The Arizona Mirror, based in Phoenix, Arizona, was created in 2018 as part of States Newsroom, a nonprofit news site based in 12 state capitals. The Arizona Mirror describes States Newsroom as "a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit supported by a coalition of donors."

Until November 2019, when States Newsroom gained its own independent 501(c)(3) status, the work was supported by the Hopewell Fund, a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit. According to States Newsroom director and publisher Chris Fitzsimson, Hopewell, which was launched in 2015, provided administrative support to States Newsroom and its affiliate sites, but did not fund them. Hopewell is managed by Arabella Advisors, a consulting firm that specializes in left-leaning philanthropy.

Andrea Verykoukis, deputy editor of States Newsroom, told NewsGuard that the idea for States Newsroom came from people who had donated to Chris Fitzsimson's earlier project, a North Carolina-based website called NC Policy Watch. "Longtime donors of NC Policy Watch approached him about replicating it or investing in other properties like it in other states," Verykoukis told NewsGuard in a phone interview. "Why they chose Hopewell, I can't say."

Fitzsimson told NewsGuard in a phone interview prior to the approval of the independent tax status that Hopewell acted as States Newsroom's "fiscal sponsor," and would do so until States Newsroom's separate 501(c)(3) status was approved. "Hopewell is not a funder. The money is given to Hopewell by a coalition of donor-advised funds, local foundations, reader support," Fitzsimson said, explaining that donations in effect passed through Hopewell to the Newsroom, which could not accept donations independently until it became a separate entity.

Fitzsimson told NewsGuard that he and the other editorial employees at the Newsroom do not know what prompted the program's founding donors to affiliate with Hopewell. "We don't know why they chose Hopewell...I would've been happy to be started by anybody. That's how it worked out," Fitzsimson said. "The people who gave money to Hopewell, one of the few things they insist on is that their donors remain anonymous." He described this as a negative aspect of working with Hopewell. "That's the only downside — or a downside — of being incubated. We can't really talk about that, as long as we're a project of Hopewell," he told NewsGuard prior to separating from Hopewell.

Verykoukis said that Hopewell's policy is to not "disclose or confirm who gives to any of its various projects, which included Newsroom."

In the meantime, the Newsroom continued to run advertising. "The site was passed to the States Newsroom team," Verykoukis confirmed, and they could see a list of donors by site. "States Newsroom split off from Hopewell in early November 2019," Verykoukis told NewsGuard that they had not decided whether to publish any information about major donors. "As to what will appear on each site, we have not determined that," she wrote in an email. She did not respond by email to a specific question from NewsGuard requesting information about the identities of States Newsroom's donors.

Neither the Arizona Mirror nor the Newsroom list their donors. A donate page on AZMirror.com states that the site is "supported by the generosity of those who believe an informed Arizona is a better Arizona." AZMirror.com does not run advertising.

In a 2017 tax filing, the Hopewell Fund describes its mission as "helping social/corporate entrepreneurs and other changemakers launch new, innovative social change projects." The filing shows that in 2017, Hopewell donated $4.9 million to Priorities USA, a left-leaning Super PAC aligned with the Democratic Party. It also donated $2.6 million to the New Venture Fund, a left-leaning nonprofit that, along with Hopewell, is managed by Arabella Advisors, which does not disclose its investors.

Fitzsimson told NewsGuard that the sites in the States Newsroom network "have nothing to do with Hopewell's larger policy," adding that Hopewell has no say in our editorial policy.

The Arizona Mirror's About page asserts that "We retain full editorial independence."

However, according to the States Newsroom website, the network's national staff supervise the different state sites. States Newsroom's About page also says that Fitzsimson "oversees the content and themes of the organization," and a national editor "works with the state editors to plan coverage, maintain editorial standards, expand the reach of each state's reporting and commentary, and advise on cross-outlet projects." Verykoukis said each site's editor makes the final decision on what they publish. "We offer a list of editorial guidance and support...but the editors decide what to cover," Verykoukis told NewsGuard.

The Arizona Mirror primarily covers state politics and public policy in Arizona. The site describes its mission as "amplifying the voices of Arizonans whose stories are unheard: shining a light on the relationships between people, power and policy; and holding public officials to account." The site lists four staffers based in Phoenix, the state capital, and also relies on freelance contributors.

Content on the site is organized into sections including Education, Immigration, Criminal justice and Policing, Politics, Law and Government, and Investigations. In addition to Arizona politics and policy, the site reports on national issues as they relate to Arizona. For example, in September 2019, the site posted a story about how Arizona's congressional delegation voted on a gun regulation bill in the U.S. House of Representatives.

AZMirror.com occasionally posts content from Cronkite News Service, the news division of Arizona PBS, which is affiliated with Arizona State University's Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication.
The Arizona Mirror is an independent, nonprofit news organization that covers Arizona government and politics. It maintains a transparent approach to funding and ownership, prioritizing journalistic integrity and public service over profit-driven motives. The site is supported by a coalition of Arizona businesses, philanthropists, and individuals who share the goal of strengthening civic engagement and informed decision-making.

To access the full Article, please visit [The Arizona Mirror](http://www.azmirror.com).