banner) and Erin McGoff (Advice with Erin), Jonah Kessel (The *New York Times*), Alex Clark (CBS, Columbia).



# **Convening Creators: Virtually**

Building a digital community that transcends borders and cultures



Members engage together hundreds of times per week, particularly on our active Slack workspace – helping each other learn, discuss ideas, share opportunities, offer support, and more.

Our Job Boards, which span across our web platform and Slack, are active every day with jobs that range from short- to long-term, freelance to staff, journalism to documentary (to branded and beyond) that members post for each other around the world. And they're often filled in the blink of an eye – with excellent talent.

We offer an ongoing roster of digital resources, including:

- Workshop Archive Library: An ever-expanding library of insightful interviews and workshop recordings.
- Templates + Guides: Easily adaptable templates and guides for each unique filmmaking journey.
- Make It Happen Monday: A curated monthly list of documentary filmmaking and video journalism opportunities to fund and elevate careers and other editorial resources.



#### MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

### **Carlos Beltran**

Documentary Filmmake Location: New York VC Member since: 2018

"For nearly a decade, Video Consortium has been a second home. It's been a place where I've met dozens of collaborators at the regular New York gatherings, where I've learned during hands-on workshops, and where I've found amazing opportunities through its growing network. I am a proud Gold Member and will always be grateful for the friendships, insights and possibilities that VC continues to provide."

- CARLOS BELTRAN



Above: Carlos filming "All I Ever Wanted," with Kevin Durant.

Right: on assignment for CBS News in Louisiana.



# **Empowering Creative Talent**

Leveling the playing field

Our professional development initiatives bring creative talent together to learn and grow together. Rather than a top-down approach, we pull talent directly from our community to lead workshops and share skills:

#### **ADVISORY CIRCLES**

A collaborative mentorship program that strategically connects nonfiction storytellers together to exchange support, expertise, networks, and advice.

#### **MATCH LAB**

Matching nonfiction storytellers and their in-progress visual stories with the right people and platforms who'll help bring them to life.

#### INDUSTRY CONVERSATIONS

Intimate virtual virtual round-table discussions, available to VC Gold members, to meet with key industry decision-makers to build connection and explore collaboration.

#### THE PITCH

One of our quarterly columns that explores the ins and outs of pitching to media platforms around the world, led by VC member Kate Villevoye.

Over **1,500 jobs** and gigs
were exchanged
on our job board
in 2024 alone!

#### **RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT**

# Pay Transparency Project Real Pay for Real Stories

VC began the first industry-wide collaborative pay transparency initiative and launched it with Brown Girls Doc Mafia, with an ongoing roster of excellent community partner organizations.





















### MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

### Gabriela Cavanagh

Director, Editor Location: New York, London VC Member since: 2017

"For one of my first films, I posted on VC asking for b-roll to license — members not only came through with what I asked for, but shared beautifully shot footage of my subjects that I didn't know existed, free of charge. That is the magic of this community. The generosity of VC members — with everything from technical advice to job opportunities, and all the odd requests in between — is what has made it an invaluable resource to so many people. I've met some of my most cherished collaborators through VC, and can't wait to see what the next decade brings."

- GABRIELA CAVANAGH



Above: a still from "Rebbeca," which premiered at Tribeca in 2025, and Gabriela pausing between shoots.

# **Empowering Creative Talent**

Growing video in journalism

#### **UNIVERSITY INITIATIVE**

VC empowers and connects documentary film and video journalism students and professors from dozens of university media programs across the U.S. through virtual gatherings, specialized trainings, mentorship, and a SONY gear giveaway.

#### **NEWSROOM COLLECTIVE**

In 2024, we launched this US-wide community of local newsrooms using video to enhance journalistic impact, expand audiences, and increase revenue.

- ► 140+ VC members have joined as newsroom members
- ➤ 50 newsrooms represented in Newsroom Collective

#### THE INCUBATOR

VC supported eight local and independent newsrooms to incorporate video into their strategies. Results:

- ► More than half a million combined views
- Built lasting capacity and skills among newsroom staff
- ► Established focused approaches for monetizing video content and expanding audience reach

# NEWSROOM SPOTLIGHT Mississippi Today

"Our participation in the Video Incubator was transformative for our organization because it provided the practical training we needed to sustainably create the capacity for video production in ournewsrooms. Our journalists quickly learned how to translate their reporting into formats that exponentially increased audience reach and impact in the communities we serve."

WARWICK SABINPresident and CEO, Deep South Today



"We needed to wholly understand the video tools and ideas available to us as a small, local nonprofit newsroom. The goal was to learn something that we could bring back and implement here that would serve Mississippians. That goal was certainly accomplished and then some. We've seen huge reach, a sizable increase in engagement, and...everything has changed for us since the start of the Incubator. Collaboration within our newsroom has increased tenfold. Reporters and editors routinely approach us with video ideas and opportunities. And, our audience loves our increased video presence, and we're thrilled to soon offer them so much more."

MICHAEL GUIDRY, RICHARD LAKE
 Editorial Director of Multimedia, and Video Editor,
 Mississippi Today

Above: Michael Guidry and Richard Lake making videos at Mississippi Today.

Right: Video Intern Aaron Lampley leads one of the newsroom's new social videos.





# **Empowering Creative Talent**

**Building Creative Talent** 



### **ROUGH CUT PODCAST**

VC's community-driven podcast on navigating the art and practice of video journalism and nonfiction filmmaking.

Click to watch and listen to Rough Cut Podcast.

Clockwise from top: Lance Oppenheim, Bing Liu, original host Jennie Butler, and Chloe Gbai recording podcast episodes.











# Facilitating Solutions-Focused Stories

Pairing talented filmmakers with social entrepreneurs across the Global South.

The Solutions Storytelling Project is an innovative fellowship that connects regional filmmakers with mission-driven NGOs to produce solutions-focused short documentaries that catalyze positive change – both locally and globally. SSP began in Africa, expanded to Latin America, then to Asia, and is continuing as we enter our second decade. SSP's outcomes have been tremendous, and we are so proud of the 50 films and immense talent that have come out of the program.

Made possible by

# sk⁰ll

# Solutions Storytelling Project: Africa

SSP Africa brought together 20 filmmakers and 19 social entrepreneurs, across nine African countries, to produce 19 solutions-focused short documentaries that have been viewed millions of times to date – and continue to screen around the world. Some of the films were acquired by global media organizations, and all have screened at festivals and community gatherings on the continent and beyond. Out of SSP, filmmakers were exposed to professional opportunities beyond the continent and received robust master classes; the ripple effects of the program continue.

Right: Nigerian filmmaker Frank Adegbie with his crew, while filming during the program.













"The Solutions Storytelling Project gave me more than professional experience; it gave me a sense of personal belonging, purpose, and fulfillment. It showed me that storytelling is my tool for change, and now I'm using it to help others amplify and accelerate their world-changing work."

ERIC MWANGI,Director, Ripple Productions, Kenya

Left: Kenyan SSP fellows Nick Wambugu and Edward Ahenda, and Brian Obra, at work on their films.

Above: Eric Mwangi in his element, directing in Nairobi.











Click to watch SSP Africa's films!

Left: SSP fellows Laissa Malih and Franklyne Mudulia in Kenya, Hangui Marcial in Cote d'Ivoire.

Above: Fama Ndaiaye editing in Senegal, Sam Dablew pausing between shoots in Kenya.



### Solutions Storytelling Project: Latin America

Latin America films, from Latin American filmmakers, for a global audience.

- ▶ 16 filmmaking fellows and 16 organizations across Latin America collaborated to produce cinematic, solutions-focused short documentaries.
- ► The films have screened in dozens of festivals, conferences, funder circles, and in local communities.
- They've been viewed online millions of times to date and continue to make waves of solutions-driven change.

"Being part of SSP LATAM and the Video Consortium community was a transformative experience. Beyond everything I learned about narrative, production, and structure, the most valuable thing was feeling part of a family, of a real support network of filmmakers who share the same passion for telling stories with impact."

VIVIANA ZUÑIGA
 Filmmaker, Mexico

Right: SSP fellow Laura García shooting her film with Water For People in Sibacá, Guatemala. Fellow Asael Jalal and his crew pause between shoots for his film, with Root Capital in the a Labor community of Ocotepeque, Honduras.

















"The story helped us to showcase the results and solutions of our programs rather than focusing solely on the problems. This is extremely important to us, as it allows us to highlight the positive impact and real transformations in the communities we work with. The narrative of the documentary took a proactive approach, highlighting resilience and community leadership."

Click to watch SSP LatAm's films!

- MERCEDES NAVARRETE
Glasswing International

Above: SSP fellow Ángel Linares producing his film with WITNESS in the Calakmul Biosphere Reserve, Mexico.

Top left: SSP fellow Mauricio Panozo and crew filming for their Teach For Bolivia film in La Paz, Bolivia.

Bottom left: SSP Fellow Laura García filming with Water For People in Guatemala.

Bottom right: SSP Fellow Greg Méndez and Daniel Gómez, sound operator, during a production in the Colombian Amazon with the Amazon Conservation Team.







Snapshots of a celebratory screening of SSP Latin America's films in Mexico City, presented in partnership with DocsMX and screened at the Goethe Institute. Directly above: Skoll Foundation's Gabriel Diamond celebrates with SSP fellows Ángel Linares, Pablo Mejía Trujillo, Rene Mauricio Panozo Montero, and Nicole Caifal.













Left: Behind the scenes with Solutions Storytelling Project Asia filmmaker Bhumika Saraswati and crew preparing for a shoot in Rajasthan, India in collaboration with Educate Girls.

Above: SSP fellows Manuel Alberto Maia and Aghniadi, filming with the fisherfolk of Ende, Indonesia for a short documentary in collaboration with Blue Ventures.











Click to watch the trailer for SSP Asia!

Right, top: SSP fellow filmmaker Sandeep Sreelekha in New Delhi, as he films with local community leader Manoj, in collaboration with Nidan. Right, bottom: In Uttar Pradesh, India, VC member Ipshita Bhattacharyya and crew film the region's first female drone pilot for a Solutions Storytelling Project: Asia film in collaboration with Breakthrough.

Above: SSP fellow Bhumika Saraswati and crew in Rajasthan, India in collaboration with Educate Girls. Below: SSP fellow Nikita Mandhani sits with her film's protagonist, Tara, in collaboration with Khushi Baby.



### Who We Are

We're a multi-faceted staff and board of media makers, industry veterans, and creative producers who work, in collaboration with our global network of community organizers, to support our growing membership of thousands, beyond borders and cultures.

#### **CORE TEAM**



Andrea Arauz Manager, Latin America Communities



Debra Aroko Co-Director, Solutions Storytelling Project Africa



Christina Barston Manager, Development and Global Media Partnerships



**Koval Bhatia** Co-Director, Solutions Storytelling Project Asia



Sky Dylan-Robbins Founder, Executive Director



Samantha Stokes Community Coordinator



Chantal Encalada Manager, Community



Hany Hawasly Director, Operations



**Christine Liu** Manager, Global Teams



Maggie Piazza Carroll Manager, Press Play Tour



Jenna Potts Senior Manager, Communications



Veda Shastri Co-Director, Solutions Storytelling Project Asia



Kat Vacchio Manager, Creative Development

#### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**



**Andy Pergam** Chair Media/Tech Executive and Advisor



Duy Linh Tu Vice Chair Filmmaker, Dean of Academic Affairs, Columbia Journalism School



**Ann Derry** Treasurer Executive Producer



Jane McDonnell **Executive Committee** CEO, Free Range Media LLC



**Richard Samson** Secretary Media and Entertainment Executive



Kati Fernandez Chief Content Officer, TOGETHXR



Kevin Merida Media Executive



Joe Posner Director, Fire-Works Film



**Betsy Rate** Director, Career Development, UC Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism



Rodrigo Reyes Director, Producer and Writer

"The Board stands in awe of all that the VC team has achieved. The staff and volunteer organizers continue to imagine bold new ways to support this fast-growing creative network and nimbly adapt as the industry shifts. This work would not happen without the financial support of VC's partners, and we're grateful for their vision, as well. We're united in our excitement for the future – and couldn't be prouder of how the organization is blazing a trail, actively growing its impact around the globe."

- ANDY PERGAM, **Board Chair** 

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### With Immense Gratitude

### TO OUR FUNDERS

The Video Consortium is made possible by support from:

















### AND TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS



AND TO THE HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE WHO'VE DONATED THEIR FUNDS AND TIME TO HELP POWER VC YEAR-ROUND.

> Right: Behind the scenes of a Solutions Storytelling Project: Latin America film by Mauricio Panozo Montero with Teach for Bolivia.





### What's Next?

As we enter our second decade, we'll continue to build deep community, provide resources, and offer professional development for our immensely talented, and fast-growing, global membership. We'll continue offering fellowships and collaborative mentorship. We'll continue to be local first, supporting existing and new local hubs around the US and globe.

Now, we'll build upon all of this with new initiatives. Among them: a grant opportunity for innovative stories, research on emerging trends, resources on Al and sustainability, more offerings for students, more training for local newsrooms, and a platform that connects excellent story ideas with the people who can help bring them to the world.

Most notably, we'll be expanding our mission to not only serve professionals, but, gradually, audiences, too.

As our first decade reflected the linear, one-way nature of the industry, our second decade will reflect the emerging reciprocity of what it means to make and consume media.

Amidst all of this, we'll staunchly uphold our torch of journalistic integrity, of ethics, and of using our medium as a reminder of our shared humanity and interdependence – which is, at the end of the day, what most matters.

Right: Longtime member and video journalist Joss Fong (@HowTown) speaks during Future of Nonfiction Video 2025, with fellow journalist Sam Ellis (@SearchParty).







Here's to diving deeper and to discovering tradden trees was (and new models) along the way.

Owward we go!

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