

**THE BUREAU
OF INVESTIGATIVE
JOURNALISM**

ANNUAL REPORT 2018



AWARDS 2018

WON



NOMINATED



IN TURBULENT TIMES, INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM FIGHTS BACK

Sharing findings revealed through investigative journalism, the Bureau is a trusted, international resource – where citizens come to better understand complex issues; where NGOs get evidence to support their campaigns; where specialists and politicians come for facts to support positive change.

From local to global, we investigate serious, systemic issues affecting our societies. Working collaboratively to source stories from the ground up, we can report with, not on, the communities affected. Strong networks and partners help to get our findings into the hands of changemakers in government and big business.

Our co-publishing model enables maximum reach through print, broadcast and online partners at local, national and international level. Through creative storytelling we engage our audiences with issues that affect their lives and their world. We tell the stories that matter.



FOREWORD FROM
THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE,

**RACHEL
OLDROYD**

In 2018 as our world confronted seismic international events, we continued to shine a light on areas that the wider media ignore. We brought important but under-reported issues to the front pages and into public debate, sparking change at a local, national and global level.

We focused on six key areas affecting individuals and communities across the UK and internationally, because digging deep over a sustained period of time is how our journalism can make a lasting difference.

We looked at superbugs and the impact of antibiotic resistance - the world's biggest threat to public health - with the clock about to be turned back on decades of medical advances. Global efforts to eradicate diseases such as TB, typhoid and malaria, to reduce child mortality rates and to improve outcomes for patients in some of the world's poorest countries are all being challenged as important medicines increasingly do not work. Our reporting revealed actions and decisions that are exacerbating this, highlighting where change is needed.

Transparency and accountability in lobbying, PR and spin were areas of concern at the Bureau long before the world coined the phrase "fake news". As information manipulation has reached new heights the Bureau has continued to keep readers informed about the means by which the powerful aim to influence public opinion. Our award-winning drones team widened its brief, tracking how Western

superpowers fight Shadow Wars – the conflicts that don't make the front pages. We investigated CIA-supported local militias and how private mercenaries are increasingly the go-to-force. We continued our work in Afghanistan – the forgotten war – digging into the continued drone and air war.

In 2018 we took on new investigations too. We exposed major issues in industrialised farming and gave readers information on how this impacts the food they eat. This global industry is controlled by a handful of little-known supercompanies and individuals exploiting the growing demand for animal protein - one of the most significant changes to food production across the world.

Working collaboratively with individuals and organisations across the UK, through Bureau Local we took on local authorities and the government's failure to properly fund them, digging into their creaking finances and the dramatic cuts being made to support services for the most vulnerable people in our country.

We also exposed the shocking numbers of homeless people dying in the UK. Can there be a greater litmus test of the failure of the fabric of our society than measuring our efforts to overcome homelessness?

Bureau Local continues to have a widespread impact on the journalism ecosystem. Since its launch less than two years ago, our team has built a community of over 800 members who have worked

together on 10 investigations, producing more than 280 exclusive local stories. Our innovative approach has been recognised through numerous awards and we have been working with not-for-profit news organisation Correctiv in Germany to replicate the model over there.

Significant growth this year in publishing partnerships means our findings have reached millions of readers, with work carried in the Guardian, the Telegraph, the Times, the New York Times, the Hindu, the Malawi Times and many local and specialist publications. Our work was also broadcast widely by Channel 4, ITV, the BBC and CNN.

We welcomed new funding partners on board too. Luminate, Rudolf Augstein Stiftung and Lankelly Chase Foundation joined our long-term supporters, including our founders David and Elaine Potter who share more on their commitment to the Bureau at the close of this Annual Report.

It has been a great privilege to lead the Bureau through 2018, to have the opportunity to work with dedicated, brilliant journalists, enthusiastic and supportive funders, collegiate publishing partners and collaborators, and interested, engaged readers.

In 2019 we will listen more to all these valued constituents of our Bureau community to inform our progress and success in these turbulent and fast changing times.

Thank you for your support.

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It is by digging deep over a sustained period of time that our journalism can make a lasting difference.



STRIKES TRIPLE IN YEMEN AND SOMALIA: BUREAU REVEALS TRUMP'S FIRST YEAR IN NUMBERS

COUNCILS IN CRISIS: BUREAU UNCOVERS THE DISASTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCES ACROSS THE UK

BUREAU LOCAL WINS: EUROPEAN PRESS PRIZE FOR INNOVATION



UNTREATABLE INFECTIONS IN UK HOSPITALS: BUREAU ISSUES WAKE-UP CALL

CONTROVERSIAL US-STYLE BEEF "FEEDLOTS": BUREAU EXPOSES ARRIVAL IN THE UK, UNNOTICED AND UNREGULATED

LAW CHANGED IN INDIA: BUREAU REPORTING UNDERPINS BAN ON SALE OF ANTIBIOTICS WITHOUT PRESCRIPTION



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REFUGE WOMAN THEATRE TOUR: BUREAU SHARES HARSH REALITIES WITH AUDIENCES ACROSS THE UK

BABIES DYING IN MALAWI: BUREAU SHINES A LIGHT ON TRAGEDIES OF ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE

BUREAU WINS: LANDMARK PRESS FREEDOM CASE AT THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

DYING HOMELESS: BUREAU LOCAL INVESTIGATION REPORTS 449 PEOPLE DIED LAST YEAR

AFGHAN AIRSTRIKES TRANSPARENCY: BUREAU DATA CRUCIAL AS US GOVERNMENT LIFTS DATA BLACKOUT

SUPERBUGS IN CONFLICT ZONES: BUREAU FINDS DOCTORS BATTLING "AN EPIDEMIC"



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DYING HOMELESS



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It is difficult to overstate the importance of the Dying Homeless Project, which has shed new light on a subject that was ignored for too long.

Matt Downie, Director of Policy and External Affairs, Crisis

The Bureau Local’s ‘Dying Homeless’ reporting revealed, for the first time, the scale of homeless deaths across the UK. By telling the personal stories of the people behind the statistics, we brought national attention to this shocking issue.

The project started in February 2018. We were in the midst of freezing winter conditions and wanted to know how many people were dying while homeless. We soon found that no official body held the figure. So we started counting, aware that this deficit of information meant

no-one knew how widespread the issue was or whether lessons could be learnt to prevent deaths in the future.

We logged the details of every homeless person that had died since October 2017, and told as many of their stories as possible.

More than 100 journalists, members of the public and outreach workers helped compile the database and more than 70 local and 50 national articles were produced - including multiple leading stories on Channel 4 News.

At the end of the year this strong, nationwide reporting revealed that over 449 people had died while homeless in the UK since October 2017. James Brokenshire - Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government - called the findings “utterly shocking” and promised case reviews into deaths.

Several councils launched local investigations. Crucially, the Office for National Statistics used our work to produce the first ever statistics on homeless deaths. Scottish and Northern Irish equivalents are set to follow.

LOCAL POWER



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The Bureau’s research should send shivers down the spines of ministers because they know this is a crisis in part caused by their actions.

Andrew Gwynne, Shadow Secretary for Communities and Local Government

Ahead of government funding decisions in March 2018, the Bureau Local team set out to scrutinise council budgets across the UK as part of a collaborative investigation into local government finances.

In February we brought together nearly 200 journalists and community members across five UK cities for a one-day ‘collaborative reporting day’. The resulting stories revealed that more than half of councils in England were planning to slash costs by cutting spending on services for children and

that four local authorities were in financial crisis and using reserves to balance their books. Our investigation made The Times’ front page and caused several MPs to respond.

At the end of the year we revealed that some of the smallest local authorities in England had amassed debts equivalent to more than ten times their spending power in order to buy commercial property. Experts warned that this tied the future of vital public services to the uncertainty of the property market. Shortly after our reporting, the council that had

borrowed the most to buy up property announced it would no longer be making these kind of investments.

More than 70 people were involved in this part of the investigation, including our partners at The Times and the Local Government Chronicle.

Following this reporting, James Brokenshire - the Secretary for Housing, Communities & Local Government - spoke out in the Commons with a warning to local authorities and announced he would discuss intervention with the Treasury.

SUPERBUGS



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I have no doubt that many actions over the next year will be in large part because of how close and real you painted this global threat.

*Michael Craig, Senior Advisor for Antibiotic Resistance Coordination and Strategy
US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

Drug-resistant infections are one of the biggest threats to public health according to the World Health Organisation. Estimated to kill 700,000 people worldwide each year, this number could rise to 10 million annually by 2050 if no action is taken.

After the lack of reporting to inform public understanding of this crisis, the Bureau began investigating issues around antibiotic resistance in 2016, leading to greater awareness and sparking positive change.

Across the world more than 50% of antibiotics are fed to animals, and some of them are used just to help them grow rather than to tackle illness. Our January story on the ‘last hope’ antibiotic being used to fatten chickens was widely syndicated in India, the UK and globally, and led to local papers like the Kashmir Monitor launching their own investigations.

In response, Dame Sally Davies, England’s Chief Medical Officer, made a public statement calling for all use of antibiotics for growth promotion in agriculture to be banned within five years. A lawyer in Maharashtra, India’s second biggest state by population, put our story before the Bombay High Court who ordered the state’s Food and Drug Administration to instruct all animal drug stores not to sell antibiotics to farmers without a valid prescription.

With new support from the European Journalism Centre we produced stories on how superbugs are devastating health systems in Yemen, Malawi, Afghanistan, India, Ghana and Gaza; the emergence of nearly untreatable infections in British hospitals; US farms continuing to use crucial antibiotics; and a misleading campaign by one of the world’s biggest animal drugs companies, which Dame Sally Davies later condemned.

As well as changing laws, issues around antibiotic resistance are reaching far wider audiences thanks to our successful international publication partnerships with CNN, the New York Times, The Times of India, the Times Group Malawi, and with specialist medical magazines including The Lancet Infectious Diseases and The BMJ.

In September the Bureau’s health and science editor Madlen Davies was invited to launch the US government’s international drive to stem the rising tide of superbugs, held during the United Nations’ General Assembly conference.

An audience of nearly 400 including world leaders, pharmaceutical company executives, heads of biotech companies, foundations and NGOs watched our film, produced in partnership with CNN, on the superbugs that are killing babies in Malawi.

INFORMATION MANIPULATION AND SPIN



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The Bureau “reveals the global reach of automation and amplification in digital politics on social media, orchestrated by private actors.”

Oxford Internet Institute

Spin and digital propaganda remained a hot topic in 2018 as political volatility continued to shake the world and foreign governments sought to shore up their standing with an unpredictable White House.

In March we published a major investigation in the Times exposing the Saudi Crown Prince’s unprecedented PR drive, and the role of a senior British diplomat within it. This was widely cited at the time and was picked up again by Private Eye, Sky News and others later in the year following the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. The following month we revealed that one of the people

involved in the disgraced public relations firm Bell Pottinger’s controversial “black ops” work in Iraq had been hired by the UAE to make a slick ‘documentary’ vilifying Qatar.

The team later unearthed some surprising tactics being touted by two British public relations firms aimed at influencing the outcome of Macedonia’s name change referendum.

In August, our work on the bot network supporting the Gupta family in South Africa was cited extensively in the Oxford Internet Institute’s annual inventory of social media manipulation.

And in January the New York Times credited the Bureau’s pioneering work exposing companies such as Devumi which generate fake followers on social media sites. The practice was later ruled illegal.

Later in the year, we followed up with the far right in Germany after our previous work on online networks there. When the stabbing of a German citizen by suspected foreigners triggered unexpectedly large anti-immigrant demonstrations in August, we revealed that a cluster of ‘alternative’ news sites we had identified in 2017 had been promoting incendiary false information about the circumstances of the attack.

FOOD & FARMING



The industrialisation of food production, including the rise of livestock ‘megafarms’, is increasing globally, but this comes at a cost to food safety and public health, the environment and farm animals.

Following the Bureau’s major investigations into the rise of megafarms in 2017, and our in-depth reporting around food safety in the meat sector, 2018 saw us join forces with The Guardian. As part of the newspaper’s ‘Animals Farmed’ series, the Bureau began a two-year, collaborative investigation into industrialised farming.

We launched with a major investigation revealing a catalogue of serious hygiene failings in dozens of US meat plants, including compelling

new evidence of dirty chicken meat being treated with chlorine - a practice that has sparked controversy in the debate about trade deals post-Brexit. This was quickly followed by a further front page investigation revealing the worrying volume of regulatory breaches in meat plants across the UK.

In May 2018, we revealed - for the first time - how intensive US-style beef feedlots had arrived in the UK almost unnoticed. We obtained dramatic pictures of thousands of beef cattle being held in grassless pens in about a dozen sites across the east of England. The images provoked a major response from the public, particularly on social media, and led to supermarkets having to defend their decision to source from the feedlots.

The investigation highlighted a serious regulatory loophole - that intensive beef farms do not require a permit in order to operate, in contrast to intensive pig and poultry farms.

As a result the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has no records of how many beef farms there are in the UK, prompting MPs and campaigners to call for the loophole to be closed.

With continued focus on corporate accountability, we also exposed the Big Pharma PR campaigns designed to muddy the waters around the threat posed by antibiotic use in livestock production; and the shocking human cost of the meat industry, with serious injuries found to be commonplace in both US and UK meat plants.

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The Bureau delivered a series of dramatic exposés on the industrial scale of much farming in the UK, providing a huge public service for both consumers and the farming industry.

Press Gazette judges at Specialist Media Awards 2018

SHADOW WARS



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US strikes leading to civilian casualties more than doubled in the first nine months of 2018, surpassing all years since records began in 2009.

From the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan

America's foreign engagements under President Trump have become messier and less accountable. From Somalia to Sangin, arms-length interventions are combining the aggressive hard power of traditional wars - drones, airstrikes and ground raids - with the lack of accountability of covert ones.

In June 2018, we launched our 'Shadow Wars' project to track and monitor US actions and highlight their impact on civilians. This represents a new direction for the team, which previously focussed on the use of drone warfare.

Towards the end of the year, following the Bureau's reporting, and concern among civil society groups about the sharp decline of military transparency under President Trump, a year-long blackout of detailed information about US airstrikes in Afghanistan was lifted.

The US resumed publishing this data, having previously declared it too sensitive for public release. Our work here is by no means done - some of this information has since been made private again - but this progress demonstrates the value and importance of maintaining continued

pressure for transparency. At the same time, we want to highlight the impact of war on people's lives. Our major story 'One Day in Afghanistan' was the result of months spent documenting every attack during an ordinary day in the country, using unpublished official documents and on-the-ground reporting.

We found details of 31 attacks and more than 20 air strikes, killing at least 60 people in 16 provinces. This snapshot investigation, published on the 17th anniversary of the war, was a powerful reminder of the scale and human cost of the conflict.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



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We need a specific funding model for refuges, because without it people die.

*Labour MP Jess Phillips,
Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Domestic Violence*

The Bureau Local team continued to report on vulnerable women and children fleeing domestic violence in the UK, and the stretched system that is often not delivering.

In January we revealed how those asking for information about their partner’s record of domestic violence are 10 times less likely to receive it from police in some parts of the country than others.

This followed our investigation that found funding for domestic violence

refuges had been cut by more than 24% since 2010 and that over a thousand women had been turned away from refuges in six months alone.

Top police chiefs also spoke out, with one Police and Crime Commissioner, saying he was “horrified” at the way funding had been cut.

Twelve MPs, including the Labour leader and key shadow ministers, spoke out about the provision for people affected by domestic violence.

The Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government launched a consultation on the funding of refuges and our findings were raised in Prime Minister’s Questions.

More than 30 local journalists, volunteers, refuge managers, survivors and other experts participated in the investigation which resulted in 75 local and national stories, including reports in the Guardian, the Times and Channel 4 News.

REFUGE WOMAN TOUR



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Thank you for teaching me more than prison taught me.

Audience member

The Bureau Local brought investigative reporting to the stage this year. Refuge Woman, a semi-autobiographical show, gave audiences up and down the country a searingly honest and darkly funny insight into life in a domestic violence refuge.

While reporting on domestic violence we came to know Cash Carraway, a writer who had been living in a women’s refuge in London when the roof came crashing in. We heard Cash had plans to turn her experiences into a one-woman show. We worked with her to develop it and take it on the road

to destinations where Bureau Local members had produced stories.

We toured the show in community centres and fringe theatres in Birmingham, Norwich, Leeds, Bristol, London and Lancaster, as well as to the Byline Festival in East Sussex. After each performance we invited local journalists, refuge managers and support workers to tell the audience about their findings on regional funding cuts and the needs of the particular community.

Through this innovative combination of investigative journalism and theatre, we informed people in new

ways, sparked debate and reached different audiences.

Perhaps most importantly, we supported a survivor of domestic violence to tell her story in her own words.

Audience members were moved, saying “It was pure, real, raw and honest”; “Cash is a voice to be listened to and a voice for those that can’t be heard”; “Cash, thank you for teaching me more than prison taught me”; “It was great to listen to the Bureau of Investigative Journalism give us insight and detail we wouldn’t get via the [traditional] media.”

THE BUREAU LOCAL: OUR COMMUNITIES MATTER



Bureau Local was built on the belief that local journalism is a crucial part of the fight for an informed, participatory and just society. Together with our network we have published over 280 exclusive local stories and over 100 national stories in just 20 months.

In the wake of the Brexit referendum, communities across the UK are demanding to be heard. More power is being given to public bodies outside London while the collapsing commercial model for news means that local papers face cuts to their staff and resources. The capacity for investigative, data journalism where it is urgently needed is extremely limited.

Launched in March 2017, Bureau Local has now built an 800-strong - and growing - network across the UK whose members include

regional and national news outlets, local reporters, hyperlocal bloggers, technologists, community-minded citizens and specialist contributors. We join forces on investigations with the aim of strengthening our information ecosystem, holding power to account at both a local and national level, and telling stories that matter to communities.

With each investigation, we make relevant information and datasets accessible to everyone in the network and help members find out how issues play out in their area. As reporting takes place across the country, we then connect the dots to create a national picture.

We focus on mobilising communities around our journalism and ensuring we report with, not just on, the communities we cover. We run online and offline community

forums, meetups and live journalism events to bring our stories to everyone.

Our collective reporting method produces broader and deeper investigations than would be possible for any individual newsroom, allowing us to shine a light on systemic issues and hold those in power to account. A national perspective increases the impact of the story and increases support locally, through reach, community mobilisation and lasting change.

In 2018 the team has brought together new, inspired funders who are keen to join existing partners in supporting our ambitions for 2019 and beyond. Further funding is being sought to deepen our work with communities and strengthen our business model.

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A remarkable use of collaboration and knowledge-transfer to strengthen data-driven, local journalism. Bureau Local can elevate local stories to show their national impact, and reveal how large-scale developments affect local communities.

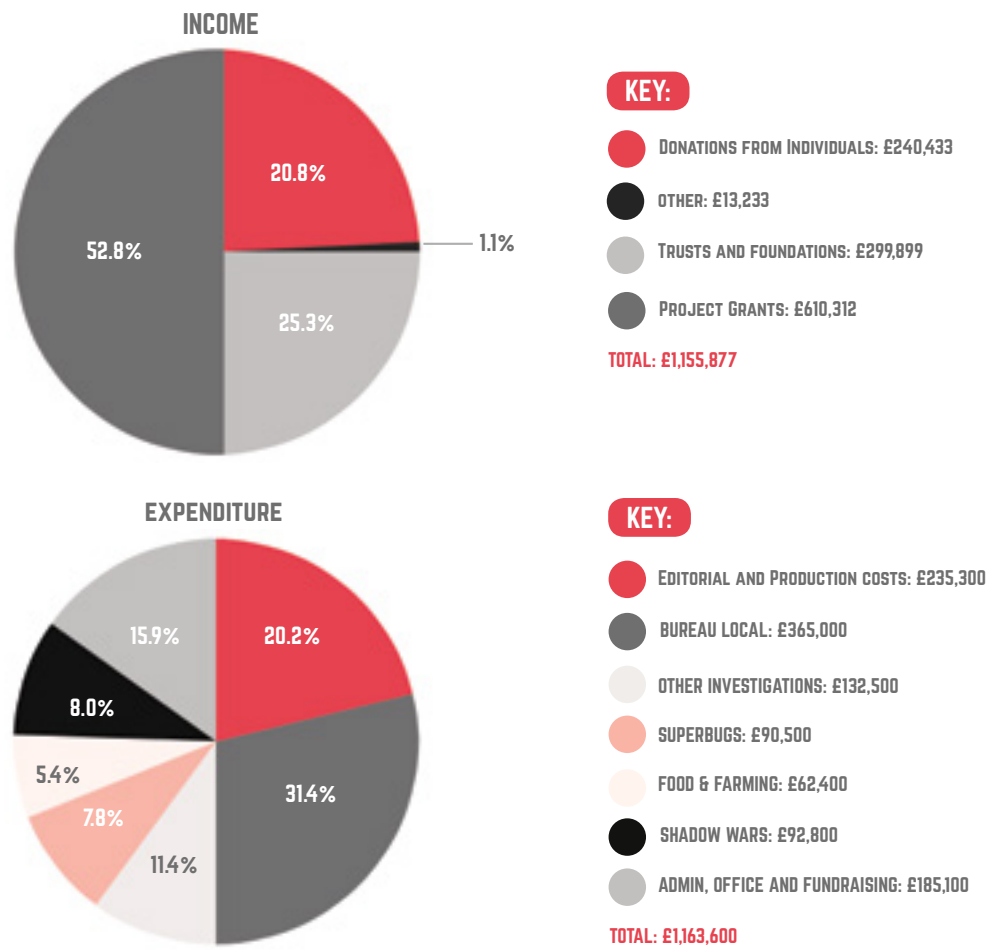
Stephanie Reuter, Rudolf Augstein Foundation

PUBLISHING PARTNERS

The Bureau works collaboratively with publishing partners, from local to global, including those listed here. Beyond this, Bureau findings were cited in national and international media on average 300 times a month, peaking at 1,000 citations in December.



OUR FINANCES



FOUNDERS OF THE BUREAU



David and Elaine Potter

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We intend to crusade against the backward drift of human rights, to demand and deliver transparency and the hard pursuit of truth.

Elaine Potter

When we launched the Bureau I wrote: “Democracy itself is imperilled in the absence of honest information and a robust watchdog to hold government and the powerful to account. Without that we all become susceptible to the manipulation and deceptions orchestrated by governments, industry or even the media.” In the eight years since then things have got much worse.

Anti-semitism with its ugly long history has again come to life, far right movements have spread across Europe, the Americas and around the world, minorities are under threat, racism is becoming tolerated. Each year it seems a new and feted ‘illiberal democracy’ comes into being to sit all too easily alongside established dictatorships.

And everywhere the press is under enormous pressure, being diminished daily with wild and indiscriminate assertions of fake news whilst fake news itself is being manufactured and proliferating across the internet.

The Bureau has gradually been building a new bulwark to address these issues. Through our pioneering Bureau Local we are bringing local accountability journalism back to life as well as creating an original model for others to adopt. Globally through our varied and penetrating probes into matters of public importance we are positioning ourselves to be powerful truth tellers. We intend to crusade against the backward drift of human rights, to demand and deliver transparency and the hard pursuit of truth.

We are forging new partnerships to enhance our impact and help find ways of taking the press back to its Fourth Estate duties.

Many years ago when working on a major investigation into the aerospace and airline industry, I learnt that the safest airlines were those which operated in countries where accountability was strongest.

We believe this observation holds true beyond the airline industry and that holding the powerful to account is the most important role of investigative journalism. With huge ambition we intend to do just that.

Elaine Potter
Founder of the Bureau



By focusing on long-term, sustained investigations, the Bureau has become recognised for their work on specific topics, which enhances the impact they can have.

Kitty von Bertele, Luminate Foundation

OUR SUPPORTERS

We are grateful to all our supporters - inspired grantmakers and individuals looking to strengthen communities and change our society for the better:

Adessium Foundation
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The Evan Cornish Foundation
Friends of the Bureau
Freedom of the Press Foundation
Google: Digital News Innovation
Google: Global News Initiative
Guardian.org Foundation

Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
Open Society Foundations
Lankelly Chase Foundation
Luminate
Pears Foundation
David and Elaine Potter
Reva and David Logan Foundation
Rudolf Augstein Stiftung
Joseph Schull

In addition, Google sponsored fellowships for new journalists at the Bureau, and we received pro bono services from Gorkana and Simons, Muirhead & Burton solicitors.

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