



INDEPENDENT NEWS
SUSTAINABILITY
SUMMIT
SAN DIEGO, CA • SEPT. 9-11, 2026



Wyndham San Diego Bayside
1355 North Harbor Drive San Diego, CA 92101

Sponsorship Packages

Support the only conference for independent news leaders

Lion
PUBLISHERS

Welcome

Welcome to the **2026 Independent News Sustainability Summit (INSS26)**, where hundreds of independent news leaders, funders, and supporters will come together on September 9-11 in San Diego for two memorable days of transformative learning and connection with the local media ecosystem.

Hosted by LION Publishers, this conference features keynotes from industry experts, dozens of educational sessions on financial health, operational resilience, and journalistic impact (LION's pillars of sustainability), and facilitated networking opportunities.

In conjunction with the Summit, we'll also host the eighth annual **LION Sustainability Awards**, celebrating dozens of winners across 10 categories with recognition and cash prizes. The LION Awards Ceremony will be held on the evening of September 9*. Tickets to the Summit and LION Awards are sold separately.

Sponsors of INSS26 are afforded incredible opportunities, including the following:



Meet the right people

Directly engage with business owners and decision-makers, and participate in conversations shaping the industry for today and tomorrow.



Show off what you do

Boost your brand visibility with event-related marketing materials and strategic social media mentions before and after the event. And don't fret, as we create a host of networking opportunities for your company to showcase how your products and services can change the game for these media outlets.



Share your story

By accessing attendee profiles and scheduling hosted conversations through our conference, you can build brand awareness with key decision-makers.

**Date subject to change*



INDEPENDENT NEWS SUSTAINABILITY SUMMIT

SAN DIEGO, CA • SEPT. 9-11, 2026



Wyndham San Diego Bayside

Who Should Attend

LION calls all leaders and funders interested in nurturing a thriving and sustainable journalism ecosystem. Here's who should attend the event:

- **Leaders of independent news publications.** We define a leader as CEO/executive director, founder, publisher, editor, chief operating officer, chief financial officer, or equivalent.
- **Anyone who works for independent news publications.** Attendees have told us that sending team members who work on the business side has been a valuable experience for them.
- **Supporters of independent news publications.** This includes vendors who serve publishers, individual donors, news funders, and those who work for other journalism-support organizations.

If any of the above describes you, will you join us in San Diego to explore ideas, build connections, and envision change?



INDEPENDENT NEWS SUSTAINABILITY SUMMIT

SAN DIEGO, CA • SEPT. 9-11, 2026



Wyndham San Diego Bayside

What People Are Saying



The community I find at the LION Summit is a highlight of my year, every year. Running a news org and holding it down for your community, whether it's a couple blocks or a county of a million, can be really lonely work. The LION Summit gives us a space to bring us closer together, and that's how the industry moves forward."

Richard Young, CivicLex



LION has probably been one of the best investments I have made in my media business and professional development this year. I attended their Summit in Chicago and it was hands down the best conference I have attended. I have been looking for other independent publishers and media-centric resources as I scale Urbaanite and I think I found my people, lol.

Ashley Currie, Urbaanite



It's always a joy to attend this annual gathering of trailblazing publishing entrepreneurs who wear their journalistic hearts on their sleeves. It's so clear that folks here are committed to serving communities and supporting democracy – and that's always incredibly inspiring to me.

Anita Li, The Green Line





INDEPENDENT NEWS SUSTAINABILITY SUMMIT

SAN DIEGO, CA • SEPT. 9-11, 2026



By the Numbers

At LION, we are working towards a **hopeful vision where a sustainable and thriving local media ecosystem is a tangible reality** – and our Summit helps us bring this vision to life.

4

years of the LION Summit

8

years of the LION Awards

1,400+

attendees

[Learn more](#) about the 2024 Summit attendee and sponsor experience. 2025 recap coming soon!

Independent News Sustainability Summit | September 9-11, 2026 | San Diego, CA

Sponsorship Packages

Summit 2026 sponsorship opportunities are limited! The deadline to confirm your sponsorship is July 17, 2026, to receive full sponsor benefits. Questions? Contact Shelly Hunter, LION’s development director, at sponsorships@lionpublishers.com or 404.465.2460.

	Presenting	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Community
Value and number available	\$65,000 (1)	\$50,000 (2)	\$20,000 (4)	\$10,000 (4)	\$4,000 (8)
Virtual sponsor profile in event app	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Complimentary Summit and LION Awards tickets	4 Summit; 4 Awards	3 Summit; 3 Awards	2 Summit; 2 Awards	1 Summit; 1 Awards	1 Summit
Logo/name recognition on event webpage (tiered placement)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ (Name)
Logo/name recognition on sponsor slide during Summit kickoff (tiered placement)	✓	✓	✓ (As a group)	✓ (Name, as a group)	✓ (Name, as a group)
Social media posts recognizing support on three platforms	✓ (3)	✓ (3)	✓ (2 as a group)	✓ (1 as a group)	✓ (1 as a group)
Recognition in the post-event sponsor report	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Distribution of branded swag at the Summit and Awards	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Verbal acknowledgement during opening remarks at the Summit (tiered placement)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Ability to schedule 1:1 meetings with attendees, as available	✓	✓	✓		
Featured Q&A posted on LION’s website and social channels	✓	✓	✓		
Recognition in annual report	✓	✓	✓		
1 push notification in event app	✓	✓	✓		
Highlighted as a “VIP sponsor” in event app and in three pre-event communications	✓	✓			
Invitation to introduce one main ballroom session	✓	✓			
Rotating digital banner ad in app	✓	✓			
Recognition, “Made possible by,” on all Summit and Awards marketing materials	✓				
VIP recognition, advertisement in Whova email communications	✓				
Invitation to make 5-minute remarks at the Summit’s opening or closing	✓				
Inclusion of logo on branded conference T-shirt	✓				

Independent News Sustainability Summit | September 9-11, 2026 | San Diego, CA

À La Carte Opportunities I

These opportunities can be added to an existing sponsorship level or sold separately. All sponsorship packages are a starting point for deeper conversation about your organization’s philanthropic and marketing needs.

	Reception Partner	Luncheon Partner	Networking Breakfast	Accessibility Partner	Signage Sponsor
Value and number available	\$15,000 (2)	\$15,000 (3)	\$8,500 (2)	\$8,500 (1)	\$8,500 (1)
Description	Celebrate as the sponsor of one of two evening receptions.	Sponsor one of three luncheons during the conference.	Curate a programming experience at one of two breakfasts and connect with an audience of your preferred size. Hospitality costs assumed by sponsor.	Support building an accessible experience, from ASL interpretation at select events to a nursing person’s room.	Help create a safe, informed space by covering costs of signage or branded materials that raise attendee awareness.
Virtual sponsor profile in event app	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Complimentary Summit and LION Awards tickets	2 Summit; 2 Awards	2 Summit; 2 Awards	1 Summit; 1 Awards	1 Summit; 1 Awards	1 Summit; 1 Awards
Logo/name recognition on sponsor slide during Summit kickoff (tiered placement)	✓ (As a group)	✓ (As a group)	✓ (As a group)	✓ (As a group)	✓ (As a group)
Social media posts recognizing support on three platforms	✓ (2 as a group)	✓ (2 as a group)	✓ (1 as a group)	✓ (1 as a group)	✓ (1 as a group)
Recognition in the post-event sponsor report	✓	✓	✓ (Name)	✓ (Name)	✓ (Name)
Distribution of branded swag at the Summit and Awards	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Verbal acknowledgement during your sponsored event	✓	✓	✓		
Invitation to make remarks at your sponsored event	✓	✓	✓		
Hosted at event site	✓	✓	✓		
Verbal acknowledgement during opening remarks at the Summit (tiered placement)	✓	✓			
Featured Q&A posted on LION’s website and social channels	✓	✓			
Complete event coordination by LION (size, meeting space, menus, etc.)	✓	✓			
Recognition in annual report	✓	✓			
Complimentary drink tickets for attendees	✓				
Your name and LION’s name on lanyards that all attendees will wear					✓
Recognition, “Signage sponsored by TKTK,” on event signage					✓
Determines hospitality budget, plus guest count and menu			✓		



À La Carte Opportunities II

	Training Workshop	Wellness Partner	Coffee Partner	Vending Partner
Value and number available	\$8,500 (2)	\$7,500 (1)	\$5,000 (1)	\$4,000 (8)
Description	Plan a two-day networking and programming space for up to 50 attendees. The sponsor is responsible for AV needs.	Support a wellness experience focused on sharing and practicing tools that enhance mental, physical, and emotional health.	Play a key part in fostering dialogue and connection by providing our attendees with their next coffee fix.	Make connections with attendees and showcase your support for independent news publishers as an event vendor.
Virtual sponsor profile in event app	✓	✓	✓	✓
Complimentary Summit and LION Awards tickets	1 Summit; 1 Awards	1 Summit; 1 Awards	1 Summit	1 Summit
Logo/name recognition on sponsor slide during Summit kickoff (tiered placement)	✓	✓	✓ (Name)	✓ (Name, as a group)
Recognition in the post-event sponsor report	✓ (Name)	✓ (Name)	✓ (Name)	✓ (Name)
Social media posts recognizing support on three platforms	✓ (1)	✓ (1)	✓ (1)	
Distribution of branded swag at the Summit and Awards	✓	✓		
Hosted at event site	✓			
Ability to program in dedicated, private event space	✓			
Recognition, “Provided by,” on signage near coffee station(s)			✓	
Receive a 10x10 space, a 6-foot table, and two chairs in our vending space				✓

Interested in expanding access?

Ask Shelly Hunter how you can **expand your sponsorship to support the attendance of deserving LION members or students** who would otherwise be unable to attend the premier conference for independent news leaders.

Sponsorship FAQ and Final Deadlines

- **Confirmation, invoicing, and key dates.** The sponsorship opportunities and associated benefits are included in this deck. Based on your chosen sponsorship level, please provide the items associated with your sponsorship level by the requested date(s). After confirmation of your sponsorship, you will receive an email inviting you to upload your logo and any additional digital marketing assets to Whova and/or provide additional information. We cannot guarantee sponsorship fulfillment if the August 12 deadline is not met.
- **Conference registration.** You will also receive a confirmation email that will include a custom code to register your complimentary ticket(s) to attend the conference.

As you consider which support level you’re interested in, please keep the following final deadlines in mind. **LION cannot guarantee the availability of certain benefits past these deadlines.**

July 17 Secure your sponsorship (last call to sign on for 2026).	July 24 Submit logos, all digital marketing assets, Q&A responses, and let LION know if you intend to send swag.	August 12 Register for your free ticket(s) and submit final event planning details and/or required documentation as requested by the INSS team.	August 14 Submit Summit remarks and confirm any speaker(s) from your organization.
---	--	--	---



INDEPENDENT NEWS SUSTAINABILITY SUMMIT

SAN DIEGO, CA • SEPT. 9-11, 2026



Sponsorship Confirmation

Your contribution towards any sponsorship level is vital in deepening our commitment to strengthening the local news industry by supporting independent publishers. Sponsorships directly benefit conference attendees by keeping event participation costs low. Packages are the foundation for conversations, and our team is dedicated to crafting a package that meets your philanthropic and marketing needs. Exclusivity is limited to the Presenting Sponsorship level.

To secure your sponsorship or discuss additional opportunities not included in this deck, contact LION's director of development, Shelly Hunter, at sponsorships@lionpublishers.com or 404.465.2460 to start the conversation.



Confirm your sponsorship today!

