

Alabama Public Radio CPB Station Activities Survey for 2016

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.*

Alabama Public Radio provides regular ongoing coverage of community issues through local news headlines and feature stories scheduled during our most-listened parts of the schedule Morning Edition and All Things Considered. Our goal is to be an indispensable source of accurate, reliable information for our community of listeners and in many parts of the state we are the only source of noncommercial news and information. We also provide a full schedule of locally hosted classical, blue grass and big band music which has attracted an enthusiastic and loyal audience.

With three HD channels and a robust online presence, the station strives to reach a diverse audience through multiple platforms including an active website, online streaming, and multiple social media sites. Our transmission system covers approximately two-thirds of the state of Alabama. Our online streaming includes our main broadcast channel as well as two sub-channels featuring BBC News and contemporary music.

APR strives to provide a combination of headline news and in-depth feature reports about the critical issues and concerns facing Alabama citizens. The station identifies issues and needs through regular contact with educational, political, religious and community leaders from across the state. This year APR held community listening sessions in each of our four primary broadcast areas. These meetings engaged diverse community leaders with the primary focus of learning how we can better serve the community. In addition, APR has "Friends" groups in several communities in diverse parts of the state to assist in developing partnerships with a variety of community organizations.

This year the APR news team produced two multi-part series on issues important to its communities. One was a series of reports on Alabama's water supply and the health of its rivers while the second was a comprehensive examination of the challenges facing Alabama's prison system and the options it is pursuing to improve the situation.

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.*

The APR news team led a statewide, multi-media project examining Alabama's prison system. The project launched in collaboration with the University of Alabama's Graduate Program in Community Journalism. The APR staff mentored graduate students in developing stories that were published online and in print by the Anniston Star, the Program's newspaper partner in addition to developing their own radio series.

The APR news team spent six months investigating a variety of issues, from prison overcrowding to the challenges facing those re-entering society to models of reform found in Texas to programs designed to reduce suicide. To develop the stories the news team reached out to dozens of government agencies and community organizations including the Equal Justice Initiative, Alabama Policy Institute, and the Southern Poverty Law Center.

APR also engages the community through membership organizations including, but not limited to, The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama, Public Relations Council of Alabama, Baldwin Business Council, Women's Business Alliance, Mobile Sr. Coalition, Mobile Chamber of Commerce, Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce, and Coastal Alabama Business Chamber. These organizations enable APR to engage with the community through multi-media venues.

APR's classical music programming included collaborations with both the Tuscaloosa and Mobile symphonies. APR's evening schedule included a special three-night broadcast featuring performances by the Mobile Symphony Orchestra, collaboration valuable to both our gulf coast audience and orchestra.

- 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.***

APR has been honored with over fifty awards for journalism excellence, one third of which are at the national and international levels. In 2016, the Alabama Associated Press named APR the "Most Outstanding News Operation" in the state for the fifth year in a row.

Broadcast audience measurements as well as social media metrics provide information regarding our value to local audiences. Perhaps the most valuable measure of our impact on the communities we serve is the feedback we get from our listeners.

Comments like these are typical:

All the best from NPR (and other public radio content providers) plus excellent local news and events coverage. Keep up this great work, and thanks for being a constant companion in our lives every single day.

I'm 93 years old and Alabama Public Radio is my life line.

APR provides a connection to the world -- to important and interesting information about current events, about the arts, about science, and so much more. It provides breadth and depth. It is a part of my daily life

I value your classical music programming -- it enriches my life every day, and news coverage which is unbiased and very informative. I very much enjoy your entertaining Saturday programs, especially "Car Talk," "Wait, Wait..." and "Prairie Home Companion."

Love Morning Edition and Weekend Edition, as well as All Things Considered- these programs keep me informed and balanced

Love hearing the BBC. Listen to Says You, the old Car Talk shows, etc. Mostly to and from work, also. It's nice having uncluttered, unbiased news

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 2016, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2017. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

APR provides regular ongoing coverage of stories of special interest to minority and other diverse audiences. Our news team produced a multi-part series and documentary on the condition of Alabama's water supply and the health of its rivers. Along with environmental and governmental issues, our coverage addressed the plight of Uniontown, Alabama, a predominantly lower income and African American community of Uniontown. The Tennessee Valley Authority uses a landfill near the town as a dumping spot for poisonous coal ash. As a result, local trees are covered with a fine dust, flowing water appears "milky," and backyard gardening has stopped because the plants "look funny." The APR team later produced a multi-part series and documentary on prison reform and justice reform in Alabama. Through interviews with former prisoners and advocacy groups including the Southern Poverty Law Center, APR reported on how Alabama's prisons are 100% over capacity, and the state spends the least per inmate for housing and rehabilitation. Critics of the state's justice system equate it to a "new Jim Crow" which is geared to subjugate African

Americans. APR also mentors student interns from the University of Alabama, with 60% of these students being minority or female. APR investigates the needs of its communities through multiple modalities, including regular "talk back" sessions in the diverse communities served by our network.

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?***

CPB funding is critical to Alabama Public Radio's local mission: The APR News staff is the largest public radio news team in the state, covering political, economic and cultural issues of critical importance to the people of Alabama. CPB funding allows us to support staff who are engaged with our diverse citizenry. Alabama continues to grapple with significant social and economic issues; many of its counties rank among the poorest in the country. Our broadcast signal reaches more than 80 percent of the state. CPB funding helps us leverage the support of listeners and local companies extending our ability to produce high quality unique local programming. Without the support of CPB Alabama Public Radio would be unable to provide the current level of community programming and outreach.