

KCRW Foundation, Inc.
Corporation for Public Broadcasting
Local Content & Services Report (FY2018)

1. Describe your overall goals and approach to address identified community issues, needs, and interests through your station's vital local services, such as multiplatform long and short-form content, digital and in-person engagement, education services, community information, partnership support, and other activities, and audiences you reached or new audiences you engaged.

The mission of KCRW, an award-winning public radio station and NPR affiliate in Santa Monica, California, is to connect an ever-growing community around the highest pursuits of the human spirit. As a service of Santa Monica College, our aim is to learn and inform. To enlighten and delight. To discover and share. We challenge convention, confound expectations, and serve the whole person through news, music, arts, and culture. We make room for originals. We nurture the creative impulse and protect the artistic process. We honor excellence and integrity. KCRW embraces dreamers and unique voices because we passionately believe they will help us discover the new frontiers of audio.

KCRW is deeply committed to telling the stories that inspire a greater understanding of the institutions and people around us. In today's partisan and divisive media landscape, KCRW's award-winning journalism and community-based reporting fosters nuanced conversations about local and national issues. KCRW encourages our audience's curiosity about the world through in-depth, thought-provoking storytelling on a wide variety of topics. For their work, KCRW producers and journalists have received many prestigious honors, including The George Foster Peabody Award, Edward R. Murrow Award, Radio and Television News Directors Association Awards, and Corporation for Public Broadcasting Awards.

KCRW is one of the most respected and progressive music outlets in the world, which serves as a gateway for introducing young, diverse audiences to public radio. Our trendsetting music programming is widely regarded as the best source for independent music and a home for true music discovery. Equally impressive is KCRW's unparalleled ability to combine our unique brand of programming and use of digital technologies to engage culturally curious, diverse audiences. Their passion for KCRW and dedicated support has made the station what it is today—the future of public media. KCRW provides an all-access pass to premier music, arts, and cultural events. Each year we partner with civic and cultural organizations to produce and present hundreds of live events attended by over 200,000 people.

Highlights of KCRW programming, both on-air and in-person, for FY18 include:

- KCRW's *There Goes the Neighborhood: Exploring the Housing Crisis and Gentrification in Los Angeles* aired in FY18 on the KCRW daily program *Press Play*. An award-winning series produced in partnership with WNYC and supported by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, *There Goes The Neighborhood* consisted of eight podcast episodes and all were aired as part of *Press Play*'s continued commitment to covering the homelessness crisis in Los Angeles.

- California Elections Coverage: In the lead-up to the California primary election in January 2018, *Press Play* interviewed all six leading contenders in the governor's race. The show provided in-depth coverage of important ballot issues in the weeks leading up to *Press Play's* Election Day special.
- *Left, Right and Center*, KCRW's most popular show featuring nuanced political discussion across the aisle, moved from a 30-minute format to one hour as the result of increased audience interest. *Left, Right and Center* also produced three live broadcasts in front of audiences in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and New York during the grant period.
- *Welcome to LA*, one of KCRW's newest storytelling podcasts, earned the distinction of being making it onto *Vulture's* Best Podcasts of 2018 list. *Welcome to LA* features unforgettable stories of people who learn what lies beyond the dream – yacht parties with theremin makers that end on the rocks, low-budget filmmaking that blurs the line between truth and fiction, and movie stars and Hollywood hopefuls whose stories seem too crazy to be true.
- *Lost Notes*, which began airing in FY18, is a new podcast that showcases lesser-known popular music stories, such as an FBI investigation into the classic rock anthem "Louie Louie". Each of the eight episodes showcased stories pitched by independent producers. *Lost Notes* was so well-received among listeners that it reached the #1 spot on the iTunes music podcast charts.
- *Bodies*, hosted by producer Allison Behringer, is another new KCRW podcast. An intimate, highly-produced documentary program, each of its five episodes follows one person's journey to solve a mystery about their own body. Primarily focused on women's health issues, this timely podcast addresses subjects that receive little attention in the mainstream media.
- In March 2018, KCRW began airing *Don't @ Me with Justin Simien*, a show that focuses on issues of race, gender, and sexuality, often within the context of the entertainment industry. Through weekly conversations with the stars, artists and creators shaping our culture, Simien conducts nuanced conversations about how these topics shape their work.
- *One Year Later* is a special series from KCRW that takes a new approach to the national political debate. A year after a polarizing election, three hosts, each with a distinct perspective, speak honestly about America's differences and look for ways to bridge the country's divides.
- Continued educational and professional development opportunities, including a Summer Marketing Internship Program that engages interns from colleges around the country, as

well as expanded professional development opportunities for media producers, including Independent Producer Project workshops

- In-person programming through partnerships with organizations such as the Annenberg Space for Photography, the Hammer Museum, and the Hollywood Bowl resulted in new seasons of Summer Nights and World Festival concerts. KCRW's events are attended by over 200,000 people across Southern California, Santa Barbara, and the Central Coast each year. Events are often related to KCRW's award-winning programming, such as *Press Play's* two public events as part of KCRW's *There Goes The Neighborhood* series to discuss housing and gentrification in Los Angeles.

KCRW invites audience participation through digital media, call-ins, social media, and crowdsourcing, including data and feedback gathered through audience engagement tools like American Public Media's Public Insight Network (PIN) and Hearken, used as part of *Curious Coast*, a citizen-led journalism project that encourages the public to submit and vote on story ideas for KCRW reporters to investigate. Similarly, *SoundsLA* is KCRW's multiplatform storytelling project that inspires creative expression and community engagement through the sounds of Los Angeles and the stories they evoke. *SoundsLA* partners with independent producers and the greater Los Angeles community to collect one-minute audio postcards that use a sound as the basis for personal storytelling.

2. Describe key initiatives and the variety of partners with whom you collaborated, including other public media outlets, community nonprofits, government agencies, educational institutions, the business community, teachers and parents, etc. This will illustrate the many ways you're connected across the community and engaged with other important organizations in the area.

Each year, KCRW partners with numerous organizations across multiple sectors (public media, nonprofit, government, education, and business). In FY18 some of our key initiatives and partnerships included the following:

Music Initiatives & Partnerships

- *Summer Nights Concerts*: Each summer, KCRW partners with local businesses and nonprofits to offer dozens of free concerts across Southern California, attended by 200,000 people. Partner sites include One Colorado, Chinatown, the Hammer Museum, and KCRW's brand-new Media Center in Santa Monica.
- *World Festival at the Hollywood Bowl*: KCRW partnered with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Association to produce the 19th season of world music concerts, the World Festival at the Hollywood Bowl.

News & Culture Initiatives & Partnerships

- NPR: As a flagship member station, KCRW broadcasts NPR's *Morning Edition* and *All Things Considered* and regularly partners with NPR to report on the Southern California region.
- Public Radio International (PRI): KCRW airs PRI's *The World*, its daily news magazine that focuses on telling intriguing stories from around the world that remind us just how small our planet really is. Through November 2017, KCRW also partnered with PRI to produce and distribute the daily news show *To The Point with Warren Olney*. (After November 2017, *To The Point* switched to a weekly podcast format.)
- WNYC Studios: In FY18, KCRW aired its collaboration with WNYC Studios titled *There Goes the Neighborhood: Los Angeles*, described earlier in this report.
- The Norman Lear Center (USC Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism): In FY17, KCRW initiated a year-long research study to evaluate the impact of recent grant-funded capacity building initiatives to increase coverage of underreported issues and vulnerable communities. The report was completed in the spring of 2018, and a public version of the report is being finalized for 2019.
- Antioch University Santa Barbara (AUSB): KCRW partnered with AUSB to develop *Curious Coast* — a citizen-led initiative to engage the Santa Barbara community and educate journalism students in new ways of reporting on local issues and community interests.
- KCRW's Independent Producer Project (IPP), our main pipeline for new talent and content, spearheaded and partnered with several new projects over the grant period. New KCRW originals launched through IPP include *Lost Notes*, a music anthology series focused on lesser-told great stories in popular music, as well as *Bodies*, a highly-produced documentary program that focuses on women's health issues. During the grant period, the IPP hosted four workshops for over 150 independent producers focusing on relevant industry topics.
- The IPP also hosted the Sixth Annual 24-Hour Radio Race that engaged 250 teams producing short audio documentaries, all within a 24-hour period. In FY18, the IPP also began a partnership with the *Boyle Heights Beat*, a bilingual community newspaper produced by high school students residing in East Los Angeles. This collaboration resulted in multiple joint reporting projects that aired on KCRW, including NPR's *Morning Edition*.

Internship Initiatives & Partnerships

Volunteers and interns play a vital role in all of KCRW's operations. Our more than 850 volunteers work across the station, from the membership and underwriting departments, at special events, in the music library, and with both on-air and digital programming. In FY18, KCRW continued to partner with Santa Monica College to offer student internships throughout the station's many departments. KCRW also continued internship opportunities at its station in Santa Barbara in partnership with Antioch University Santa Barbara. Current internship and volunteer programs include:

- Membership Volunteer Program: Volunteers donate their time once a week to take donations, answer questions and update member information in our database.
- Weekly Volunteer Program: Volunteers contribute their time and expertise across departments at KCRW, from helping the communications team, to helping sort/file music in the music library, to providing production assistance to our in-studio DJs.
- Summer Marketing Internship Program: From June to September, interns serve as KCRW's marketing arm to promote the station and foster community interaction. Interns are on site at our free *Summer Nights* concerts and post on social media and KCRW's blog to expand the station's reach.
- Santa Monica College Internship Program: KCRW offers internships to current Santa Monica College students (for credit and non-credit), in various departments throughout the station.
- News Internship Program (In Santa Monica & KDRW Santa Barbara): News interns practice developing well-focused stories, writing for broadcast news, and using audio equipment and editing software while honing career-building and networking skills.
- KDRW Santa Barbara Marketing and Street Team Internship Program: Like our Summer Marketing Internship Program, this program serves the Santa Barbara community and our local station's efforts to engage the public at local events.

Through such initiatives, KCRW hopes to create a replicable volunteer and internship model for stations to employ throughout the country—thereby ensuring an inclusive and accessible public media ecosystem.

3. What impact did your key initiatives and partnerships have in your community? Describe any known measurable Impact, such as increased awareness, learning or understanding about particular issues. Describe indicators of success, such as connecting people to needed resources or strengthening conversational ties across diverse neighborhoods. Did a partner see an increase in requests for related resources? Please include direct feedback from a partner(s) or from a person(s) served.

KCRW strives to be reflective of its audiences while providing community members with an accessible forum in which they can become better informed and engage with important ideas. We believe the best way to achieve this goal is by creating quality programming that not only informs, but inspires curiosity. KCRW measures the impact and reach of our programs on an ongoing basis through quantitative metrics that examine listenership/viewership data, as well as qualitative feedback and participation via digital and in-person platforms.

Direct Feedback From Listeners and Community Members

Feedback from our listeners is essential to KCRW's growth, as it holds us accountable to remain relevant in an ever-changing media landscape. Direct feedback we have received from our listeners during the grant period includes:

“Thank you for all the terrific programming! It's obviously more important than ever to get all the important news in a clear, factual, and engaging manner.”

“I listen to KCRW every day on my commute to and from work, and I am a very proud listener. Growing up I hated talk radio, but the shows on KCRW are so smart, informative, and interesting, I have learned to love it. Thanks for sharing the incredible content.”

“Thank you all for inspiring me, keeping me entertained and enlightened on a daily basis!”

“You guys rock and I'm proud to be a long time listener and supporter. Keep giving us your unbiased news and information! You make the world a better, truer place.”

“*Good Food* is my favorite program. I particularly like [Evan Kleinman's] sharing current issues in the food world, ranging from colony collapse disorder to the pay of waitstaff. Any book or podcast can talk about how to cook. Evan shares with us how food brings us together.”

“Keep up the good work. In a time when journalism and journalists are under attack worldwide, your work is essential. Thank you.”

“Even though I no longer live in LA, I'm so thankful that I can stream Eclectic24 and KCRW live at my home in Portland, Oregon! I count on the amazing DJs to introduce me to the best new music in the world. Thank you so very much for existing!”

KCRW creates our programming with our large and diverse community in mind. On social media during the grant period, KCRW had 1.3 million followers, 348,000 engagements, and 46.8 million impressions. During this period, KCRW's terrestrial listenership averaged roughly 550,000 monthly cumulative listeners, and we saw significant digital audience growth due to our newly redesigned KCRW app that allows users to listen to KCRW live and download on-demand podcasts. KCRW will have more specific digital audience information to provide in next year's report.

In addition to this community feedback and engagement, KCRW's programming was commended by multiple journalistic institutions, garnering a series of national, regional and state awards for excellence, including multiple Southern California Journalism Awards, multiple Regional Edward R. Murrow Awards, a Public Radio News Directors Incorporated Award, and a Gracie Award. KCRW was also recognized by the industry publication *HotPod* as, “becoming one of the most interesting publishers of unconventional and surprising independent-spirited podcasts.”

Additionally, KCRW continues to develop programming that empowers listeners to provide us with input regarding the stories KCRW should tell. Programs and initiatives such as *Curious*

Coast, which was developed as a way to engage the community in deciding which local stories KCRW would tell, while *SoundsLA*, an initiative of KCRW's Independent Producer Project, engages with the greater Los Angeles community by creating a collection of one-minute audio postcards that use a sound as a linchpin for personal storytelling. *SoundsLA* not only influences how residents experience their neighborhoods, but honors a sense that is often overlooked when we talk about the places where we live—how they sound.

Community engagement and impact will play an even more significant role throughout the next grant period as KCRW moves into the new KCRW Media Center, which allows us to physically invite the community into our home for important community discussions on pertinent topics. These events and discussions will allow KCRW to engage with our listeners in a more personalized and intimate way than traditional terrestrial radio.

4. Please describe any efforts (e.g. programming, production, engagement activities) you have made to investigate and/or meet the needs of minority and other diverse audiences (including, but not limited to, new immigrants, people for whom English is a second language and illiterate adults) during Fiscal Year 2018, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2019. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

KCRW reaches listeners through a variety of media platforms. Our primary method is our terrestrial broadcast, through which KCRW's news and cultural programming reaches 550,000+ average weekly listeners across Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Ventura, Mojave, Palm Springs, and Orange County. With such a large audience, it is essential that KCRW's programming efforts capture the diverse voices and needs of minority and underrepresented communities.

As part of a three-year grant-supported initiative, KCRW partnered with The Norman Lear Center at the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism beginning in 2017 to study the impact of our investigative and enterprise reporting on vulnerable communities in Los Angeles. The study, which was completed in spring of 2018, described how this transformative grant created significant positive changes for KCRW's ability to serve the residents of Los Angeles through this journalism. A final public report will be published in spring 2019.

KCRW is committed to ensuring that our programming directly responds to the most pressing needs of our community. Perhaps the greatest example of this during the grant period was KCRW's award-winning *There Goes the Neighborhood* series. Produced in partnership with WNYC and supported by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, the eight-episode series focused on gentrification and the housing crisis in Los Angeles. All episodes were aired on *Press Play* as part of the show's continued commitment to covering Los Angeles' homelessness crisis. *Press Play* also co-hosted two public events to discuss housing and gentrification in Los Angeles.

In 2018, KCRW received many Southern California Journalism Awards for its coverage of topics relevant to the diverse populations in Southern California, including:

- Best Radio Documentary (First Place): Anna Scott, Saul Gonzalez, and Miguel Contreras' *There Goes the Neighborhood*.
- Best Radio News or Feature Short Form (Second Place): Jenny Hamel's "Angelenos protest after the announcement to end DACA program."
- Best Radio News (First Place): Jenny Hamel's "There are 6,000 homeless youth in LA, reaching them is crucial."
- Best Radio Personality Profile/Interview under 20 minutes (Second Place): Benjamin Gottlieb's "A North Korean refugee's journey to Los Angeles."
- Best Radio Personality Profile/Interview over 20 minutes (Second Place) Kim Masters and Kaitlin Parker's "Comedian Hasan Minhaj on telling the story of the 'new brown America.'"

KCRW also won second place for the Best Division AA Podcast from the Public Radio News Directors Incorporated Awards for *There Goes the Neighborhood*, as well as a Regional Edward R. Murrow Award for Hard News for Carla Green's story "Some Uber Drivers Make so Little, They have to Live in Their Cars."

Throughout the next year, KCRW will maintain this commitment to producing shows highlighting diverse communities, including *Don't @ Me*, *Bodies*, and other essential reporting on civic and community issues. Additionally, KCRW will implement a brand-new format for our existing program, *SoundsLA*, that will bring more attention to the unique characteristics of Los Angeles' numerous neighborhoods through sounds collected by community members.

5. Please assess the impact that your CPB funding had on your ability to serve your community. What were you able to do with your grant that you wouldn't be able to do if you didn't receive it?

Support from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting allows KCRW to fund critical news programming, notably NPR's *Morning Edition* and *All Things Considered*, which brings our listeners the highest quality reporting from across the nation and around the globe. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting's consistent support for this programming allows KCRW to allocate funds raised by the station to support original local programming initiatives such as our daily news and music shows, podcasts, and reporting projects.

The continued support of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting also allows KCRW to put resources into creating trademark community events that differentiate us from other public media organizations. More than just a radio station, KCRW extends its presence beyond the airwaves by bringing unique live experiences such as concerts, film screenings, political and cultural forums, and community events to Southern California and beyond. One example of this is our annual Good Food Pie Festival, in which hundreds of home cooks and professionals compete side-by-side. In September 2018, Good Food also hosted its first Great Tortilla Tournament. In the spirit of the Good Food Pie Contest, the Great Tortilla Tournament brought together local foodways and local businesses to find the best tortillas in Los Angeles—a staple

in Los Angeles' heavily Latin-American influenced food scene.

With the opening of the brand-new KCRW Media Center in Santa Monica, KCRW has already hosted a number of internal and external events in the building. For example, in October 2018, KCRW partnered with NPR Music to present a live event centered around their new Tiny Desk Talks initiative entitled "Setting the Scene: How to Soundtrack for Movies and Television." This event saw KCRW Music Director Jason Bentley in conversation with composer Ludwig Gorranson (*Black Panther*, *Atlanta*, *Creed*) and music supervisor/KCRW DJ Liza Richardson (*Barry*, *Narcos*). In December 2018, the KCRW Media Center served as the location for a town hall event moderated by Madeleine Brand to discuss the increasingly severe wildfire problem in Southern California titled "California Wildfire: Learning to Live in the 'New Abnormal.'" This event brought together climate-change experts, state officials, and community members to discuss how to address this pressing issue.

KCRW's unique music programming sets us apart from many public radio stations, and the support of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting allows us to create the highest quality music programming. KCRW broadcasts this cutting-edge music programming through our flagship show, *Morning Becomes Eclectic*, every weekday morning from 9AM - 12PM, along with our late evening, early morning, and weekend programming featuring music programming from our incredible roster of DJs. KCRW's music programming also features live performances from some of today's most interesting artists, both established and up-and-coming. Recent performances have included Guster, Snail Mail, Death Cab For Cutie, Thom Yorke, Rufus Wainwright, Leon Bridges, and Christine and the Queens.

Some of KCRW's most important work is done through the Independent Producer Project, KCRW's pipeline for new talent and supporting independent work. Through this project, KCRW supports compelling podcasts such as *Nocturne* and *Here Be Monsters* and commissioned stories from a wide-variety of independent producers. The Independent Producer Project also provides trainings for independent journalists and puts on the 24-Hour Radio Race each year. Corporation for Public Broadcasting funding also allows KCRW to invest in our original digital program offerings such as *Don't @ Me* and *Welcome to LA*.

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting's grant also serves as an endorsement of our work and our model, enabling us to solicit and secure new support from members of the public, from private local and national foundations, and from public grantmakers such as the National Endowment for the Arts.