

**KCRW Foundation, Inc.**  
**Corporation for Public Broadcasting**  
**Local Content & Services Report**  
**October 1, 2018 - September 30, 2019**

**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.**

KCRW is an award-winning public radio station and flagship NPR affiliate based in Santa Monica, California. A service of Santa Monica College, KCRW has served Southern California and beyond for more than 40 years through innovative news, music, arts and culture programming, as well as in-person events. Inspired by the spirit of Los Angeles, KCRW connects our diverse communities of listeners through trusted and representative programming. KCRW is driven by a steadfast commitment to ethics and integrity. Our content features varied perspectives to create a nuanced understanding of the world around us. We address our listeners' passions and curiosities with original content distributed through cutting-edge platforms, all while celebrating the relationship-building power of terrestrial radio. KCRW producers and journalists have received many prestigious honors for their work, including The George Foster Peabody Award, Edward R. Murrow Award, Radio and Television News Directors Association Awards, and Corporation for Public Broadcasting Awards.

KCRW's goals are to (1) deliver striking, human and credible programming, (2) stay relevant in the face of changing media behaviors, and (3) build a robust and engaged membership community that we represent and respond to. We seek to inform, enlighten, and delight; and by doing so connect our community of listeners, who expect the highest standards of credibility and creativity. KCRW's unparalleled ability to engage culturally curious, young, and diverse audiences has made the station what it is today—the future of public media.

In addition to our robust schedule of news, music, arts and culture programming, each year, KCRW partners with civic and cultural organizations to produce live events for Southern California residents. These events, the majority of which are free for the public, allow us to reach beyond our traditional listenership to engage individuals from across the region. Highlights of KCRW programming, both on-air and in-person, for FY19 include:

- ***Greater LA***, which premiered April 2019, is a daily 30-minute local affairs program hosted by veteran reporter and host Steve Chiotakis that focuses on telling sound-rich, closely-reported stories throughout the neighborhoods of Los Angeles. *Greater LA* explores larger issues through the lens of our local communities and increases essential local programming in our program schedule.
- ***Morning Becomes Eclectic***, KCRW's signature morning music program, celebrated an exciting year that culminated in the show's move to the KCRW Media Center. While the original basement studios hosted countless bands over the past decades, the KCRW Media Center has improved the show's production quality with our state-of-the-art Annenberg Performance Studio.
- ***Press Play with Madeleine Brand*** exemplifies the best that KCRW has to offer by combining national news, local issues, arts, culture, and music into an award-winning hour-long show. In FY19, *Press Play* featured extensive, ongoing coverage of California's climate-related natural disasters such as the Woolsey Fire, climate change more generally, the January 2019 LAUSD teachers' strike, and the beginnings of the 2020 Presidential Elections. Among numerous honors in FY19, the Los Angeles Press

Club recognized Madeleine Brand as Broadcast Journalist of the Year at its National Arts & Entertainment Journalism Awards.

- ***Left, Right & Center***, one of KCRW’s most popular shows, moved from a 30-minute format to one hour in 2018 as the result of increased audience demand for nuanced political discussion from across the aisle. In FY19, *Left, Right & Center* began producing a weekly spin-off program, *LRC Presents: All the President’s Lawyers*, which is a discussion of the politics of law, libel, litigation, and the White House.
- ***Lost Notes***, KCRW’s music documentary podcast, addressed the concept of artistic legacies in its second season with the guiding question: *whose story is considered worth remembering and why?* Every episode gives context around the cultural forces that shaped, and in some cases, complicated an artist’s career. With Jessica Hopper as Executive Producer, Season 2 of *Lost Notes* received universal acclaim, was ranked the #1 podcast of 2019 by *Vulture*, and made it on multiple publications’ “Best of 2019” lists, include *IndieWire*, *The Verge*, *Podcast Review*, and the *Los Angeles Daily News*.
- **The Independent Producer Project (IPP)** allows KCRW to engage with independent producers by commissioning reporting projects and offering a wide variety of workshops and networking events. In addition to supporting a slate of original programming and professional development opportunities, in August 2019, the IPP held the 7th Annual 24-Hour Radio Race, a competition that gives teams of reporters and producers just 24 hours to produce a radio feature on a given topic.
- **Report LA Fellowship:** Launched in May 2019, KCRW’s paid Report LA Fellowship is innovating KCRW’s traditional hiring process while setting a replicable example for how public radio stations can diversify their staff. Our inaugural group of Fellows have quickly become an integral part of the KCRW newsroom and are already producing content for broadcast on-air. Diversifying KCRW’s workforce is essential to building a station that embodies the diversity of the population that we serve through our reporting, ensuring that KCRW stays a relevant public service.
- **Summer Nights:** KCRW’s free concert series across Southern California took place for the 10th year, welcoming thousands of community members for performances by dozens of local and national bands. Summer Nights concerts are held at diverse venues across the region each summer, such as KCRW’s headquarters in Santa Monica, Chinatown, the Hammer Museum, One Colorado in Pasadena, the California African American Museum, and the Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara. During the grant period, KCRW expanded the geographic reach of Summer Nights to include concerts in Irvine (Cadence Park) and Long Beach (POW! WOW! And Downtown Long Beach Buskerfest). These concerts celebrate diverse neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles County by partnering with like-minded arts organizations that are committed to providing accessible programming.

Each year, KCRW’s events presented in partnership with organizations, such the KCRW-curated World Festival concerts at the Hollywood Bowl (with headlining performances from Chromeo, Toro y Moi, Natalia Lafourcade, Lord Huron, and more), which are attended by over 200,000 people across Southern California, Santa Barbara, and the Central Coast. Events exclusively produced and promoted by KCRW, such as our Summer Nights concerts, reach 50,000 in-person attendees each year. Among these KCRW-produced events over the grant period were the **Good Food Pie Contest**, which celebrated its 10th anniversary with an incredible turnout at UCLA’s Royce Hall of more than 5,000 people and 500 pie entries: a huge growth from the contest’s first iteration in Sherman Oaks with 60 pie entries. **KCRW and Gustavo’s Great Tortilla Tournament**

presented its second annual event in September 2019 at a new venue: the LA Plaza de Cultura y Artes in downtown Los Angeles. The second Tortilla Tournament was a resounding success and saw hundreds of attendees from across the city come together to celebrate the tortilla's role as a food staple in Southern California.

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 shows like *Greater LA*.

**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 FY19 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 thousands of people. Partner sites include One Colorado in Pasadena, Chinatown, the Hammer Museum, and KCRW's brand-new Media Center in Santa Monica. During the grant period, KCRW expanded the series to include concerts in Long Beach and Irvine.
- ***World Festival at the Hollywood Bowl:*** KCRW partnered with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Association to produce the 20th season of signature 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*, *All Things Considered*, *Weekend Edition*, and *Marketplace* and regularly partners with NPR to report on the Southern California region.
- ***The New York Times* and the *The New Yorker:*** On weekday afternoons, KCRW airs *The Daily* hosted by Michael Barbaro. Powered by *The New York Times'* newsroom, *The Daily* focuses on just one or two stories each weekday, offering listeners a 30-minute, deep, textured portrait of the characters and human stakes driving the news. On weekends, KCRW airs *The New Yorker Radio Hour*. Hosted by David Remnick, the editor of *The New Yorker*, the program features the magazine's award-winning writers in a weekly hour of radio that both delights and informs.
- ***The Norman Lear Center at USC's Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism:*** In 2017 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 was released in Fall 2019.

- **Antioch University Santa Barbara (AUSB):** AUSB provides KDRW (KCRW's frequency in Santa Barbara) with studio space and also recommends students for our Santa Barbara Internship opportunities.
- **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 during the grant period include the critically acclaimed second season of *Lost Notes*, 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 **Seventh Annual 24-Hour Radio Race** that engaged 295 teams producing short audio documentaries, all within a 24-hour period. In FY19, the IPP continued its 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 during the locally-produced portions of 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 terrestrial and digital programming. In FY19, 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:

“I moved to LA in 1984 and it took me a while to get to know LA. And then I found KCRW. All these years later I still get everything I love from KCRW: news, music, arts, book reviews, *The Daily* and other podcasts, and Andrew Bird for free! KCRW is my home.”

“I absolutely love *Left, Right & Center*. It turned me on to KCRW, and the show is among the best in broadcast political debate on any medium.”

“I’m a geography and earth science high school teacher in Santa Ana, CA. I listen to KCRW the whole way to school, and I frequently start my classes talking about something I heard. Thank you for teaching the teachers!”

“Even though I don’t live in LA anymore, I continue to seek out new music by listening to Eclectic 24 [KCRW’s hand-selected music stream] on the KCRW app and follow your Spotify music playlists. Thank you for keeping hand-picked music alive and well in this world of algorithms and robots.”

“KCRW has become a grounding force in my life, like the seasons and the school calendar. You are my musical inspiration and my daily reminder that thoughtful, reasoned, compassionate journalism endures.”

“I love KCRW and listen every day to diverse and exciting music, news, opinions, great journalism, story tellers, book reviews, and wonderful updates on film, art, food and the ever-growing culture scene in our beautiful Los Angeles. I was a fish-out-of-water New Yorker when I moved here 20 years ago, and thanks to KCRW, I found a home in LA.”

KCRW creates programming with our large and diverse community in mind. On social media during the grant period, KCRW had 1.15 million followers. During this period, KCRW’s terrestrial listenership averaged roughly 550,000 monthly cumulative listeners, and we saw significant digital audience growth due to our app that allows users to listen to KCRW live and download on-demand podcasts.

In addition to this community feedback and engagement, KCRW’s programming was commended by multiple journalistic institutions, including multiple Southern California Journalism Awards, multiple LA Press Club National Arts & Entertainment Journalism Awards, and recognitions of our podcasts and programs by a number of major news outlets including *Vulture*, *The Atlantic*, and *A Public Space*.

Additionally, KCRW continues to develop programming that empowers listeners to provide us with input regarding the stories KCRW should tell. With the launch of new programs such as *Greater LA*, KCRW has implemented procedures for audience feedback and questions using the audience engagement tool, Hearken. Through the use of this tool, KCRW programs now frequently solicit audience feedback which has influenced our programming focuses and has led to multiple follow-up episodes on popular topics and stories.

During the grant period, KCRW completed our move into the brand new KCRW Media Center which has allowed us to explore community engagement in ways that would not have been possible in our old studios. Over this period, KCRW hosted a number of in-person events hosted in the Annenberg Performance Studio at the KCRW Media Center including a live tie-in to our popular podcast, *Lost Notes*, and a series of three Summer Nights concerts hosted in the courtyard of Santa Monica College’s Center for Media and Design campus.

**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 2019, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2020. 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 version of this report was released in the fall of 2019.

KCRW's programs are committed to covering all of the diverse communities that call Southern California home. During the grant period, KCRW reportedly extensively on housing costs and homelessness, LGBTQ+ issues, education, immigration, and how climate change impacts communities across the region.

In 2019, KCRW received many Southern California Journalism Awards for its coverage of topics relevant to the diverse populations in Southern California, including:

- Best Radio Investigative (First Place): Frances Anderton & Avishay Artsy's "Bridges & Walls"
- Best Radio Investigative (Second Place): Saul Gonzalez's "Should homeless housing cost half a million dollars a unit?"
- Best Radio Lifestyle Feature (First Place): Deepa Fernandes' "How motel vouchers are keeping homeless families off the street"
- Best Radio Personality Profile/Interview, under 20 minutes (2nd Place): Sarah Sweeney & Madeleine Brand's "LA's Galvyn and Reverie, female rappers trying to make it in a man's hip hop world"
- Best Broadcast Gender/LGBTQ Reporting (3rd Place): Jenny Hamel's "The Pansy Craze"
- Best Solutions Journalism (2nd Place): Deepa Fernandes' "Motel owners see altruism and opportunity in sheltering the homeless"

KCRW's coverage also won various awards from the Radio & Television News Association of Southern California and had work recognized by *Vulture*, *The Atlantic*, and *A Public Space*.

KCRW's newest daily program, *Greater LA* is dedicated to telling the stories of underrepresented communities. *Greater LA*'s character-driven pieces focused on the life and sounds of Southern California residents present stories through the eyes of the individuals most intimately impacted by issues in our community.

**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 local news and music shows, podcasts, and reporting projects.

The continued support of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting 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. Examples include our annual Good Food Pie Festival, in which hundreds of home cooks and professionals compete side-by-side. The Good Food Pie Festival celebrated its 10th anniversary this past spring. In September

2018, Good Food also hosted its first Great Tortilla Tournament, an event that was so popular that it moved to a larger venue for its second iteration in September 2019. 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 all of KCRW’s broadcast operations now moved to the brand-new KCRW Media Center in Santa Monica, KCRW has hosted a number of internal and external events in the building. These have included a live tie-in to the popular *Lost Notes* podcast, a live conversation between Audie Cornish and Glenn Close presented in conjunction with NPR, and a number of Summer Nights concerts hosted in the courtyard of the campus. These events have been wonderful opportunities to bring the community into KCRW in ways that simply would not have been possible before.

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 Brittany Howard, Yola, Mac DeMarco, Mon Laferte, Common, Cautious Clay and more.

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* as well as 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 *Welcome to LA*, *Bodies*, and the award-winning *Lost Notes*.

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting’s grant 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.