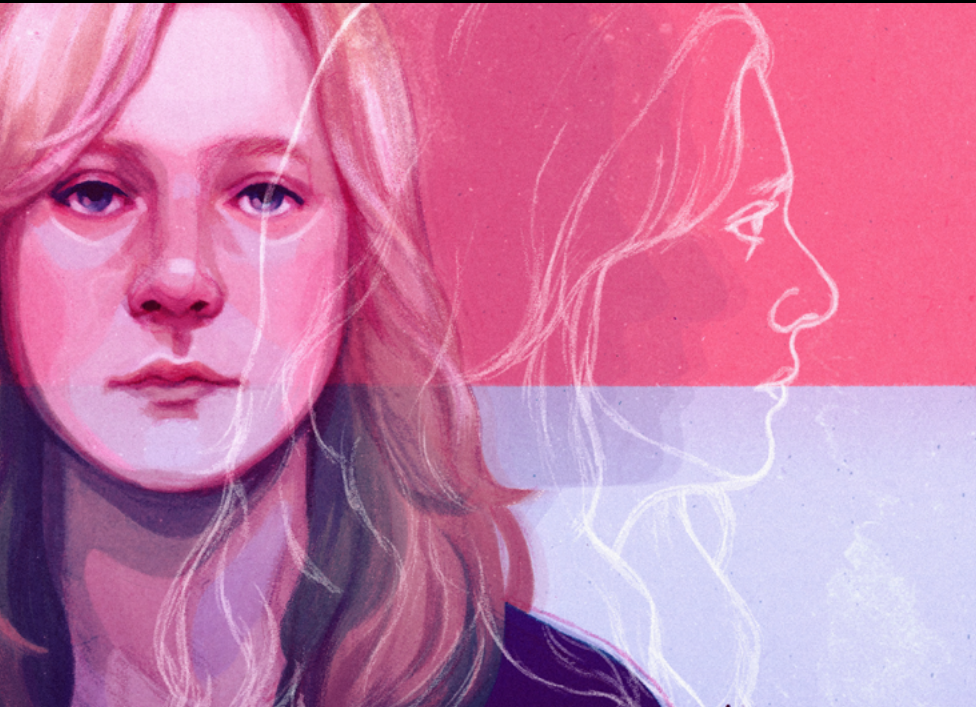




The Intercept\_

FIELD\_ OF\_ VISION

PRESS FREEDOM DEFENSE FUND



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F I R S T

**“Our nation is stronger when we protect the rights of individuals to speak their minds, associate with whomever they please, and criticize their government and others in power.”**

– Pierre Omidyar, founder



## A Note From the CEO

Welcome to First Look.

First Look Media Works is a one-of-a-kind media organization that was built for the moment we live in. Amid widespread distress and despair about the fate of our democracy and our world, First Look is about transparency and daylight, truth and responsibility, individual liberty and public good.

First Look exposes injustice, shapes culture with voices that reflect who we really are, and defends those who can't defend themselves.

First Look is home to The Intercept, dedicated to fearless investigative journalism; Field of Vision, the filmmaker-driven documentary unit; and the Press Freedom Defense Fund, supporting journalists and whistleblowers facing legal threats. We live, breathe, and defend the First Amendment, and our programs empower the most ambitious voices in journalism and cinematic storytelling.

I invite you to learn more about each of them here.

All of us pursuing this work — our crusading investigative journalists, some famous and all remarkable; visionary and innovative filmmakers, many of them young and of color; indefatigable legal experts defending press freedom; and dozens of behind-the-scenes co-workers — believe the impact of First Look is vital.

As CEO, I am humbled by the courage and passion of the team. We are impatient but tenacious, and persevere when conditions demand it, as yearslong lawsuits and complex stories often do.

Our audience must believe in us, too, for 19,000 paying members support First Look. They understand that our work cannot rely on conventional business models. First Look is proud to be among the important news organizations that are supported by philanthropists, foundations, and readers.

When eBay founder and philanthropist Pierre Omidyar created the company in 2013, he knew that his investment was just the beginning. He committed resources to build, launch, and strengthen the organization, and continues his financial leadership. Having gained global respect and a loyal following, First Look is building a community of donors who join Pierre Omidyar in supporting media that holds power to account and tells stories that need to be told.

We invite you to join us.

Michael Bloom  
Chief Executive Officer

O O K



## The Intercept

Dedicated to fearless, adversarial journalism, The Intercept has made an indelible mark on the media landscape — and society at large — since its launch in 2014. Whether its reporters are exposing war crimes by U.S. troops, environmental crimes by corporations, or miscarriages of justice on death row, they are singularly focused on bringing to light hidden truths that the public has a right to know.

Founded in part as a platform for reporting on the disclosures of former NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden — which sparked a global debate on the encroachments of government surveillance on individual privacy — The Intercept has built a loyal and passionate base of readers and supporting members who believe that independent journalism is a critical component of a healthy democracy.

The Intercept emphasizes deep, original, groundbreaking reporting and unflinching analysis of the most pressing events of the moment, from war to climate to policing to tech. Intercept reporters approach their beats from a variety of viewpoints, but share a commitment to journalism that makes an impact on society by exposing injustice and provoking debate and change.

## IMPACT

In 2018, The Intercept broke new ground on virtually every major issue that troubles our society — or gives us hope. From the Supreme Court nomination of Brett Kavanaugh to the crackdown on immigration, the election of progressives like Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the vast power of tech giants like Google and Facebook, and the climate crimes of the Trump administration — The Intercept was not just reporting on these crucial subjects, it was breaking news with revelations that other outlets chased after.

### Brett Kavanaugh

The nomination of Brett Kavanaugh was proceeding relatively smoothly until The Intercept’s Ryan Grim reported on September 12, 2018 that Sen. Dianne Feinstein had received a letter about an incident during Kavanaugh’s high school years. Grim’s story set off the well-known chain of events that followed: the emergence of Christine Blasey Ford and her congressional testimony that Kavanaugh tried to rape her in 1982, when they were teenagers. Without The Intercept’s reporting, Blasey Ford’s letter might have remained hidden forever. And The Intercept did not let up, publishing dozens of follow-up stories that revealed new details about the culture of aggression and excessive drinking at Kavanaugh’s high school, Georgetown Prep.

### Immigration

The Trump administration’s racist crackdown on immigration was one of the major U.S. issues in 2018, and The Intercept broke several stories that helped define the national debate. The first photograph of a mass immigration trial was published by The Intercept: As Debbie Nathan explained in her story, dozens of migrants were convicted and sentenced en masse, in proceedings



Delia and her 5-year-old son are reunited after the U.S. government separated them at the U.S.-Mexico border as they sought asylum from Guatemala. Still: Verónica G. Cárdenas for The Intercept

that usually lasted just a few minutes. The Intercept was also the first news organization to profile, in an award-winning video, the reunion between a Guatemalan mother and her son following their traumatic separation at the

U.S.-Mexico border. And Intercept reporter Alice Speri, in an investigation headlined “Detained, Then Violated,” revealed a pattern of sexual abuse and harassment inside detention centers run by Immigration and Customs Enforcement. In June 2019, Sen. Elizabeth Warren cited Speri’s article in her presidential campaign’s immigration reform plan and said she would “create accountability for the abuse perpetrated during the Trump era.”

### Google and China

In 2018, Intercept reporter Ryan Gallagher broke one of the biggest technology stories of the year: that Google was secretly developing a censored search engine that would allow China’s government to eliminate search results it found politically objectionable. The Intercept’s reporting



Illustration: Soohie Cho/The Intercept

led to a congressional hearing, internal protests at Google, an international outcry led by more than 60 human rights groups, and the eventual ending of the secret program that Google had code-named Dragonfly. The revelations from The Intercept were a dramatic illustration of the extent to which U.S. technology companies are willing to cross moral lines in their pursuit of profits and data.

### Saudi Arabia

The assassination of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, on the orders of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, was a shattering event at the end of 2018. Readers of The Intercept were already aware, by that time, of the nature of the Saudi regime and its unusually close ties with the White House. Reporters Alex Emmons, Ryan Grim, and Clayton Swisher, in a widely cited article, reported in March that MBS privately boasted that Trump’s son-in-law Jared Kushner was “in his pocket” and had provided him with key U.S. intelligence about his internal enemies. Sarah Aziza, showing that Khashoggi wasn’t the first to be targeted by MBS, documented MBS’s repression of feminists fighting for reforms in the kingdom. The Intercept prides itself on covering issues before they reach a general audience — and these Saudi articles are prime examples.

## **Progressive Democrats**

It was May 22, 2018 and the name Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez meant absolutely nothing to the Democratic Party establishment. But on that day, The Intercept's Aída Chávez and Ryan Grim wrote a 3,000-word article, headlined "A Primary Against the Machine," about an unknown bartender



Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez in the Bronx, N.Y., on April 21, 2018. Photo: Andres Kudacki for The Intercept

making a primary run against longtime New York Rep. Joe Crowley. This was the first national article about Ocasio-Cortez, and it put her on the map. The Intercept's team of reporters in Washington, D.C. has distinguished itself by covering progressive trends before they register on the mainstream radar. The D.C. Bureau's hard-nosed reporting centers on the struggle between progressives and centrists for the soul of the Democratic Party, as well as the power dynamics in Washington that determine the nation's political fate.

## **Environmental Justice**

Sharon Lerner was among the first reporters to take aim at Scott Pruitt, Trump's first Environmental Protection Agency chief who was almost comically corrupt. In 2018, her relentless investigations into Pruitt's industry ties and cronyism helped drive him from office. Lerner also continued to break new ground in her yearslong investigation into the global PFAS water contamination crisis — reporting on previously unknown compounds like GenX and the military's continued use of toxic firefighting foam — and she proved that 3M, like DuPont, has known for decades about the dangers of these toxic chemicals.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

The Intercept achieved wide exposure for its investigative journalism in 2018. The intense engagement of The Intercept's audience drove the early success of its membership program, which, by year's end, reached its goal of 19,000 members.

## **AUDIENCE**

The Intercept's audience strategy has focused on diversifying sources of traffic in order to bring stories to the broadest possible audience while avoiding dependence on any single big tech platform. The combined Twitter following of The Intercept's writers reaches into the millions, providing a ready mechanism to amplify their investigative stories. A growing number of readers also follow The Intercept's main Twitter account, which grew by 17 percent in 2018. The Intercept's overall engagement rate on Facebook is among the highest for top-tier news publishers, demonstrating the site's ability to drive readers to important political stories, as well as more under-reported topics that traditionally struggle to find an audience. Concerted focus on additional platforms like Instagram and YouTube also drove results, with Instagram followers increasing by 150 percent in 2018, and YouTube subscribers growing by 295 percent in 2018. Just as important, this off-platform audience growth was achieved while remaining true to The Intercept's journalistic voice and mission.

## **AWARDS**

The Intercept won seven awards and was a finalist in a dozen others for journalism published in 2018. That same year, The Intercept also accepted over a dozen awards for the year prior, including a George Polk Award, Headliner Award, Edward R. Murrow Award, two Izzy Awards, and an Innocence Network Journalism Award.

FIELD\_  
OF\_  
VISION



## Field of Vision

When Field of Vision launched in 2015, its goal was to create a space in which journalism and art could coexist and to support artists and filmmakers who want to push the boundaries of storytelling. Field of Vision is first and foremost filmmaker-driven and responsive to the world around us.

Since the inception of Field of Vision, its mission has remained the same: to support innovation, diversity, and risk-taking in nonfiction filmmaking.

When Field of Vision began, its focus was on short films; in 2017, the focus expanded to include series and feature-length films. Every project was completed, and Field of Vision has seen great success since the films were released in 2018. With an increased involvement in feature-length films and a fellowship program aimed at nurturing a new generation of filmmakers, Field of Vision hopes to further contribute to vital nonfiction storytelling and sustainability in the field.

Field of Vision believes that the diverse range of films and filmmakers it supports is inextricably linked to its success. Fifty percent of Field of Vision-supported films are directed by women, and 42 percent by filmmakers of color.

## SUCCESS STORIES

From its inception in 2015 to the end of 2018, Field of Vision has supported over 101 documentaries, including 68 shorts, 29 features, and four series. These projects have been embraced enthusiastically by filmmakers, audiences, curators, and the independent film community, earning top honors in the field.

Field of Vision-supported films have received Academy Award nominations, Emmy Awards, and have premiered at Cannes, the Toronto International Film Festival, and the Sundance Film Festival, where 10 Field of Vision-supported films have screened, including three jury award winners.

In addition to these accolades, Field of Vision-supported shorts and series have found a wide audience online through partnerships with outlets like The New Yorker, The Atlantic, The Root, and Teen Vogue.

Field of Vision increased online viewership and audience reach by 71 percent, from 8.1 million overall views in 2017 to 13.9 million overall views in 2018.

It currently has 33 projects in production: 18 features, 13 shorts, and two series.

Here are three documentaries that highlight the caliber of filmmaking Field of Vision supports and their glowing reception.

## A Night at the Garden

In the wake of the 2017 Charlottesville riot instigated by white supremacists, director Marshall Curry wanted to remind audiences that fascism had a foothold in the United States before, although the episode had been long forgotten. With funding from Field of Vision, Curry was able to license archival footage from a 1939 American Nazi rally at Madison Square Garden to make the first film bringing all the footage together. The resulting work prominently features Isadore Greenbaum, a Jewish plumber who stormed the stage as German American Bund leader Fritz Kuhn degraded non-Gentiles, members of the press, and other objects of the Bund's ire.



Still: A Night at the Garden/Field of Vision

Since debuting online at The Atlantic, "A Night at the Garden" has been viewed nearly 3 million times. And after screening at the Sundance Film Festival earlier in the year, the film was included on the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' 2018 Oscar shortlist for Best Documentary Short Subject.

## Crime + Punishment

After working with filmmaker Stephen Maing on two extraordinary shorts, "The Surrender" and "The Release," Field of Vision leapt at the opportunity to join him in producing "Crime + Punishment," his feature documentary profiling the NYPD 12 — a coalition of black and Latinx law enforcement officers against "stop-and-frisk" policing and quota policies — and Manuel Gomez, a private investigator working with Pedro Hernandez, a young man facing spurious criminal charges.

In addition to providing funding for the film's production, Field of Vision supported a free outdoor screening of the film for New York City residents at Franz Sigel Park in the Bronx.

"Crime + Punishment" premiered at Sundance, where it won the U.S. Documentary Jury Award for Social Impact Filmmaking; it was also included in the 2018 Oscar shortlist for Best Documentary Feature. The film is now streaming on Hulu.



## **Hale County This Morning, This Evening**

For his first film, longtime photographer RaMell Ross wanted to challenge and reframe the ways in which African Americans are usually seen on screen and in the collective American imagination. Composed of intimate and unencumbered moments of everyday life in a rural Alabama community, “Hale County This Morning, This Evening” allows the viewer an emotive impression of the historic South.

Field of Vision came on board as an early supporter of the film, providing funding and editorial support.



Still: Hale County This Morning, This Evening/Field of Vision

After premiering at Sundance and winning the Creative Vision Jury Award, “Hale County” went on to receive other accolades, including the 2018 Gotham Award for Best Documentary, and in 2019, it was included on the 2018 Oscar shortlist for Best Documentary Feature.

## **FELLOWS PROGRAM + ARTIST IN RESIDENCE**

In 2018, Field of Vision launched a fellowship program, a yearlong, collaborative fellowship program designed to support filmmakers in achieving their long-term artistic goals. Four filmmakers — Garrett Bradley, Lyric Cabral, Michelle Latimer, and Charlie Shackleton — each received a grant to pursue projects of their choosing.

It also put in place an Artist in Residence, Josh Begley, a data artist who works to elucidate society’s most pressing justice issues, including mass incarceration, officer-involved shootings, and border policy.

## **LOOKING AHEAD TO 2019**

In 2019, a record number of six Field of Vision-supported films — four shorts and two features — screened at the Sundance Film Festival in January, including two jury award winners: “Ghosts of Sugar Land” and “American Factory.”

Four new fellows were also chosen: Heba Y. Amin, Ja’Tovia Gary, Heloisa Passos, and Bassam Tariq.

Field of Vision also started developing an online security guide with the Freedom of the Press Foundation to help filmmakers and journalists keep their footage and sources safe. It is scheduled to debut on [fieldofvision.org](http://fieldofvision.org) in 2020.

**“Journalism is under assault globally, and we must do everything we can to ensure the free flow of information.”**

– James Risen, director

## Press Freedom Defense Fund

The crisis facing journalism has been brewing for some time. Not only are resources dwindling for news organizations to engage in enterprise reporting that holds powerful institutions – both governments and businesses – accountable, but journalists also lack the muscle to battle legal threats devised to quiet that reporting. The weaponization of libel and privacy laws to silence those who report consequential stories is in full deployment. The threat of government retaliation against sources who seek no reward but the satisfaction of revealing official misconduct is palpable, and it now restricts the free flow of information necessary for our democracy. The Press Freedom Defense Fund was created to provide necessary resources to reporters, news organizations, and sources facing these crippling legal threats.

In 2018, the Press Freedom Defense Fund provided grants to support the legal defense of reporters burdened by defamation lawsuits and threatened with legal action to compel the disclosure of confidential sources. The Fund is unique in its commitment to provide legal resources to individuals who face prosecution and incarceration for providing information to journalists about government misconduct.

In the testimonial that follows, James Risen – Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, bestselling author, and director of the Press Freedom Defense Fund – reflects on the principles that compelled The Fund to support the legal defense of former NSA contractor Reality Winner.

Reality Winner was brought into the cramped courthouse conference room by a marshal. She was wearing an orange prison shirt and pants, and she was shackled at her wrists and ankles. The marshal unshackled her wrists, but left her shackled by her ankles as she sat down to meet with us. She looked tired and nervous, for good reason. She had just pleaded guilty to a crime for which she should never have been prosecuted.

I had traveled to Savannah, Georgia, with our legal director to meet with Winner, one of the first and most important grantees of the Press Freedom Defense Fund. The meeting, during which her intelligence and deep interest in public service came shining through, helped reinforce my strong belief in The Fund's goals: to support embattled journalists and their sources when they are facing threats from overzealous prosecutions.

Winner is a remarkable young woman. After growing up in Texas, she joined the Air Force and later worked for a contractor to the National Security Agency. While working at the contractor, she had come across an NSA document that she believed the American people needed to know about. The document showed that Russian intelligence had been trying to hack the election systems of U.S. states, in an apparent effort to manipulate American elections.

This information had not been made public because it had been deemed classified. But that classification also meant that it hadn't been adequately shared with other federal, state, and local officials, and as a result, state election officials didn't know about the threat. In an act of moral courage, Winner decided to share the report with the press.

A Senate report later concluded that state election officials around the country only learned of the Russian threat because of press reports.

Instead of being lauded for warning the public of the Russian threat, Winner was arrested, charged, and prosecuted under the Espionage Act, the draconian World War I-era law that the Justice Department uses like a hammer to force whistleblowers to plead guilty in order to avoid much longer prison sentences.

The Press Freedom Defense Fund is proud to stand with Reality Winner.

James Risen, director

## JOURNALISTS CAN TURN TO THE PRESS FREEDOM DEFENSE FUND

Winner's cause is just one of many challenges that The Fund has taken on, as it protects a wide range of news organizations, journalists, and whistleblowers both in the United States and around the world.



Illustration: Sarah Gonzales for The Intercept

Maria Ressa, the founder of Rappler, an online news site in the Philippines, is another courageous woman who has relied on The Fund's support. The Philippine government has tried to silence Ressa and Rappler because they have shined a light on President Rodrigo Duterte's murderous "war on drugs." The Fund stepped in to back Rappler's marathon legal defense against the Duterte regime.

## LOOKING AHEAD TO 2019

In 2019, The Fund provided crucial legal support to Bryan Carmody, a freelance journalist in San Francisco. His home was illegally raided by San Francisco police officers who wanted to find out who leaked Carmody a secret police report. The police sledgehammered their way into his home and held him in handcuffs while they seized his electronic equipment. Judges who had issued warrants in the case later said that the police had not told them Carmody is a journalist, and the controversy surrounding the case ultimately led to the resignation of San Francisco's police chief.

## 2018 Financials

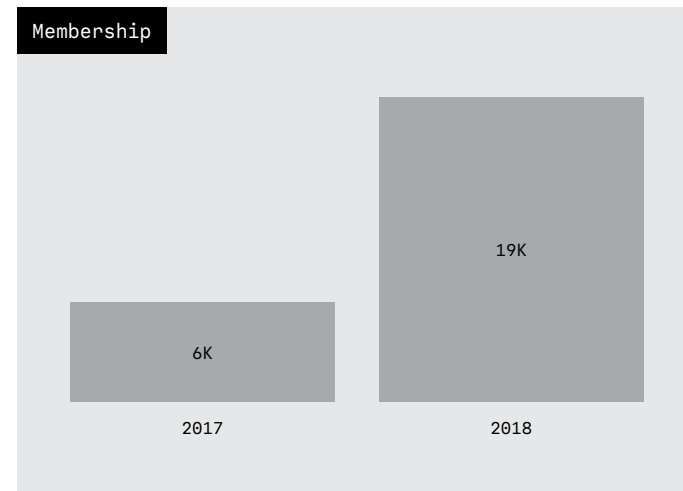
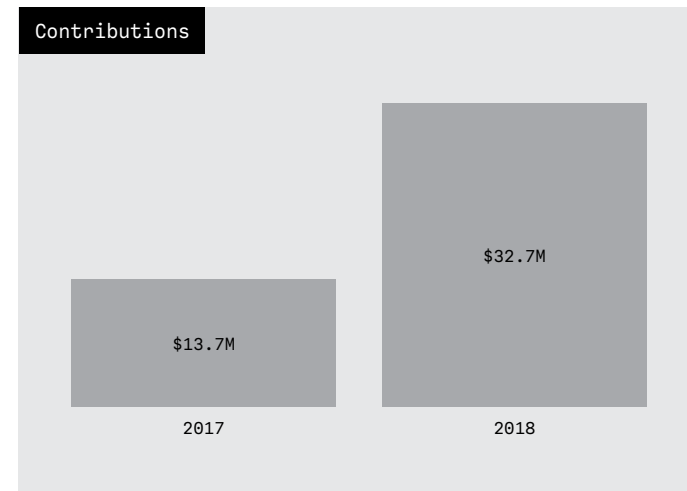
First Look relies completely on the generosity of individual donors and foundations to support our belief that freedom of expression and the press are vital to a healthy democracy and a vibrant culture. We believe in accountability and transparency in how we use those valuable donations to fulfill our mission.

donating members reaching 19,000. We expanded the impact of our fierce journalism through The Intercept's reporting and podcasts, increased the number of voices and stories told through Field of Vision-funded documentaries, and significantly supported the defense of whistleblowers and sources.

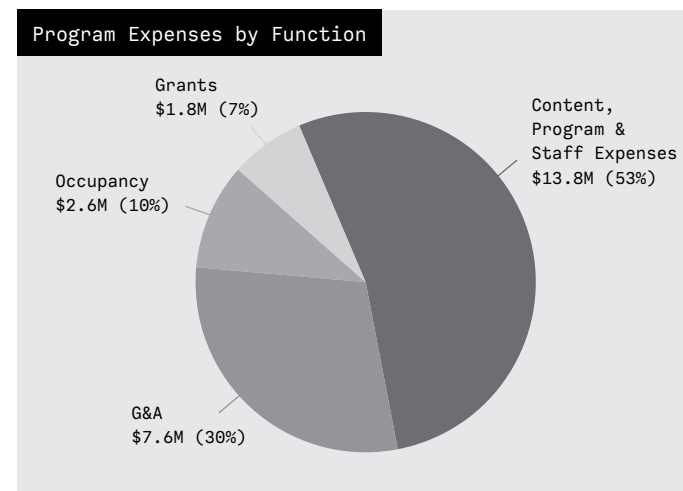
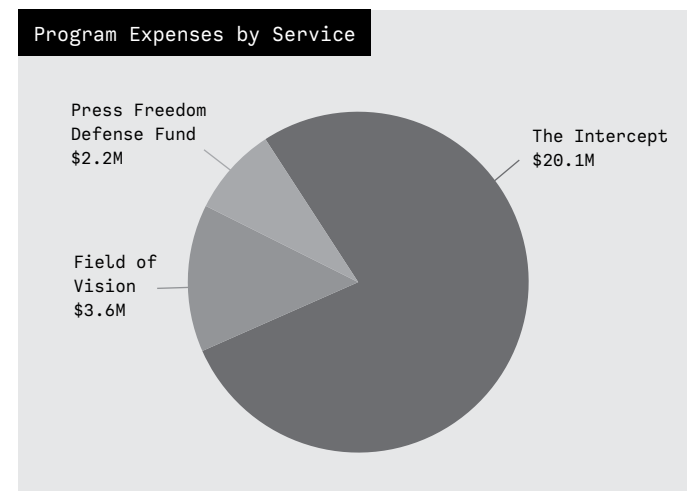
In 2018, First Look saw continued growth to new highs in contributed income and membership, with

First Look had 90 dedicated and passionate staff in 2018 who executed our mission every day.

## Revenue



## Expenses



The information presented here is extracted from First Look's audited financial statements and presented for convenience. First Look's Form 990 returns are available at our website: [firstlook.org](http://firstlook.org). Our audited financial statements are available on request.

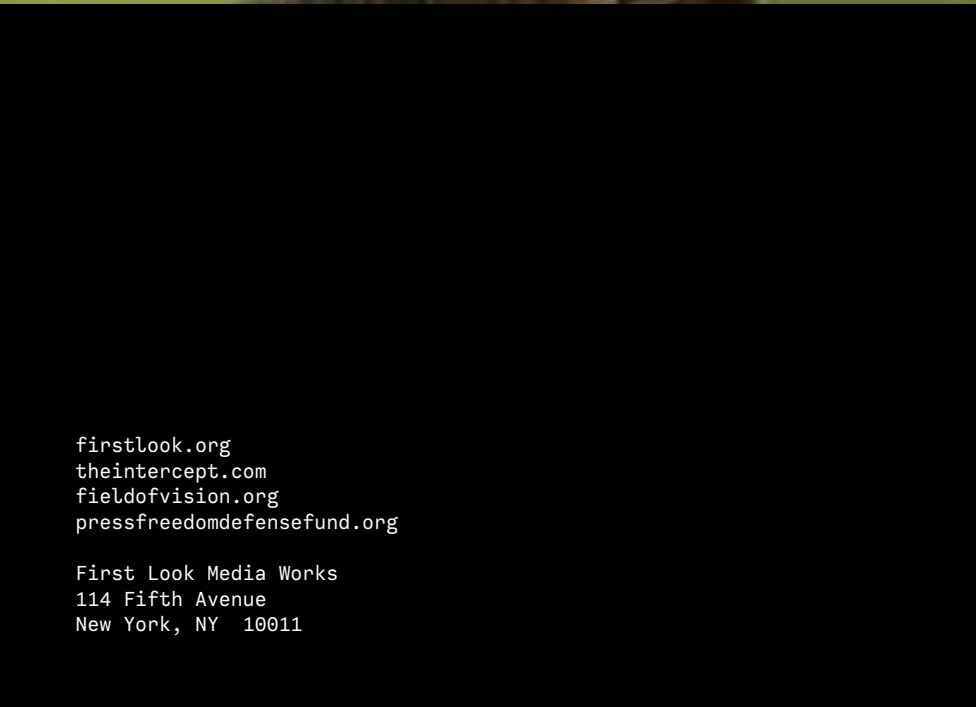
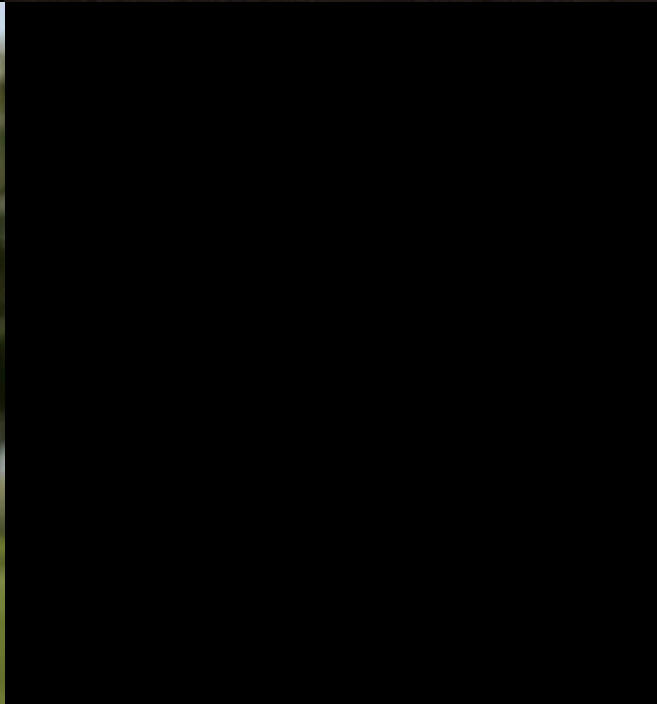
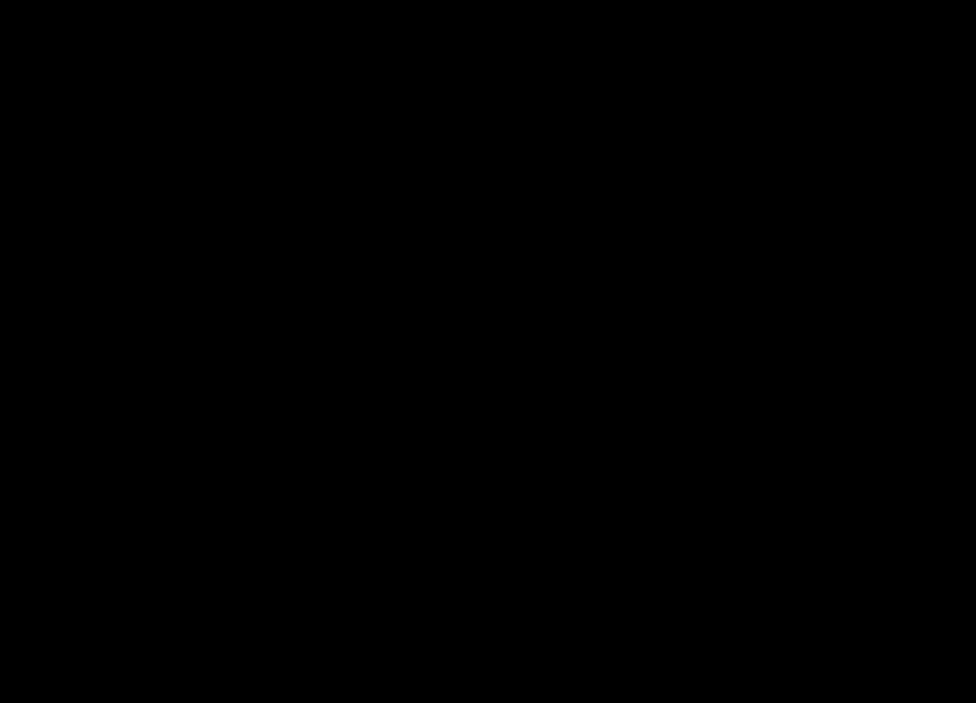


First Look is needed now more than ever.

The Intercept, Field of Vision, and the Press Freedom Defense Fund are vital actors in the public interest. Our journalism has demonstrable impact on the most pressing issues of our time, from corruption at home and abroad, to national security, politics, surveillance, the climate emergency, criminal justice, and the war on immigrants. We give talented filmmakers the support required to get unique documentary storytelling into the world. And we step up and defend those who face threats in retaliation for their journalism.

The work we do is critical to democracy. By revealing the truth, we enable the public to hold their leaders to account.

If you value the freedom of the press and want to empower innovative truth-tellers, we invite you to join us in our work. First Look is stronger when we have many standing with us. Take this opportunity to join thousands of individuals who invest in First Look.



[firstlook.org](http://firstlook.org)  
[theintercept.com](http://theintercept.com)  
[fieldofvision.org](http://fieldofvision.org)  
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