

KCRW Foundation, Inc.
Corporation for Public Broadcasting
Local Content & Services Report (FY2022)
October 1, 2021 - September 30, 2022

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 began in the post-war 1940s when the station offered returning servicemen introductory job training in the radio industry and has been a leader in public service media ever since. KCRW has become a source for news and cultural programming for generations of listeners in Southern California and across the globe.

Incorporated as the KCRW Foundation in 1982, KCRW has been defined by our steadfast commitment to both news and the arts. KCRW's long-running morning show *Morning Becomes Eclectic* has served as a source of music discovery for decades of music-lovers while current affairs shows, such as *Press Play* and *Greater LA*, have fostered civic debate, exploration of our communities, and conversations between neighbors. KCRW continues these traditions today through our renowned slate of news, music, and arts and culture programming.

KCRW producers and journalists have received many prestigious honors for their work, including The George Foster Peabody Award, National & Regional Edward R. Murrow Awards, Radio and Television News Directors Association Awards, Southern California Press Club Awards, Corporation for Public Broadcasting Awards, and many others from additional esteemed awarding institutions.

KCRW's goals are to create striking and exceptional content that engages, inspires and serves our audience, and to foster inclusivity and diversity inside and outside of our walls. As a community driven by the spirit of Los Angeles, KCRW aspires to connect the interesting to the interested, growing a hyper-engaged LA-based collective through accessible, one-of-a-kind experiences.

In addition to our robust schedule of news, music, arts and culture programming, KCRW partners with civic and cultural organizations to produce live events and virtual/interactive programming for Southern California residents. These events, the majority of which are free or low cost to the public, allow us to reach beyond our traditional listenership to connect individuals from across the region.

Programming highlights, both on-air and in-person, for FY22 include:

- ***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 FY22, key stories included LA's Mayoral Race, inflation costs, climate change, wildfires, and housing issues.

- ***Greater LA*** is a daily 30-minute local affairs program hosted by veteran reporter and host Steve Chiotakis that offers sound-rich, character-driven stories throughout the neighborhoods of Los Angeles. *Greater LA* reframes larger issues through the lens of our local communities and increases essential local programming in our program schedule. Coverage on *Greater LA* during this period has provided listeners with important insights on housing, California's drought, and wildfire insurance information for Californians. Our program feeds our community with critical information that impacts their daily lives through stories, such as one feature about LAUSD teachers providing mental health and wellness support to students after the pandemic.
- ***Morning Becomes Eclectic***, KCRW's signature morning music program, has continued providing our listeners with the best new music from across the spectrum of genres. This year, co-hosts Novena Carmel and Anthony Valadez invited artists such as Stromae, Common, and Robert Glasper to our studios for intimate, on-air interviews. For the first time since 2020, *MBE* also welcomed artists to perform live from our Annenberg Performance Studio. In addition, the show has achieved the highest listenership in the history of any of our shows and in turn, helped increase the listenership for the news programming that precedes and follows the show.
- ***Left, Right & Center***, KCRW's weekly political roundtable, features voices from across the political spectrum engaging in thoughtful and respectful discussion on the day's most important issues. This year prompted a wide variety of topics for our panel to discuss, ranging from the overturn of *Roe v. Wade*, Ukraine and Russia conflicts, and midterm elections in 2022. After host Josh Barro's departure from the show in 2021, we welcomed award-winning journalist and former NPR *Morning Edition* host, David Green, as our new host at the start of the year.
- **The Independent Voices Project (IVP)** allows KCRW to engage with independent producers by commissioning reporting projects and offering a wide variety of workshops and networking events. In FY22, the IVP supported a broad slate of original programming and creative opportunities, like our annual Radio Race. This year, the IVP worked with 2020's Radio Race LA Award winner Shaka Mali Tafari to produce a new audio documentary series. "Exploring Africa in LA: A Little Ethiopia Story" is a love letter to Los Angeles' only official African enclave and explores the people and food that make this neighborhood unique.
- **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. In the winter of 2022, we welcomed our second cohort of Fellows, who quickly became an integral part of the KCRW newsroom and produced critical content for broadcast on-air through our flagship shows, such as *Greater LA* and *Press Play*.
- **Summer Nights:** Summer Nights is our free, all-ages, outdoors series featuring KCRW DJs and local artists that bring music exploration to neighborhoods across Greater Los Angeles. This summer, the series hosted 17 community events, featuring live performances by artists such as Ambar Lucid, Pachyman, and Thee Sinseers. The series encouraged people to explore their

neighborhoods and beyond by presenting events at the Hammer Museum, the MOCA, CAAM, Grand Performances, Descanso Gardens, and Chinatown's Central Plaza.

- **Young Creators Project:** In March of 2022, KCRW launched the Young Creators Project, which invited Los Angeles youth to share their self-expression through disciplines including music, poetry, storytelling and visual arts. The program connected young artists with educational and professional resources to help them explore pathways to the creative economy in their respective areas. The project culminated with a free, all-ages showcase for artists, family, friends and the broader KCRW community to celebrate the young creators and enjoy performances across the subject areas.
- **Podcast Bootcamp** debuted last November as a three-day intensive that taught the elements of storytelling, editing, sound collection, sound design and story delivery. Each eight-hour day of the Podcast Bootcamp weekend featured lessons from experts such as Pat Prescott from 94.7; Alex Blumberg, founder of Gimlet podcast network; and Hernan Lopez, founder of Wondery podcast. Through the Podcast Bootcamp, we share this expertise with aspiring Southern California storytellers, amplifying unique perspectives that are often outside the attention of mainstream media.

Each year, KCRW hosts events that are attended by more than 200,000 people across Southern California, Santa Barbara, and the Central Coast. Following a triumphant return to live performances, this year's KCRW World Festival with the LA Philharmonic featured artists such as Hiatus Kaiyote, Grace Jones, and Polo and Pan. Over the course of the grant period, KCRW produced a wide variety of community events including Summer Nights, our annual Tortilla Tournament, a local small business marketplace at CAAM, and mayoral election panels and community conversations.

KCRW invites audience participation through digital media, social media, and crowdsourcing. Data and feedback gathered through the Hearken audience engagement tool, helped shows like *Greater LA*, *Press Play*, *Morning Edition*, and *All Things Considered* understand what topics would be most useful to listeners, readers and all SoCal residents. Staff training and workshops ensured our content teams understood how to take actionable steps to apply the data in meaningful ways.

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 FY22 some of our key initiatives and partnerships included the following:

News & Culture Initiatives & Partnerships

- **NPR:** As a flagship member station, KCRW broadcasts NPR's *Morning Edition*, *All Things Considered*, and *Weekend Edition* and regularly partners with NPR to report on the Southern California region.
- **California Hub:** In 2020, KCRW joined NPR member stations throughout California (including KPCC, KQED, Capital Public Radio, and NPR West) to form the California Hub. This collaboration enables stations to share resources for reporting projects on issues that affect the state broadly, including important topics such as wildfires and droughts. This year, KCRW's newsroom contributed to a California Hub story covering the urgency of fire mitigation work to protect California's Big Bear region. This work received attention from an array of news outlets and elected officials, including Senators Alex Padilla and Dianne Feinstein.
- **American Public Media:** KCRW has carried programs from American Public Media for years including their flagship program, *Marketplace*, which airs each weekday on KCRW brings listeners the most up-to-date news on our economy.
- **The Moth:** KCRW carries episodes of *The Moth*, the show that celebrates storytelling, each Sunday. KCRW also partners with *The Moth* to host live and virtual storytelling events throughout Southern California.
- **The New Yorker:** 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 Los Angeles Times:** During 2022's election season, KCRW and *The LA Times* hosted a debate between LA's top mayoral candidates on the issue of homelessness. Live-streamed from KCRW headquarters, our homelessness and housing reporter, Anna Scott, and *The LA Times* columnist and host, Gustavo Arellano, moderated an in-depth discussion with Karen Bass, Kevin de Leon, and Gina Viola. This event was part of a broader effort to support our community members in making informed election decisions.

Music Initiatives & Partnerships

- **Summer Nights Concerts:** Each summer, KCRW partners with local businesses and cultural institutions to offer dozens of free concerts across Southern California, attended by tens of thousands of people. Though a cross-pollination of promotion and outreach, our collaborative events bring the diverse audiences of various organizations together.
- **KCRW Festival at the Hollywood Bowl:** In Summer 2022, the KCRW Festival at the Hollywood Bowl returned with six shows hosted in partnership with the LA Philharmonic. Shows included Hiatus Kaiyote, Flying Lotus, Grace Jones, and UB40.
- **Global Beat:** KCRW invested in music discovery in FY22 with the launch of *Global Beat*, a series that encourages listeners to expand their musical tastes in international directions. The first iteration, hosted by KCRW DJ Raul Campos and expert curators, offered a sonic tour of

Australia. The show's success in attracting new audiences encouraged the continuation of the series early in FY23 with *Global Beat: México*.

- ***Live From....***: To bring intimate performances, fresh sounds, and candid conversations to our audience, we introduced a new series of shows called *Live From...* that gives artists a platform to share their unique art with audiences. Through our live performance events, we invite artists to discuss insights and stories from their musical worlds with us. Live performances have featured guests such as Arlo Parks, Spoon, Cuco, and Tears for Fears.
- ***Bent by Nature***: In 2021, KCRW debuted a new documentary and digital archive series that tells the little-known story of the life and artists surrounding an influential American DJ —KCRW's very own Deirdre O'Donoghue. The host of the late night show "SNAP!" on KCRW in the 1980s, O'Donoghue invited countless artists to cram into her studio to perform live on the show. *Bent by Nature* explores how the LA-based show served as a waypoint for underground music, artists, and fans—and helped shape the sound of independent and D.I.Y. culture today.

Government & Education Partnerships

- **Santa Monica College** is the license holder of KCRW-FM and a long-term partner of the KCRW Foundation. The KCRW Media Center is located on the Santa Monica College Center for Media and Design Campus, and we are proud to host SMC interns each year across KCRW's various departments.
- **National Endowment for the Arts, California Arts Council, Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture, and City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs**: KCRW maintains critical partnerships with several government funders and views these grants as essential endorsements of our work to serve our community with informative news and meaningful cultural programming.

Internship Initiatives & Partnerships

Our more than 80 volunteers and interns play a vital role at KCRW by contributing their ideas and skills that influence final products like community events, music selections, and newsletters. To encourage a mutually beneficial exploration, volunteers and interns participate in learning sessions with key departments throughout KCRW to understand the various roles within a nonprofit. Current internship and volunteer programs include:

- **Street Team Volunteer Program**: Volunteers assist with audience engagement during live events, helping guests learn about the station, become a member, and purchase KCRW swag. Live events include Primavera Sound LA Festival, Summer Nights events, Young Creators Program Showcase, and KCRW Festival at the Hollywood Bowl.
- **Santa Monica College Internship Program**: KCRW offers internships to current Santa Monica College students (for credit and non-credit) that give them the opportunity to contribute to special

projects that give them hands-on experience with one of the most recognizable names in public radio.

- **News Internship Program:** 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.
- **Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture supported interns:** In our second year of participating in this program, we hosted three paid interns in our Development, Membership, and Music departments.

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.

KCRW builds community through connections of identity, culture, and history. Our events aim to convene people from diverse corners of Southern California to celebrate the spirit of Los Angeles through music, exploration, and expression. During this grant period, we have been more intentional about where we promote and host our events, in order to reach new audiences by meeting them where they are.

In July, we hosted our annual Summer Nights event at the California African American Museum where guests were able to dance under the stars and explore the museum's six exhibits after-hours. At the end of the night, the best success indicator of the CAAM Summer Nights event was hearing from the Executive Director of CAAM who was astonished that this one evening attracted more visitors across a few hours than the museum receives across a whole month. Last fall, our annual Tortilla Tournament celebrated Latinx culture in Los Angeles and a multi-generational history of food through its various family-friendly, tortilla-based activities and musical performances.

Our communities have benefitted from our work, including our Independent Voices Project. Since the 2020 Radio Race and the production of "Exploring Africa in LA: A Little Ethiopia Story" a love letter to Los Angeles' only official African enclave, Shaka Mali Tafari's life has transformed. In an email to our team, Shaka shared, "Two years ago I was a lost Uber driver with a masters degree trying to figure it out, and then Gail encouraged me to enter the KCRW Radio Race 2020. Since then I have worked for HBO, Pineapple Street Media, MSNBC, Flea, Vox Media, and more. Now I am the lead producer for Bad Robot, building a franchise of narrative and fiction audio for one of the most reputable companies in

entertainment. I have been invited to give talks to students at UCLA, USC, and my alma mater, Dickinson college...[and] been invited to Africa Podfest in Nairobi, Kenya next year.”

Direct Feedback From Listeners and Community Members

Feedback from our listeners is essential to KCRW’s growth, as it ensures accountability and relevance in an ever-changing media landscape. We receive hundreds of messages each week that are reviewed by our senior leadership teams and used to inform critical programming decisions. Listeners shared this feedback during the grant period:

Thank you! With you guys every morning and evening on my way to work. I’m a more informed, entertained, and investigative person because of it!

We left DTLA for Houston (I know, I know--TEXAS!) 7yrs ago and are coming back half-time. 1st step, before house-hunting: Re-subscribe to our much-missed KCRW!!!

Thank you for challenging us to listen, learn and enjoy something every day. And for challenging yourselves to make KCRW the best it can be!

With our large and diverse community in mind, KCRW creates broadcast, digital and in-person programming to serve an audience of 3.1 million people worldwide monthly. Each month, KCRW tracks the size of our audience across nine sources including broadcast, streaming, downloads and social media. Our digital products include three 24/7 live streams, a website, a mobile app, newsletters, and more than 20 podcasts. Our social media audience includes 1.2 million people across Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

Additionally, KCRW continues to use audience engagement tools, such as Hearken, as well as requests for feedback across our social media channels to make sure our regular news programming (*Press Play*, *Greater LA*, etc) empowers listeners with regular opportunities to provide input regarding the stories KCRW tells.

In addition to community feedback and engagement, KCRW’s programming was commended by multiple journalistic institutions, including the National Edward R. Murrow Award, multiple Southern California Journalism Awards, the Radio and Television News Association of Southern California (known as Golden Mike Awards), and more. Additional recognitions of our podcasts and programs have included major news outlets including *Time*, *The New Yorker*, *IndieWire*, *Vulture*, and *The Verge*. A list of first place wins at the Southern California Journalism Awards include:

- Best Broadcast Solutions Journalism: Julie Carli, Gary Scott and Warren Olney, "[In Our Backyard](#)"
- Best Anchor/Host in Audio Journalism: Madeleine Brand / [Press Play with Madeleine Brand](#)
- Best Talk/Public Affairs Reporting in Audio Journalism: Steve Chiotakis, Christian Bordial, Jenna Kagel and Kathryn Barnes, "[Huntington Beach oil spill is the latest in history of California’s offshore mishaps](#)"
- Best Light Feature Reporting, One Minute or Longer: KCRW, *Greater LA*: "[Marilyn in Palm Springs](#)"

- Best Use of Sound: KCRW, “[Kayaking the LA River](#)”

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 2021, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2022. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

While KCRW employs a variety of media platforms, our terrestrial broadcast remains the primary method through which our news and cultural programming reaches 440,000 average weekly listeners across Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Ventura, Mojave, Palm Springs, and Orange County. During the grant period, KCRW reported extensively on pressing housing issues, systemic racial injustice, LGBTQ+ issues, education, immigration, and how climate change impacts communities across the region.

In summer 2020, we adopted the Pledge for Equity, which outlines concrete steps to make our organization more inclusive and create more programming that reflects and appeals to the vast diversity of the region we serve. In June, we released our second annual Pledge For Equity Annual Report that provided a detailed overview of current progress and the path forward. This report is essential for transparency with our community of listeners and members. All of our reports are available on our website.

Our internal committee called the Culture Club is responsible for ensuring new team members, including interns, are fully supported and have an onboarding process that introduces them to the full staff. We plan to expand the Culture Club and add a sub committee to include our internal initiatives that focus on building a more diverse KCRW team. Each year, our organization invests in internal DEI Education, which consists of quarterly staff-wide seminars with DEI experts. We continuously work on creating a space where a diverse community has the resources to thrive at our organization. This work includes initiatives that amplify new voices and diversify the public media sector, such as the Young Creators Project, Report LA Fellowship, Engineering Apprenticeship, and Podcast Bootcamp.

In our commitment to exploring the best music worldwide, KCRW debuted *Global Beat*, a new series bringing new sounds and emerging artists from all over the globe. The second season of *Global Beat* transported listeners to neighboring México and spotlighted its up-and-coming artists from an array of genres. *Global Beat* presented the opportunity to celebrate the Mexican music community that transcends borders.

Our newsroom continuously updates our style guide to ensure that the language we use and the framing of events is inclusive and accurate and our language is frequently reviewed by our internal Language and Framing task force. In tandem with this effort, we have conducted regular internal audits of the voices being featured on KCRW-produced news programs such as *Morning Edition*, *All Things Considered*, *Press Play*, and *Greater LA*. Ensuring that we are making room for underrepresented voices on KCRW’s air is essential and this will be an important part of how we evaluate success in our newsroom going

forward. In the coming year, we will be creating surveys to solicit feedback from people at all stages of the user journey to find out how we can better serve our community.

In FY22, KCRW received many top awards for its coverage of topics relevant to the diverse populations in Southern California. A sampling of these awards include:

64th Southern California Journalism Awards

- Best Personality Profile/Interview over 10 minutes in Audio Journalism: Madeleine Brand and Angie Perrin, "[Rita Moreno on 'West Side Story,' race in Hollywood, and trauma](#)"
- Best Entertainment Reporting: Madeleine Brand and Bennett Purser, "[What 'It's a Sin,' 'Pose,' and other TV shows have historically taught the world about HIV/AIDS](#)"

72nd Golden Mike Awards

- Best Feature News Series Reporting: KCRW, "[Wasted](#)"
- Best Business and Consumer Reporting: KCRW, "[LGBTQ Bars Fight to Stay Open](#)"

Regional Edward R. Murrow Awards

- Best Investigative Reporting: The California Newsroom (in partnership with The California Newsroom, KQED, KCRW, Capital Public Radio), "[Dangerous Air: As California Burns, America Breathes Toxic Smoke](#)"

47th Annual Gracie Awards

- Local Radio Producer: Angie Perrin, KCRW, [Press Play with Madeleine Brand](#)

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 our trademark community events that differentiate us from other public media organizations. More than just a radio station, KCRW brings people together to find commonality and to celebrate differences, curiosity, and exploration. Through unique live experiences such as concerts, film screenings, and political and cultural forums, we cultivate community rooted in discovery.

To bring the most important news of the day to our audience, we rely on our reporters who are experts in their respective fields. In FY22, KCRW had three dedicated beat reporters; Anna Scott discussing the urgency of housing and homelessness, Megan Jamerson spotlighting small businesses and entrepreneurship, and Caleigh Wells analyzing the connection between climate and public health. As one

of the most important issues facing our city, this year's housing and homelessness coverage sparked tough questions to elected leaders through forums such as our May 2022 Mayoral Debate. The Small Business and Entrepreneurship Beat, supported by FOUND/LA, explored how businesses are recovering in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and how small businesses are cornerstones of our neighborhoods.

The support of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting allows us to create the highest quality music programming that sets us apart from many public radio stations. KCRW broadcasts our flagship show, *Morning Becomes Eclectic*, every weekday morning from 9AM - 12PM, along with our late evening, early morning, and weekend shows featuring our incredible roster of DJs. Our music initiatives also feature live performances from some of today's most interesting artists, both established and up-and-coming. This year, we welcomed an array of artists in our Annenberg Performance Studio, including Stromae, Danielle Ponder, Lee Fields, and Cuco. We also hosted live sessions at other legendary venues like our Music Director's backyard in the Hollywood Hills, and recording studios like Apogee and Village Studios. In 2022, KCRW invested in music discovery through various new programs. We added five new DJs to our lineup, and created several new music programs, such as *Freaks Only* with Travis Holcombe, and *Global Beat*, a music series that explores up and coming artists from countries around the world.

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting's grant serves as an endorsement of KCRW's work and our model, enabling us to solicit and secure support from members of the public, from private local and national foundations, and from public grantmakers such as the National Endowment for the Arts, the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture, and the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs.