



FREEDOM OF THE PRESS FOUNDATION

2019 IMPACT REPORT





A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Readers,

It's no secret that press freedom is under threat both in the U.S. and around the world. Worse yet, journalists are increasingly attacked by authoritarians who refuse to bow to public pressure.

At Freedom of the Press Foundation, we're not just advocating for press freedom rights—we are also building technology to protect journalists and whistleblowers where lawmakers refuse to help.

If politicians won't protect the rights of journalists, we will.

That's why we build software and systems now used inside the world's most impactful investigative news outlets, allowing them to avoid surveillance and keep their sources safe. It's why our digital security trainers work with at-risk independent journalists to keep their colleagues protected where the stakes are the highest. And it's why we continually innovate to stay one step ahead of the latest type of cyberattack.

We face many threats with great resources, but with your help, we can turn the tide.

But we can't protect the countless brave journalists and whistleblowers upholding our democracy based on threats from a decade ago. It's why we also comprehensively document the ever-changing threat landscape that U.S. journalists face with the U.S. Press Freedom Tracker. We track every arrest, every border stop, every physical attack, and every new legal threat they face around the country.



Whether you work at *The New York Times* or you are an independent journalist running your own website, everyone's rights need to be protected—no matter who is in political office.

It's a tough fight, but we thank you for enabling our work. We couldn't do it without you.

—

*Sincerely,
Trevor Timm
Freedom of the Press Foundation*



OUR MISSION

“A cantankerous press, an obstinate press, a ubiquitous press must be suffered by those in authority in order to preserve the even greater values of freedom of expression and the right of the people to know.”

Judge Murray Gurfein, Pentagon Papers case, June 17, 1971

FPF 2019 IMPACT REPORT



Founded in 2012, Freedom of the Press Foundation (FPF) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that protects and defends public interest journalism in the 21st century. We believe that a thriving free press—one that can change the course of history—depends not only on strong advocacy, but also on actively empowering journalists and whistleblowers to do their job in the face of adversity.

We build secure communications tools used by the world’s top investigative news organizations. We teach journalists how to keep themselves and their sources safe in the digital age. We monitor and document virtually every press freedom violation in the United States. And we engage in public and legal advocacy to defend press freedom in the U.S. and around the world.

Our goal is to protect and promote the basic human right of freedom of the press in a world where surveillance, censorship, and hacking risks are becoming more sophisticated and pervasive. These threats can keep the public from learning vital information about their governments. It’s our job to defend the public’s right to know.



HOW FPF IS UNIQUE

No other organization does what we do. With a relatively small staff, we punch orders of magnitude above our weight. Through our work on SecureDrop and our digital security trainings, we have earned the trust of hundreds of media organizations and thousands of individual journalists around the world.

This is not an accident. Freedom of the Press Foundation is an exceptionally nimble organization that is structured to be responsive to shifting press freedom threats. Our team of digital security trainers, reporters, advocates, and technologists is a team of equals, influencing each other's priorities every day.

Findings from a journalist training make their way into the development roadmap for the next day. A SecureDrop support ticket created by a news organization leads to a documentation update for the next release. An emerging threat to journalists discovered in our reporting on press freedom leads to the creation of a new advocacy campaign.

This agility is essential, given the rapidly changing nature of threats journalists face. As we look to the future, we must preserve our ability to remain responsive to new threats, to bring together diverse expertise, and to make decisions with a minimum of bureaucratic overhead.





MAJOR PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

Protecting High Stakes, High Impact Journalism

Building the Next-Generation of Secure Communications Tools

SecureDrop / For five years, Freedom of the Press Foundation has led the development of SecureDrop, an open source whistleblower submission system that enables journalists to communicate with anonymous sources in a safe and secure manner. SecureDrop is currently available in 20 languages and it is used by over 65 major news organizations worldwide (including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *NBC News*, *ProPublica*, *ICIJ*, *The Center for Investigative Journalism*, and many more). It is seen as an increasingly vital tool for all news organizations to offer to whistleblowers, and it has been the source of countless important investigative stories over the past several years.

Open Source Encryption Tools / FPF continues to build a variety of open source encryption tools that aim to protect journalists or promote transparency. In partnership with the Guardian Project, we released an Android app called *Haven* in 2018, which lets you turn a smartphone into a personal physical security system by using its motion, sound, vibration and light detectors to watch for intruders. It was designed for investigative journalists, human rights defenders, and people at risk of forced disappearance. It was widely adopted and has been downloaded over 500,000 times. We will continue to design and prototype open source encryption tools for the public's benefit.



SECUREDROP



MAJOR PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

Empowering Journalists

Digital security is now one of the most important press freedom issues of the 21st century. The press is currently barraged by a variety of threats from government actors and private individuals hoping to harass journalists, spy on them, or steal their communications. There have been countless cases reported nationally and internationally where journalists have been tracked down, arrested, or worse, based on data that is emitted from their cell phone or computer.

It has never been more important for journalists to protect their sources using technology and encryption tools from the moment they start speaking to them—and Freedom of the Press Foundation is the only US-based non-profit organization who has a team of experts who assist journalists in protecting themselves online.

Digital Security Trainings / FPF operates a growing team of digital security trainers based in New York, who regularly go inside newsrooms to provide journalists, documentary filmmakers, and media organizations important training on how to protect themselves and their sources online. These trainings include how to lock down your accounts to prevent hacking, how to protect your anonymity online, how to mitigate potential harassment or doxing, and how to encrypt a variety of communications methods such as text messages, phone calls, and emails. Over 3,000 journalists have attended at least one of FPF's trainings over the past several years.





MAJOR PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

Monitoring Press Freedom

In recent years, both verbal and physical threats against the press in the United States have escalated. The very concept of truth is under attack daily, threatened by demagogues, automated tools posing as humans on social media, and paid operatives cranking out misleading stories and propaganda.

U.S. Press Freedom Tracker / Launched in 2017, the U.S. Press Freedom Tracker documents and counts virtually every type of press freedom violation in the United States—from journalist arrests, camera searches and seizures, subpoenas, and physical attacks to surveillance orders and whistleblower prosecutions. The Tracker is the first and only website to provide reliable, easy-to-access information on the number of press freedom violations, and fills a crucial gap in the journalism landscape.

Freedom of the Press Foundation partnered with the Committee to Protect Journalists to launch the project after a strategy meeting at the Democracy Fund in 2017. The Tracker has since become an organizing hub for all the major press freedom groups in the United States, as evidenced by the Reporters Committee's 2018 report on the state of press freedom in the United States, which relied exclusively on USPFT data.

The Tracker combines the rigorous quantitative research of a database and the aggressive reporting of a news site. The data can be used by reporters to provide context for a story and it provides source material for stories that wouldn't otherwise make it into the mainstream news. It is a powerful advocacy tool for press freedom organizations who are focused on demanding change.

**U.S. PRESS
FREEDOM
TRACKER**



MAJOR PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

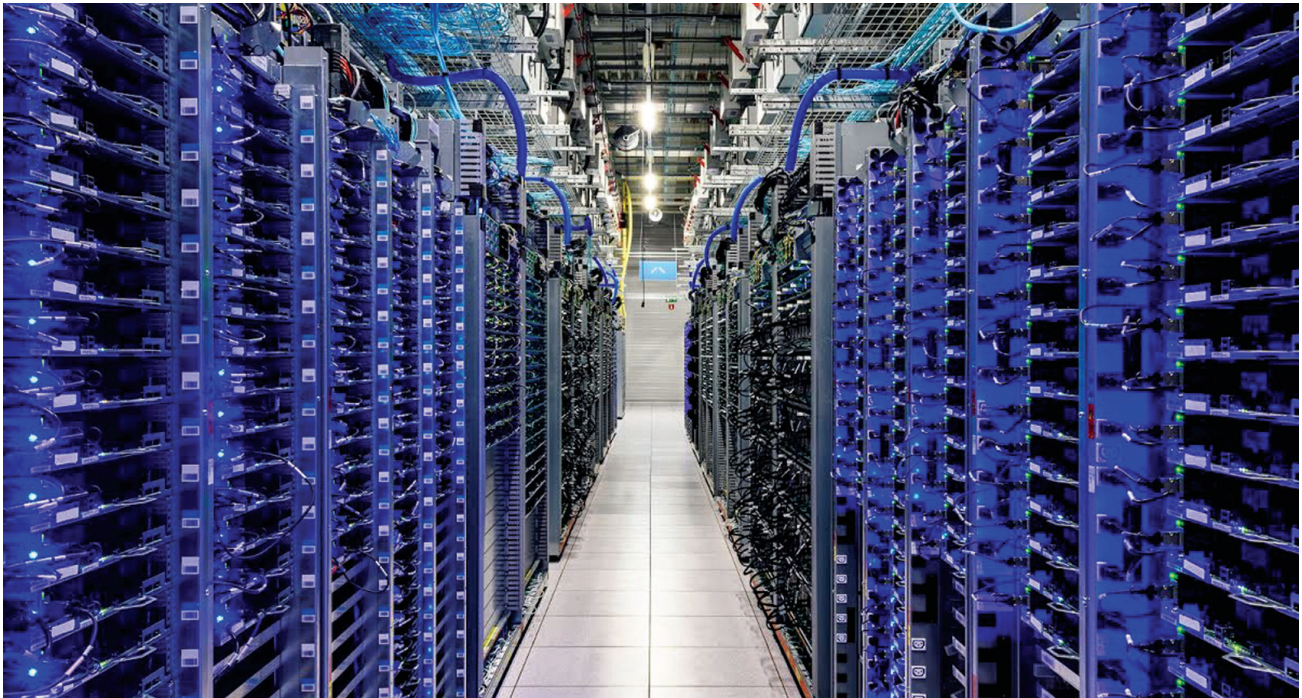
Advocating for the Press

It is essential that we engage in public and legal advocacy around critical press freedom issues, in order to fulfill our mission of protecting and promoting the basic human right of freedom of the press, both in the United States, and abroad.

Press Freedom Advocacy / Strong and intelligent advocacy is needed to combat threats to press freedom, given any political climate. FPF is in a unique position to lead grassroots advocacy efforts on these subjects. We have a large social media following, a well-read website, and robust media profile to push our message centering on strong press freedom rights for all. Additionally, we have a high profile board of directors who can amplify our message even further.

Our public and legal advocacy efforts focus on press freedom issues such as excessive government secrecy, the persecution of whistleblowers, the dangers of surveillance of journalists, the importance of the Freedom of Information Act, and protecting reporter's privilege.

Archive the News / We maintain complete archival copies of news websites threatened by wealthy buyers pushing an agenda or litigants with deep pockets through our Archive the News project. As examples like Gawker Media or Gothamist demonstrate, these risks are very real, especially for edgy outlets that pursue adversarial stories about business leaders. Our archive collection protects the work of these outlets and acts as a deterrent against attempts to silence inconvenient reporting through lawsuits or shutdowns.





HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

SecureDrop

In 2019, SecureDrop was adopted or reinstated by *NBC News*, *Australian Broadcasting Corporation*, *The Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project*, *The Dallas Morning News*, *Harvard University*, *Global Witness*, *Slate*, *Sueddeutsche Zeitung (Germany)*, *ProPublica*, *Business Insider*, and several smaller organizations.

In September 2019, we released SecureDrop 1.0.0, a major milestone marking the growing maturity and wide adoption of the project by news organizations. It provides whistleblowers with better anonymity and security protections.

We continued our work on the next generation of SecureDrop, the *SecureDrop Workstation*, which will offer journalists a more chat-like experience for interacting with anonymous sources, while maintaining critical security protections for journalists and sources.





HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

Digital Security Trainings (DST)

The DST team published more digital security resources for journalists than any previous year.

Over the course of 2019, DST's 4-person team trained over 1,000 journalists, academics, filmmakers, and members of civil society.

In 2019, the DST team introduced a new service to their training repertoire: Organizational Security Audit and Assessment services.

The DST team partnered with USC's Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism to incorporate digital security practices into the curricula of their journalism school.

In 2019, FPF added one full time position to the DST team: a Principal Researcher.





HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

U.S. Press Freedom Tracker

Since its launch in 2017, the Tracker has documented more than 400 individual cases.

Information about or from the Tracker was cited by other media outlets and organizations nearly 100 times in 2019.

U.S. PRESS FREEDOM TRACKER

SINCE 2017 LAUNCH

55

journalists
arrested

44

denials of
access

116

journalists
attacked

56

subpoenas or
legal orders

SINCE 2017

More than

400

incidents involving press freedom
violations have been collected by
the U.S. Press Freedom Tracker

PFT

pressfreedomtracker.us



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

IN 2019, THE TRACKER DOCUMENTED AT LEAST:

- 9** journalists arrested in the course of their work
- 21** subpoenas or legal orders filed for journalist testimony or work product
- 35** journalists attacked in the course of reporting
- 28** journalists denied access to public government events
- 12** journalists stopped at a border for secondary screening
- 8** journalists who had their equipment searched or seized by law enforcement

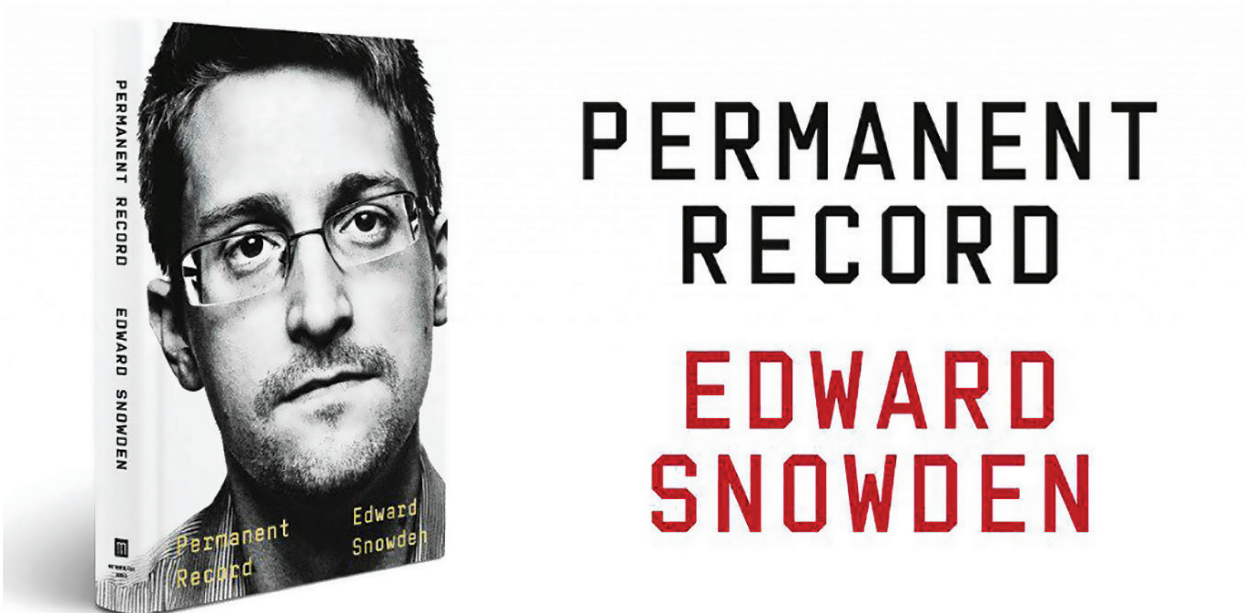


HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

***Permanent Record* by Edward Snowden**

Permanent Record was released this year on September 17th, National Constitution Day, and spent five weeks on *The New York Times* bestsellers list.

We are proud that Edward Snowden serves as Freedom of the Press Foundation's board president and lends his expertise to help us keep journalists and sources as safe as possible. In his book, Snowden reveals how he risked everything to expose the U.S. government system of mass surveillance and what led him to that decision.





EXPANSION IN 2020

SecureDrop / *The SecureDrop Workstation*

In early 2020, we will pilot the next generation of SecureDrop, the *SecureDrop Workstation*, with a small number of news organizations. Pending the results of the pilot, we are set to transition many more news organizations to it throughout the year.

We are planning to integrate other secure communications tools (e.g., Signal) with the *SecureDrop Workstation*, to provide journalists with a single environment to manage their most sensitive communications.

We will continue to professionalize FPF's SecureDrop-related services to news organizations (e.g., training, support) towards being financially self-sustaining, while still being able to offer free or heavily discounted services for smaller organizations and individuals.





EXPANSION IN 2020

Digital Security Trainings / Security Course for Journalism Schools

Through conducting hundreds of security trainings with news organizations, we've learned that journalists often have little or no formal education about digital security, and this trend extends to journalism schools. Many journalism programs offer little or no security guidance, despite an environment where contemporary newsrooms contend with targeted hacking and surveillance.

We believe future journalism professionals should have a strong security posture on day one. That's why we're launching a multi-year initiative to work alongside journalism schools to learn about their security education offerings. We will use our research and collaborate with schools to understand how to create a security curriculum that prepares journalism students for the real world.

As part of this effort, we have also announced an innovative partnership with USC's Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism to develop a comprehensive digital security education for journalism and communication students. We hope this effort will set an example for other journalism schools to follow.





EXPANSION IN 2020

U.S. Press Freedom Tracker / Tracking New Types of Incidents

In addition to its continued tracking of press freedom aggressions of journalists across the country, the U.S. Press Freedom Tracker has also launched a year-long project surrounding journalists and the upcoming election.

From Nov. 3, 2019, until Election Day 2020, the Tracker is expanding its reach to include incidents from candidates for federal office, such as denial of access to campaign rallies or retaliatory removal from events. The specialized project can be found on a blog on the Tracker website throughout the year.

See: <https://pressfreedomtracker.us/>

Advocacy & Activism / Reform or Repeal of the Espionage Act

For government whistleblowers and the journalists they communicate with, fear of Espionage Act prosecution is a major (and growing) obstacle to bringing important stories to the public. And yet, perhaps because the law's chilling effects on journalism itself are under-appreciated, the urgent need for its reform or repeal has not been widely felt. To wit, despite the trend of its use in both more and worse situations touching critical press freedom issues, the Espionage Act has not yet been a priority of either an outside group nor of any member of Congress.

Freedom of the Press Foundation will continue and expand our advocacy around the Espionage Act in 2020, both proactively and in response to expected developments in both litigation and legislation. Our unique connection to major whistleblowers of the 20th and 21st centuries informs a perspective that we will use to educate and inform members of the public and elected leaders.

Press Freedom Endowment Fund / Launch

As a relatively young non-profit organization, we have steadily grown over the past seven years and are now in a good financial position to plan our long term future. To that end, we are moving towards establishing an endowment for long term sustainability. Launching the Press Freedom Endowment Fund would represent an investment in the security of journalists, whistleblowers and activists for generations to come.

In order to sustain a long-term commitment, we are seeking an initial investment of \$10 million. Endowment gifts are permanently invested by FPF and a portion of the income is reinvested each year, enabling the endowment principal to grow, maintain its "spending power" against inflation and provide a permanent stream of income over time.



STAFF MEMBERS

FPF is headquartered in San Francisco, with staff in New York, Canada, and India.

Trevor Timm / Executive Director

Louise Balsmeyer / Director of Development

Conor Schaefer / Chief Technology Officer

Erik Moeller / Principal Project Manager

Harlo Holmes / Director of Newsroom Security

Olivia Martin / Digital Security Trainer

David Huerta / Digital Security Trainer

Martin Shelton / Principal Researcher

Rowen S. / Newsroom Services Coordinator

Kevin O’Gorman / Newsroom Support Engineer

Parker Higgins / Director of Special Projects

Kirstin McCudden / Managing Editor of the Tracker

Stephanie Sugars / Reporter for the Tracker

Jennifer Helsby / Lead Developer of SecureDrop

Kushal Das / Developer of SecureDrop

Allie Crevier / Developer of SecureDrop

John Hensley / Developer of SecureDrop

Keturah D.B. / Site Reliability Engineer

Mickael E. / Security Engineer

Harris Lapiroff / Principal Web Developer

Ryan Rice / Operations Assistant





BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President / Edward Snowden
John Cusack
Daniel Ellsberg
Laura Poitras
Glenn Greenwald
Rainey Reitman
Micah Lee
Trevor Timm
John Perry Barlow (*in memoriam*)



FINANCIAL REPORT

Complete audited financial statements and IRS 990 forms are available at FPFs website, <https://freedom.press>.

Please note: all figures are preliminary and unaudited.

Revenue

Foundations & Corporations	\$1,400,000
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Major Gifts & Individuals	\$1,200,000	Expenses
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Online Revenue	\$138,000	Staffing	\$2,519,041
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Services Income	\$95,000	Technology	\$429,075
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Other	\$70,000	Additional Expenses	\$215,500
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Total	\$2,903,000	Total	\$3,163,615
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MAJOR SUPPORTERS

Freedom of the Press Foundation is extremely grateful to our supporters, partners, and friends whose generosity makes our work possible. Thank you for all you do to help protect press freedom.

Anonymous
Bessemer National Gift Fund
Committee to Protect Journalists
Craig Newmark Philanthropies
DuckDuckGo
FLC, Foundation of Philanthropic Funds
The Ford Foundation
The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
Metabolic Studio, The Annenberg Foundation
Mozilla Foundation
Open Society Foundations
The Park Foundation
The Reva and David Logan Foundation
Wellspring Philanthropic Fund
Yelp Foundation

**Please note: we only provide the names of funding sources who have previously given permission to release their information.*



