

WKMS Response to 2018 Station Activity Survey Section 6 Each year the Corporation for Public Broadcasting audits its grantees finances, employment, governance, programming, public service, journalists, and station activities. CPB mandates that this section of its annual SAS (Station Activity Survey) be placed at wkms.org within 10 days of its having been submitted – in this case by February 15, 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.

The overall goal/vision of WKMS is to “To inspire and empower a diverse audience by being a trusted and essential resource for information, culture, community, and regional growth as a critical part of the educational mission of Murray State University.” WKMS is a small but mighty shop in rural Western Kentucky that serves around 40 counties with a largely homogenous population of approximately 420,000 people. Our full time staff, which was reduced by one person this fiscal year due to our funding cuts from our licensee, consists of 8 people.

Our content decisions rely on community feedback, and audience participation. Our News Director keenly watches online engagement for topics and their related, geographic locations. This allows the WKMS team to either identify an issue to report on or dig deeper on issues that grow in popularity and interest.

Our primary local content initiatives revolve around our two journalism collaborations: Kentucky Public Radio and The Ohio Valley ReSource. We also have two volunteer produced podcasts that help tell untold stories of artists and their process along with unique regional historical events. We also spend a considerable amount of time developing relationships with local musicians in hopes of sharing the culture of music through traditional broadcast and social media of live lunch concerts each month.

We also believe in being involved in our local communities whether we serve on non-profit boards or participate in community organization meetings or government meetings. These engagement opportunities yield both on-air and online content. WKMS also hosts engagement events that help to generate or amplify existing content. Whether they are live editions of our local podcasts or local music competitions that WKMS hosts.

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.

WKMS is among seven stations that have received renewed grant support for another two years of work from the Ohio Valley ReSource journalism collaborative which is yielding wonderful feedback from our listeners and members. The stories are also making an impact as some have been the basis of investigations by NPR and PBS Frontline. WKMS is also a core and founding partner of the Association of Kentucky Public Radio Stations, of which Station Manager Chad Lampe is chairman. The organization is a high-functioning collaborative that includes statehouse news coverage, a content sharing network, statewide mid-day newscasts and a statewide underwriting sales director that is on target to generate more than \$200,000 in sales in 2018/19 fiscal year.

WKMS also maintains a strong partnership with its licensee, Murray State University, for both content projects and event partnerships.

Other partnerships include:

Paducah Symphony Orchestra for donor events and rebroadcasting concerts

McCracken County Public Library for engagement events and educational presentations

Regional School Districts for education programs like Poetry Minutes and the WKMS Short Storytelling contest.

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.

One of the largest indicators of impact in the last year involved an investigative report from WKMS News regarding an overburdened school standards and practices investigating body and an act coined in the story as predatory sexual grooming. The investigation involved a teacher from an area school that seemingly targeted students and developed casual friendships that later evolved into inappropriate communications and after the student(s) graduated and were of legal age would proposition the student(s). This occurred multiple times according to our sources. The investigation uncovered alleged failures in reporting process in the school. This reporting uncovered a significant backlog

of investigations at the state level, with 1,000 cases to investigate with one investigator. The WKMS reporting appears to have aided in a criminal investigation. This reporting also created a microcosm of a regional “me too” moment with similar reports surfacing following WKMS’ initial report.

The story was shared on social media more than 178 times, with dozens of comments on those shares. One stands out:

[Carla Jones](#) I totally believe it happened for years and am glad he's finally exposed and out of the school system. Take allegations seriously!

While it is hard to measure “impact” in a rural part of the country and a small staff, we feel this story was one of the most impactful in 2018.

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.

In 2018 WKMS prioritized incorporating a volunteers and students with physical and developmental disabilities. A Murray State “College to Career” student with a developmental disability was integrated into the work of our operations assistant and shadowed her work for the semester. We also enlisted the help of a volunteer with a physical disability in the form of Cerebral Palsy. This volunteer aided in the production of testimonial content for our pledge drive. WKMS seeks content and creates content for celebratory months including Black History and Women’s History month.

WKMS is developing a plan for a diversity reporting fellowship opportunity. This part-time position will focus on telling stories through the lens of many different forms of diversity: gender and gender identity, race, educational attainment, religious affiliation and socio economic. We hope to fill this position in Spring/Summer 2019.

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?

The CPB Funding for WKMS-FM is vital for the station to succeed at its vision to “To inspire and empower a diverse audience by being a trusted and essential resource for information, culture, community, and regional growth as a critical part of the educational mission of Murray State University.” Specifically the funds allow the station to provide unparalleled radio broadcast news coverage to this region on-air and free access to the news online. The funding also makes the web service possible through membership fees to our content management system provider. We purchase most of the programming with CPB funds which comprise about 15 percent of our total annual budget. ` CPB Funding also supports the salary and benefits of the WKMS Host/Operations Director. This is a critical position because the University Licensee has decreased its support of salaried positions for the station within the 17/18 fiscal year, despite the station’s aggressive improvement of its transmission systems and outreach programs over time.