

Press Release

## **‘Lookout Santa Cruz’ wins the International category of the third edition of the AMIC International Award for Local Media**

*The jury has recognized the U.S. digital media outlet for being an example of how local journalism can respond to the sector’s current challenges in an innovative, rigorous, and sustainable way.*

The jury of the AMIC International Award for Local Media has announced the winner in the International category: **‘Lookout Santa Cruz’**, published in the city of **Santa Cruz, California (USA)**. The award recognizes the outlet’s contribution to strengthening and renewing local journalism.

The jury highlighted the value of ‘Lookout Santa Cruz’ as a transferable model, as it has developed its own formula that allows the project to be replicated in other territories across the United States. In fact, it has already launched a new edition of Lookout in Eugene, Oregon, and is exploring the expansion of the model to other locations across the country. Its experience provides strategic lessons applicable in international contexts and stands as an inspiring case for editors and journalism organizations. The jury also emphasized “the excellence of its journalistic practice, characterized by professional rigor and the production of content that is relevant to the community.”

The award will be presented during the AMIC International Award for Local Media ceremony on **April 14 at CaixaForum Barcelona** (Av. de Francesc Ferrer i Guàrdia, 6-8), in Barcelona, where attendees will have the opportunity to learn first-hand about the ‘Lookout Santa Cruz’ model. The project, which has been operating for six years, follows a digital-first and community-centered approach. It is built on high-quality journalism, strong civic commitment, and rigorous ethical standards aimed at fostering a better-informed and more engaged citizenry. The award will be received by **Ken Doctor**, CEO and founder of Lookout Local, Inc.

### Finalist in the International category

In the International category, **'El Armadillo'**, an independent media outlet from Medellín (Colombia) founded in 2021, has been named finalist. The jury recognized it for “representing a strong example of independent local journalism, committed to its community and guided by a clear public service mission.”

The outlet’s investigations were also highlighted, which, in the words of the jury, “have helped trigger public debates, institutional processes, and judicial actions, demonstrating a tangible impact on democratic life and on key issues affecting Medellín and Antioquia. The media outlet shows the capacity of local journalism to generate real effects beyond its immediate geographic scale.”

Overall, **'El Armadillo'** embodies a model of local journalism that combines independence, innovation, sustainability, and social responsibility—qualities that fully justify its status as a finalist in the International category.

### The strength of local media

The awards ceremony will also serve as a forum to analyze key developments in local journalism through **presentations by international experts, who will discuss the situation of the sector in their respective countries**. This year’s event will feature presentations by Dr. **Sonho Kim**, Director of Media Research at the Korea Press Foundation; **Ken Doctor**, CEO and founder of Lookout Local, Inc., winner of the 2024 Pulitzer Prize for *Breaking News Reporting*; and Dr. **Richard Fletcher**, Director of Research and Deputy Director of the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford.

### Other AMIC initiatives related to local media

The Association of Information and Communication Media (AMIC), which brings together 570 newspapers, digital outlets, and audiovisual media organizations—collectively reaching a print circulation of 1.3 million copies and more than 14 million unique monthly users online—organizes the third edition of the AMIC International Award for Local Media with the aim of promoting rigorous journalism and professional excellence among journalists and editors working in local media.

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