

CONFIDENTIAL



Dear Canadian journalists, editors and producers:

During this pandemic, we need to take exceptional measures to keep the public informed and save lives. We're all in this together.

The Institute for Investigative Journalism, Canadian Association of Journalists, Esri Canada, and Flatten.ca invite you to join "Project Pandemic: Canada Reports on COVID-19," a unique collaborative investigation into how COVID-19 is affecting Canada's most vulnerable populations.

Journalists and journalism students across the country are joining forces to track and verify COVID-19 statistics, with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups. By combining this data with official figures on infections provided by regional health authorities and health surveys that hundreds of thousands of Canadians are submitting to Flatten.ca, "Project Pandemic" members will be enabled to provide their audiences with unequalled maps of and information on the current crisis. Together, as a consortium, journalists will alert the public to what we uncover together through a series of stories across Canada.

"Project Pandemic" members have access to a storehouse of resources and assets that empower reporters and engage audiences as they together explore the impacts on health-care workers; homeless and street-involved populations; residents of rural, remote and Indigenous communities; essential service workers at grocery stores and utilities; and more. Please see the attached project description for details.

To launch this partnership, in the coming weeks we'd like to focus on Canada's front-line caregivers including nurses, doctors, pharmacists, dentists and community health workers. What price are they paying for keeping Canadians safe?

This is the equivalent of a wartime effort, where all journalists are encouraged to contribute to the best of their abilities. By signing up to participate, you or your reporter(s) are committing to checking on infection, testing, recovery and fatality rates in at least two health-care offices, facilities or businesses in your community on a designated date, and sharing information gathered with the consortium. Your news organization is also committing to pooling the reporting on the resulting stories.

All journalists currently working with a media organization, and especially those who serve remote and rural communities, are encouraged to join.

On publication day, you will be able to draw on data analysis verified by some of the country's leading experts. Esri Canada, which provides a powerful mapping solution, has donated free licenses to its software so that you have the choice of publishing an interactive map prepared by

the IJ or building your own. Through your embedded map, your audiences will be able to share curated stories about local health-care workers who went the extra mile — a national hall of heroes.

Want to take part in this groundbreaking project? [Fill out this form](#) by April 13.

The terms of the collaboration are attached. We'll be holding several informational conference calls on the video conferencing app Bluejeans to explain how the project works and answer your questions over the next week. If you are interested, please accept the invitation to join.

This project will require innovative thinking and creativity from every member who joins. Participation requires putting competition on hold in recognition of the need to serve the public. Please review carefully before applying.

Questions will be answered at the meetings above. Thank you for sharing your thoughts and comments on this collective endeavour.

Sincerely,

Patti Sonntag
Director, Institute for Investigative Journalism

Brent Jolly
Vice President, Canadian Association of Journalists