

PRESS RELEASE
Embargoed until October 4th, 12pm

Youth Internships in Community Media: a first step towards capacity building for official language community media in minority setting.

Ottawa, October 4, 2018 - The Consortium of Official Language Minority Community Media welcomes the immediate creation of nearly 60 local media internships for young Canadians through the Young Canada Works program.

This first wave of internships announced today by Minister Joly, stems from the \$ 4.5 million budgeted over five years included in the Action Plan for Official Languages. These paid internships in official language radio and print media in minority communities, is a first determining step, by government, in support of local news.

"Community media is at the heart of local information in the country and we must help develop the skills of future generations to ensure the continual flow of community information. The federal government's investment is a first step in the development of an action plan that will ensure that our community media activities are maintained over short and medium term," says Francis Sonier, president of the Association de la presse francophone.

The Action Plan for Official Languages announced by the federal government last March also includes \$ 10 million over five years to develop the capacity of the Official Language community media.

"We welcome this additional funding destined to build media capacity and support the distribution of information to our local communities. Through this capacity building initiative, local media will be able to enhance their contribution to the vitality and sense of inclusiveness of our minority communities," said Steve Bonspiel, president of the Quebec Community Newspapers Association.

For his part, Claude Chabot, president of the Alliance des radios communautaires du Canada, believes that *"the measures announced today will benefit not only the local media but especially all citizens of the communities they served."*

According to the president of English-Language Arts Network, Bettina Forget “*Quebec’s English-speaking community does not suffer from a lack of content in its own language. What we do lack is information about our communities, and platforms to share our own stories. This is a role that can only be played by community media. Stronger media means stronger communities.*”

The Consortium of Official Language Minority Community Media, whose members speak with one voice, represents some 105 newspapers and radio stations in 10 provinces and 3 territories. Created in 2016 by the Association de la presse francophone (APF), the Quebec Community Newspapers Association (QCNA) and the Alliance des radios communautaires du Canada (ARC du Canada), the Consortium has just welcomed the English-Language Arts Network (ELAN) in its ranks as a representative of English-speaking community radio in Quebec.

-30-

For more information:

Linda Lauzon, Executive Director
Association de la presse francophone
(613) 276-6363
dg@apf.ca