



## **Editorial guidelines**

### **Article submission process for The Land**

The Land is looking for freelance writers and community journalists to write news articles. No experience is necessary, though it's certainly welcome. The Land works with emerging, established and community journalists.

Our mission is to report on Cleveland's neighborhoods. We deliver in-depth solutions stories that foster accountability, inform the community, and inspire people to take action.

We are looking for the following types of pitches:

- News stories (2-3 sources, usually 500-1,000 words)
- Features (multiple sources, usually 1,000-1,500 words)
- Investigative features (longer stories that involve more research including public records requests, can be longer than 1,500 words)
- Commentary (op-eds or topical personal essays written by community members)

Typical rates are \$100-300 depending on length and complexity. We are happy to pay more for investigative pieces. We are especially interested in publishing community voices and articles written by Cleveland residents. We do not pay for op-eds.

Send a 1-3 paragraph pitch to Lee Chilcote at [lchilcote@thelandcle.org](mailto:lchilcote@thelandcle.org).

What types of stories are we interested in? Examples include profiles of neighborhood business owners, features on residents fighting for their neighborhoods, and investigations into what local leaders are doing to solve problems. We're especially interested in solutions journalism and accountability stories that dig into critical issues, what leaders are doing, and how people are taking action. We're also interested in restorative reporting in communities that are only covered for crime, shootings etc. and stories that amplify the lived experiences of residents.

We prefer in-depth stories. Here are some ways we measure that:

- Revelatory: Is this new? If not, can it be told in a new way?
- Contextual: How did we get here?
- Solutions-driven: What can be done about it? What are others doing that works?
- Data-driven: What does the data say? Does it support the thesis of the story?

We also aim to:

- Inspire people to think and act by telling stories of equity and impact
- Foster accountability by reporting on what political and civic leaders are doing to solve our problems
- Promote civic engagement by informing the community about the issues and how to get involved

We have no content paywall. Anyone can republish our stories for free with attribution. We also collaborate with the Northeast Ohio Solutions Journalism Collaborative and other groups.

Our coverage topics include:

- Arts & Culture
- **Development**
- Education
- Entrepreneurs
- Economy
- **Government**
- **Health**
- Public Safety
- **Sustainability**
- Social Equity
- Transportation
- Local Heroes

Check out our website for story examples.

To pitch, email a few paragraphs and a bio to editor Lee Chilcote, [leechilcote@gmail.com](mailto:leechilcote@gmail.com).

To see story examples, visit our website at [www.thelandcle.org](http://www.thelandcle.org).

**Story submission process**

When complete, every story should be fact-checked and edited. It should also have a title, subheads and links incorporated into the story. **Finally, it should contain a brief 1-2 sentence story slug (description) in this format (25 words or less, please).** Throughout the editing process, we will send you our requests and you'll be responsible for making changes.

Title: Immigrant-led tech startups find a home in Cleveland

Slug/abstract: Over the last decade, 3,000 immigrants have come to Cleveland each year, with many willing to take the risk of starting a business. A growing number are turning to the same place that has attracted the attention of young native-born entrepreneurs: the tech industry.

Stories should also be submitted with imagery. We need a high-quality, ideally horizontally oriented photo for the main photo. Then additional photos can be submitted for the body of the story. If you have trouble identifying photos, let me know.

### **Photo guidelines**

While photos will vary depending on each story, it's best practice to try and capture at least one of each of the following:

1. A wide shot establishing the story's place/environment
2. Headshots/portraits of people in the story
3. A close-up or detail shot of something relevant to the story

If you're unable to take photos for the story, please alert your editor, or try to find publicly available photos online (for example, Cleveland City Council provides headshots of council members on its website).

Photos should be delivered either unedited or with minimal toning to preserve journalistic integrity and adhere to the [National Press Photographers Association Code of Ethics](#).

Photos should be delivered via Google Drive. Captions should either be embedded into the photos' metadata or provided in a Google Doc in the same Google Drive folder as the photos. Captions should adhere to the [Associated Press guidelines for proper photo captions](#).

### **Editorial independence policy**

We subscribe to standards of editorial independence adopted by the Institute for Nonprofit News:

Our organization retains full authority over editorial content to protect the best journalistic and business interests of our organization. We maintain a firewall between news coverage decisions and sources of all revenue. Acceptance of financial support does not constitute implied or actual endorsement of donors or their products, services or opinions.

We accept gifts, grants and sponsorships from individuals and organizations for the general support of our activities, but our news judgments are made independently and not on the basis of donor support.

Our organization may consider donations to support the coverage of particular topics, but our organization maintains editorial control of the coverage. We will cede no right of review or influence of editorial content, nor of unauthorized distribution of editorial content.

Our organization will make public all donors who give a total of \$5,000 or more per year. We will accept anonymous donations for general support only if it is clear that sufficient safeguards have been put into place that the expenditure of that donation is made independently by our organization and in compliance with INN's Membership Standards.

### **Donor & Financial Transparency**

We are committed to transparency in every aspect of funding our organization.

Accepting financial support does not mean we endorse donors or their products, services or opinions.

We accept gifts, grants and sponsorships from individuals, organizations and foundations to help with our general operations, coverage of specific topics and special projects. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that operates as a public trust, we do not pay certain taxes. We may receive funds from standard government programs offered to nonprofits or similar businesses.

Our news judgments are made independently – not based on or influenced by donors or any revenue source. We do not give supporters the rights to assign, review or edit content.

We make public all revenue sources and donors who give \$5,000 or more per year. As a news nonprofit, we avoid accepting charitable donations from government entities, political parties, elected officials or candidates seeking public office. We will not accept donations from sources who, deemed by our board of directors, present a conflict of interest with our work or compromise our independence.