

Arabella developed winner- and field leader-specific interview protocols that included questions designed to contextualize our document review and survey data. Protocols were reviewed by the Knight Foundation staff to ensure that they captured what they intended to learn through the evaluation. Interview questions by respondent type are listed below.

**PAST KNIGHT NEWS CHALLENGE WINNER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL****1. Can you tell me a little bit about your Knight News Challenge-funded project?**

a) Prompt, if necessary: What were the goals of the project? What did it accomplish?

**2. What impact did your project have that it would not have been able to achieve without Knight News Challenge funding and support?****3. How, if at all, has your participation in the Challenge had an impact on you or your organization, beyond supporting the project that was funded?****4. As you look back on your trajectory from the time you received the award, what role, if any, has the Knight News Challenge played in your trajectory?****5. In what ways, if any, do you believe the Knight News Challenge has influenced your field?**

**FIELD LEADER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL**

**1. Please describe the ways in which you have engaged with the Knight News Challenge, if at all.**

**2. In what ways, if any, do you believe the Knight News Challenge has influenced your field?**

a) Prompt, if necessary: In what ways, if any, do you believe the Knight News Challenge has influenced the trajectory of the organizations and individuals it has supported?

**3. Are there other organizations or initiatives that are funding similar work as the Knight News Challenge?**

a) How would you compare and contrast them to the Knight News Challenge?

**4. Is there anything else you would like to share with us?**



On the 10th anniversary of the Knight News Challenge (KNC), Knight Foundation wants to learn more about its impact—how funded projects have evolved and what winners are doing now. To support the foundation in this effort, [Arabella Advisors](#) is conducting a retrospective assessment of the KNC. Our goal is to understand how your experience with the News Challenge impacted your work, your organization, and your careers.

Your responses will be reported to the foundation in the aggregate and, while the foundation may choose to release the results of this assessment, we will not attribute quotes without explicit permission. The survey should take about 20 minutes to complete.

Thank you for your help with the evaluation of the News Challenge — your input is critical to the foundation's learning. If you have any questions during the process, please contact Caroline Nguyen at [caroline.nguyen@arabellaadvisors.com](mailto:caroline.nguyen@arabellaadvisors.com).



## WINNER INFORMATION AND PROJECT STATUS

**1. Respondent name**

**2. Project name**

**3. Your position/role within the project**

**4. Did/does the project develop open source technology?**

a) Yes [skip logic » p3]

b) No [skip logic » p4]



**5. Have you released your open source code?**

a) Yes

b) No



YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE KNIGHT NEWS CHALLENGE

In the following section, please share your perspective on the KNC's influence on the field and your experience as an awardee.

FIELD INFLUENCE

6. From your perspective, what is the biggest impact you think the KNC has made on the field?

- a) No discernible impact
- b) Engaged the technology community in news and/or journalism
- c) Engaged journalists and media organizations in technology issues
- d) Helped launch specific projects
- e) Other:

7. Please share details about your perspective on how the KNC has influenced the fields of journalism and/or technology:

8. Thinking about your own work— both your KNC project and more generally—how would you say it has contributed to the larger fields of journalism and/or technology, if at all?

NETWORKS

For the following items, please select the answer that best corresponds to your experience.

My participation in the KNC helped me to build relationships that remain strong to this day with:

Fellow winners	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Knight staff members	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Others in technology	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Others in journalism and news	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

**9. How have the relationships you developed during the Challenge advanced your work, if at all? Please check all that apply:**

- a) Helped me to secure additional funding
- b) Helped me increase adoption of my product
- c) Helped me learn about the field
- d) Helped me develop business skills/acumen
- e) Helped me think differently about my work
- f) Helped me develop relevant technical skills
- g) Helped me raise awareness of my project
- h) Other:
- i) None

**10. Knight Foundation brings News Challenge winners together to learn and network in-person (e.g., “KNC Summers” gatherings at MIT). Were you able to attend at least one of these convenings?**

- a) Yes
- b) No [skip logic » p6]



**11. Looking back, how valuable was this experience to your professional development?**

- a) Very valuable
- b) Somewhat valuable
- c) Of little value
- d) Not at all valuable

**12. Looking back, how valuable was this experience to building your professional network?**

- a) Very valuable
- b) Somewhat valuable
- c) Of little value
- d) Not at all valuable

**13. Which of the following outcomes did you experience by attending these convenings, if any? Please check all that apply.**

- a) Built relationships with Knight Foundation staff members
- b) Built relationships with other funders
- c) Met business partners
- d) Met collaborators
- e) Grew my fundraising abilities
- f) Grew my business acumen/knowledge
- g) Grew my technical skills/knowledge
- h) Learned about other projects relevant to my work
- i) Other:
- j) None

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**14. Knight Foundation brings members of its community together to review grant applications to the foundation. Did you participate in any grant review processes, such as subsequent Knight News Challenges or prototype reviews?**

- a) Yes
- b) No [skip logic » p8]

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**15. How valuable did you find this experience to your professional development?**

- a) Very valuable
- b) Somewhat valuable
- c) Of little value
- d) Not at all valuable

**16. How valuable did you find this experience to building your professional network?**

- a) Very valuable
- b) Somewhat valuable
- c) Of little value
- d) Not at all valuable

**17. How, if at all, did participating in this process advance your work moving forward? Please check all that apply.**

- a) Built relationships with Knight Foundation staff members
- b) Built relationships with other funders
- c) Met business partners
- d) Met collaborators
- e) Grew my fundraising abilities
- f) Grew my business acumen/knowledge
- g) Grew my technical skills/knowledge
- h) Learned about other projects relevant to my work
- i) Other:
- j) None



**18. Since the grant year, how (if at all) have you engaged with the Knight network (i.e. Knight Foundation staff members and/or fellow KNC winners)? Please check all that apply.**

- a) Members of the Knight network have become part of my own professional network
- b) I have presented at a conference with a member of the Knight network
- c) I have collaborated on a project with a member of the Knight network
- d) I have served on a board with or for a member of the Knight network
- e) I have provided technical or professional assistance to a member of the Knight network
- f) I have promoted or featured the work of a member of the Knight network
- g) I have not engaged with any members of the Knight network since the award
- h) Other:

**19. How, if at all, should the foundation strengthen its approach to building networks? Please check all that apply.**

- a) Provide more opportunities to be together in person with other winners and KNC staff members during the Challenge
- b) Provide more opportunities for collaboration (e.g., grant review) after the Challenge ends
- c) Host alumni events at relevant conferences
- d) Build and manage an official alumni network
- e) Other:
- f) None

**CHALLENGES**

**20. What challenges did you personally encounter in executing your KNC project? Please check all that apply.**

- a) Lack of relevant technical expertise
- b) Lack of business expertise
- c) Difficulty fundraising or recruiting investors
- d) Generating awareness of the product
- e) Securing users/adoption
- f) Other:
- g) None

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**CURRENT STATUS OF KNIGHT NEWS CHALLENGE PROJECT**

**21. Did your winning project remain active after the Knight News Challenge?**

- a) Yes, and it's still active [skip logic » p12]
- b) Yes, but it has since ended
- c) No [skip logic » p11]

Comment box (optional):





**22. When did the project end? [DATE]**



**23. Why did the project end? Please check all that apply.**

[skip logic for all answers » p17]

- a) The project accomplished its goals
- b) Another entity acquired the project or product
- c) The project merged with another entity
- d) Leaders wanted to work on something else
- e) The project struggled to build a team with the right skills to advance the project
- f) The project had had trouble securing new funding
- g) The project had difficulty recruiting the right partners
- h) The project was not able to recruit users
- i) Other:



**24. Are you personally still involved in this project?**

- a) Yes [skip logic » p14]
- b) No



**25. When did you leave the organization/project? [month, year]**

[skip logic » p15]



In the following section, please share your perspective on the project's evolution since the award.

*If you feel unable to answer these questions, please choose "Don't know."*

**26. How has the project changed since the conclusion of your award?  
Please check all that apply:**

- a) New leadership
- b) Secured nonprofit status
- c) Transitioned from nonprofit to for-profit status
- d) Transitioned from for-profit to nonprofit status
- e) Project has acquired other entities

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- f) Another entity has acquired the project
- g) Project has merged with another entity
- h) Project has significantly changed its purpose/focus
- i) Other:
- j) Don't know
- k) None

Comments:

**27. What major accomplishments has the project achieved since the conclusion of the award? Please check all that apply:**

- a) The project has grown its project team
- b) The project has hired staff with the right skills to advance the project
- c) The project has grown its budget
- d) The project has diversified its revenue
- e) The project has won (an)other major award(s)
- f) The project has recruited partners important to its success
- g) The project has succeeded in marketing to potential users
- h) The project has increased its user base
- i) The project has entered new market segments
- j) The project has developed additional products
- k) Other:
- l) Don't know
- m) None

Comments:

**28. What major challenges has the project faced since the conclusion of the award? Please check all that apply:** [skip logic for all answers » p16]

- a) The project has had to downsize its project team
- b) The project has struggled to build a team with the right skills to advance the project
- c) The project's budget has decreased in size

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- d) The project is dependent on a small number of funders
- e) The project has had trouble securing new funding
- f) The project has had difficulty recruiting the right partners
- g) The project has had difficulty marketing to potential users
- h) The project's user base has decreased
- i) The project has not been able to break into new market segments
- j) The project has lost market share
- k) Other:
- l) Don't know
- m) None

Comments:

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In the following section, please share your perspective on the project's evolution since the award.

*Please respond as best you can based on the experience you had prior to leaving the project, and any knowledge you have of it since.*

*If you feel unable to answer these questions, please choose "Don't know."*

**29. How has the project changed since the conclusion of your award?**

**Please check all that apply:**

- a) New leadership
- b) Secured nonprofit status
- c) Transitioned from nonprofit to for-profit status
- d) Transitioned from for-profit to nonprofit status
- e) Project has acquired other entities
- f) Another entity has acquired the project
- g) Project has merged with another entity
- h) Project has significantly changed its purpose/focus
- i) Other:
- j) Don't know
- k) None

Comments:

**30. What major accomplishments has the project achieved since the conclusion of the award? Please check all that apply:**

- a) The project has grown its project team
- b) The project has hired staff with the right skills to advance the project
- c) The project has grown its budget
- d) The project has diversified its revenue
- e) The project has won (an) other major award(s)
- f) The project has recruited partners important to its success
- g) The project has succeeded in marketing to potential users
- h) The project has increased its user base
- i) The project has entered new market segments
- j) The project has developed additional products
- k) Other:
- l) Don't know
- m) None

Comments:

**31. What major challenges has the project faced since the conclusion of the award? Please check all that apply:**

[skip logic for all answers » p17]

- a) The project has had to downsize its project team
- b) The project has struggled to build a team with the right skills to advance the project
- c) The project's budget has decreased in size
- d) The project is dependent on a small number of funders
- e) The project has had trouble securing new funding
- f) The project has had difficulty recruiting the right partners
- g) The project has had difficulty marketing to potential users
- h) The project's user base has decreased
- i) The project has not been able to break into new market segments
- j) The project has lost market share
- k) Other:

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l) Don't know

m) None

Comments:

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#### KNIGHT NEWS CHALLENGE WINNER PROJECT UPDATE

[Winners still at original project]

#### 32. Budget

a) What is the current annual revenue for the project? [\$\_\_\_\_\_]

b) What are the current annual expenses for the project? [\$\_\_\_\_\_]

#### 33. Please provide an estimation of your revenue breakdown in:

a) Private equity \_\_\_\_%

b) Grants \_\_\_\_%

c) Individual donations \_\_\_\_%

d) Government funding (grants, contracts) \_\_\_\_%

e) Fee-for-service revenue \_\_\_\_%

f) Crowdfunding \_\_\_\_%

g) In-kind support \_\_\_\_%

h) Other:

#### 34. How, if at all, has Knight Foundation helped you to advance this project during and after the award? Please check all that apply.

[skip logic for all answers/ whole question » p18]

#### The Knight Foundation helped me to:

a) Build relationships with other funders

b) Meet business partners

c) Meet collaborators

d) Grow my fundraising abilities

e) Grow my business skills/acumen

f) Grow my technical skills/knowledge

g) Learn about other projects relevant to my work

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- h) Garner press attention
- i) Enhance my credibility due to affiliation with Knight Foundation
- j) Other:
- k) None

**KNIGHT NEWS CHALLENGE WINNER UPDATE**

[Winners no longer at original project]

**35. Name of current project(s):**

**36. Organization type (Please check all that apply):**

- a) Nonprofit
- b) Fiscally sponsored organization
- c) For-profit
- d) B corporation
- e) Other:

**37. Description of project(s):**

**38. Your position/role within the project(s):**

**39. How, if at all, has Knight Foundation helped you to advance this new project? Please consider your experience both during and after the award. Please check all that apply.**

**The Knight Foundation helped me to:**

- a) Build relationships with other funders
- b) Meet business partners
- c) Meet collaborators
- d) Grow my fundraising abilities
- e) Grow my business skills/acumen
- f) Grow my technical skills/knowledge
- g) Learn about other projects relevant to my work
- h) Experiment with an idea related to my current work
- i) Garner press attention
- j) Enhance my credibility due to affiliation with Knight Foundation
- k) Other:
- l) None

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**GROWTH**

**40. Please reflect on your career since winning the KNC. How influential was your experience on:**

Developing relevant technical skills	VERY INFLUENTIAL	INFLUENTIAL	SOMEWHAT INFLUENTIAL	NOT AT ALL INFLUENTIAL
Growing your professional network	VERY INFLUENTIAL	INFLUENTIAL	SOMEWHAT INFLUENTIAL	NOT AT ALL INFLUENTIAL
Developing business acumen	VERY INFLUENTIAL	INFLUENTIAL	SOMEWHAT INFLUENTIAL	NOT AT ALL INFLUENTIAL
Growing your enterprise	VERY INFLUENTIAL	INFLUENTIAL	SOMEWHAT INFLUENTIAL	NOT AT ALL INFLUENTIAL
Deepening your understanding of the news/journalism field	VERY INFLUENTIAL	INFLUENTIAL	SOMEWHAT INFLUENTIAL	NOT AT ALL INFLUENTIAL
Deepening your understanding of the technology field	VERY INFLUENTIAL	INFLUENTIAL	SOMEWHAT INFLUENTIAL	NOT AT ALL INFLUENTIAL

**41. How, if at all, did participating in the KNC prompt you to think differently about your work?**

- a) Deepened my interest in news, journalism, and/or media
- b) Helped me see the connection between my project and other work in news, journalism, and/or media
- c) Helped me better understand technology
- d) Allowed me to learn about the market for my product/service and make informed decisions moving forward
- e) Other:
- f) None



**PERMISSION TO ATTRIBUTE QUOTES**

**42. If Arabella Advisors quotes from your responses, may we attribute those quotes to you?**

- a) Yes, you have my permission to quote me by name
- b) Please ask me before quoting me by name
- c) No, please do not use direct quotes from my responses in any reporting