



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



Wyndham San Diego Bayside

## 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](mailto: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.



Add-Ons

Want to customize your sponsorship package even further? [We've got some ideas.](#)



\*Host a meeting

| Get event planning support                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Planning an event alongside ours? We're happy to help. We can provide up to three hours of dedicated support with site suggestions, answering questions, and more. |
| Value and number available: \$1,000 (flat rate); 4 available                                                                                                       |

| Access a list of potential venues                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| If you're looking for an off-site gathering space, we've put together a list of potential venues organized by capacity, proximity to the hotel, and more. |
| Value and number available: \$500 (flat rate); unlimited availability                                                                                     |

| Book an on-site meeting room                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Gain access to a private, dedicated meeting space in the hotel. The price is for one day, with a maximum of five hours within the space. Includes basic AV support. Food/beverage excluded. |
| Value and number available: \$2,000; 3 available                                                                                                                                            |

| Become an event partner                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| We'll help promote your on-site, off-site, or after-hours event with one Whova app push notification sent to all attendees. LION will write the content and send for approval. |
| Value and number available: \$500; 6 available                                                                                                                                 |



Prioritize access and the attendee experience

| Sponsor an attendee                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Directly cover the ticket cost for one attendee to participate in the Summit. LION will select a deserving Micro-Tier member to take advantage of this opportunity. |
| Value and number available: \$350; unlimited availability                                                                                                           |

| Become our Wi-Fi Sponsor                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sponsor Wi-Fi access for all attendees. Receive one Summit ticket, one social media post on LION's channels, verbal recognition during the event, and your logo on all attendee name badges. |
| Value and number available: \$3,000; 1 available                                                                                                                                             |

| Become a Snack Sponsor                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Provide some light refreshments for attendees between meals. Receive one Summit ticket, verbal recognition during the event, and a shoutout in a morning email sent to all attendees. |
| Value and number available: \$1,500; 3 available                                                                                                                                      |



Boost your brand visibility

| Sponsor co-branded swag                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Want to see your logo alongside LION's on limited-run conference swag? Sponsor an item. We'll source, design, and order it to distribute to attendees in San Diego. |
| Value and number available: \$3,000 (flat rate); 3 available                                                                                                        |

| Get featured in our member newsletter                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Receive a 150-word ad in our monthly member newsletter, which is distributed to approximately 650 people. Includes a 300 x 300 graphic. Image and copy must be approved by LION. |
| Value and number available: \$750 per ad; 8 available                                                                                                                            |

| Become our Digital Sponsor                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Receive two Summit tickets, one social media post on LION's channels, and one dedicated Whova app push notification sent to all attendees. LION will write the content and send for approval. |
| Value and number available: \$1,500; 1 available                                                                                                                                              |

***\*Please note: Attendees and sponsors are prohibited from scheduling on-site, off-site, or after-hours activities that conflict with LION's programming. Contact us at [summit@lionpublishers.com](mailto:summit@lionpublishers.com) to discuss possibilities for your event or offering. Thank you!***

# 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.**

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





# INDEPENDENT NEWS SUSTAINABILITY SUMMIT

SAN DIEGO, CA • SEPT. 9-11, 2026



Wyndham San Diego Bayside

## 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](mailto:sponsorships@lionpublishers.com) or 404.465.2460 to start the conversation.

Confirm your sponsorship today!



Click here!

**Lion**  
PUBLISHERS