



**We believe in
the power of
communications
for good.**

Halting climate change. Eradicating disease. Lifting up the arts. Ending poverty. At their core, foundations and nonprofits are in the business of advancing big, bold ideas. But impact only happens when those ideas move out into the wider world to inspire change through *smart communications*.

The Communications Network connects, gathers, and informs leaders from the most influential foundations, nonprofits, and social sector consultancies across the globe.



We are a vibrant, diverse, and dedicated community of 3,000 communicators, storytellers, strategists, designers, researchers, producers, and community builders.

Driven by our core values of **community**, **learning**, and **leadership**, The Network brings together social sector leaders to solve complex problems, while providing them with insights, ideas, innovations, and techniques to help them grow, thrive—and shape the future.

The Value of The Communications Network

Foundations and nonprofits that communicate well are stronger, smarter, and vastly more effective.

Practiced at its highest level, modern communications defines, understands, and cultivates important audiences. It listens, analyzes data, and gathers intelligence. It crafts and shares compelling stories and creates conversations. It sees systems and narratives. It deploys influence. It convenes and builds community.

We live in an astounding era, where powerful new tools and approaches can foster conversations, spark debates, launch ideas, and deliver change on a global scale.



The pandemic has shifted communications from a 'nice to have' to a 'must-have.' I see, with even greater clarity, the value of The Communications Network for us all.

NETWORK MEMBER



You have extraordinary power, the power to tell stories, to call people to action, and to change lives.

STACEY ABRAMS at ComNet19

At the same time, the communications field is evolving at a dizzying pace. Breakthroughs in neuroscience are teaching us about how the brain receives, processes, and understands information (and even why sometimes, it doesn't). New research in anthropology, sociology, and psychology reveals how values and narratives shape our worldviews and underpin our beliefs. How frames, stories, and language are perceived and processed. And how networks elevate ideas and make them move.

The past year placed the value of our work and community in stark relief. The COVID-19 pandemic, an overdue racial reckoning in America, and violent attacks on the truth and our fragile democracy have made plain that **smart and ethical communications are critical**. Put simply, these interconnected crises have made our **personal and professional networks more relevant — and essential — than ever**.

For over 40 years, we have proven our ability to move with agility and purpose when the world around us shifts quickly. Together with our members and supporters, we will continue to anticipate what is needed and provide vital support, connection, and resources to our community and beyond, so ideas keep moving and *no one has to go it alone*.

Elevate Your Leadership: Join The Network

Whether you serve within a large or small foundation, at a nonprofit, or lead your own consultancy, most days there isn't much time to lift your head up and seek out new ideas, winning strategies, and best practices. The Communications Network offers real and tangible benefits through our community, platforms, and programming.

The Benefits of Network Membership:

- Forge connections and build relationships with the most knowledgeable, influential, and innovative global leaders in social sector communications.
- Demonstrate and develop your leadership by sharing and exchanging knowledge, advice, and experience with peers around the world.
- Showcase your expertise by contributing to the field's best thinking through research, case studies, resource guides, reports, and practical tools curated and developed by The Network.
- Increase the visibility of your organization and causes by participating in The Network's conferences, local networking groups, communities of practice, among other Network programs and platforms.
- Access and learn from our comprehensive and growing suite of resources and tools, including how-to guides, case studies, and live and on-demand webinars; plus, our latest research, trend reports, and more.



When RWJF helped establish The Communications Network more than 40 years ago, we envisioned a community of communicators for a better world working, learning, and growing together. Giving to The Network has helped turn that vision into a powerful reality.

**ALLYN BROOKS-LASURE, VP FOR COMMUNICATIONS,
ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION**

Network Programming

Circles

Network members serving in similar job roles, working on similar issue areas, or sharing an identity connect in small, peer-led, and facilitated groups to exchange ideas and practices, and support one another through Circles.

ComNetworkLOCALs

Foundation and nonprofit leaders gather regularly through The Network's LOCALs groups in 15 cities across the US to connect and learn from one another on issues facing their communities and the field.

ComNet Annual Conference / ComNetworkV

ComNet is our in-person, annual conference attended by nearly 1,000 social sector leaders. Due to COVID-19, in 2020 The Network hosted our first-ever virtual gathering for three days of ideas, insights, inspiration, learning, networking, and fun.

The Clarence B. Jones Impact Award

Through the Jones Award, we identify and lift up social sector communications efforts that achieve real-world impact. Past winners include Florida Rights Restoration Coalition and Truth Initiative.

Learning Sessions

Our online learning sessions — webinars, virtual roundtables, and presentations—provide access to thought leaders and offer skill-building opportunities, data, and insights on a range of relevant topics and practice areas.



Research & Tools

The Network regularly conducts research and creates tools to help practitioners stay current on best practices, emerging trends, and innovations in the field.

ComNetworkDEI.org: The Network launched ComNetworkDEI.org in 2020 to help the field operationalize the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion in foundation and nonprofit communications.

Storytelling for Good: An online learning platform to help foundations and nonprofits plan and execute a storytelling strategy—with tools, resources, and case studies to help organizations tell meaningful stories that resonate.

Communication Matters:

Our data-driven model for effective communications and *Stanford Social Innovation Review* series are aimed at helping foundations and nonprofits evaluate and evolve their strategic communications.

To learn more about membership, visit: comnetwork.org/join-the-network



From sharing ideas to troubleshooting similar challenges, I have found experienced peers and trusted collaborators through The Network that have helped me strengthen my skills and my organization's impact.

NETWORK MEMBER

**Elevate the Field:
Become a Network Supporter**

The Communications Network is a not-for-profit organization that relies on private financial support, grants, and donations to fulfill our mission and core values of community, learning, and leadership.

We seek supporters who share our belief that foundations and nonprofits who communicate well are stronger, smarter, and vastly more effective and that diverse, vibrant networks are essential to build community, share learning, elevate leaders, and solve complex problems.

As an organization tasked with connecting and advancing a rapidly changing field, we are constantly evolving how we work and what we offer to meet the needs of leaders working in communications for good.

Communication matters. Now more than ever. Your financial support will make it possible for us to remain nimble and act swiftly to meet the moment and provide the priority programming, connections, resources, data, and gatherings critical to the success of the social sector.

The Communications Network: Examples of Our Members and Supporters



To learn more and explore ways you can support The Network, please contact CEO Sean Gibbons at sgibbons@comnetwork.org.