



## Local Content and Services Report FY23 (7/1/22–6/30/23)

**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.**

*Our mission: To create and serve a more informed public.*

*Our vision: Broaden conversations. Deepen understanding.*

KUOW Puget Sound Public Radio is Seattle’s NPR news station. We are an independent, nonprofit news organization that produces award-winning journalism, innovative podcasts, engaging community events and more.

Our work is about truth. We were founded with the idea that everyone should have free access to honest, fact-checked information – as well as stories that broaden conversations and deepen understanding of the world around us. We work every day in service of our mission to create and serve a more informed public, because we believe an informed public is essential to a thriving community, a vibrant democracy, and a better future.

To accomplish this mission, KUOW is focused on improving our local content offerings, expanding our digital platforms, broadening our community engagement efforts, and amplifying our reach through strategic marketing.

### **LOCAL CONTENT**

Our award-winning 60-plus-person content team is focused on local, “outside-in” reporting: handing the mic to the community and bringing our audience in-depth reporting on the stories that matter most to our region.

### **DIVERSE VOICES**

At KUOW, we believe it is imperative to prioritize the inclusion of diverse voices. Since 2015, KUOW has tracked the diversity of sources in our local broadcast features — defined as planned stories, investigations, or profiles — and on our local programs to better understand how we are representing our community and to push for improvement.

## **DIGITAL**

KUOW is making strategic investments to expand our digital content, build the infrastructure to support a rapidly changing media landscape, and ensure our content is accessible across platforms.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Our community engagement is focused on seeking-out community voices, inviting the community into our editorial process to create diverse and inclusive storytelling and collaborating across departments to understand how we can better serve our audience and our community.

**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.**

KUOW is committed to forming deep connections within our local communities. To accomplish this, we have formed strategic partnerships with impactful community organization.

## **SUPPORTING LOCAL ARTS**

In FY22, KUOW established a partnership with ArtsFund with the goal to support local arts organizations – particularly organizations owned and led by traditionally underrepresented groups – and to deepen our community's engagement with the Puget Sound region's arts community. Since then, KUOW and Artsfund have sponsored one local arts organizations per month with free promotion on KUOW's airwaves.

KUOW also employs a full-time arts reporter. They produced a weekly interview broadcast Thursdays on All Things Considered. The interview serves as a weekend-focused arts calendar of visual and performing arts events around the region.

## **NEWS COLLABORATIONS**

KUOW continues to work on collaborative journalism series with local news organizations in order to strengthen and expand our reporting. Examples in FY22 included KUOW's collaborative investigation with the Seattle Times which revealed that the Seattle Police Department wasn't investigating most new adult sexual assault

cases. KUOW also partnered with Northwest Public Broadcasting for reporting on the Cody Easterday Case in Southeast Washington, culminating in the podcast Ghost Herd.

KUOW continues as a member of the Northwest News Network. Partners include Oregon Public Broadcasting, NW Public Broadcasting, Spokane Public Radio and KNKX. In January 2023 reporter Jeanie Lindsay was hired to replace longtime correspondent Austin Jenkins. Ms. Lindsay is a full-time reporter and covers the state legislature from Olympia, WA.

Soundside built an hour-long show around a deep dive into one of Seattle's most historic and dynamic neighborhoods, the Chinatown International District. To tell the story of the people and places that make up the fabric of that community, the team partnered with journalists with the International Examiner, the oldest and largest nonprofit, pan-Asian Pacific American publication in the Northwest.

Housing and development reporter Joshua McNichols partnered with freelance journalist Bunthay Cheam to tell the story of Latino and Southeast Asian communities at high risk for displacement, centered in South Park. Cheam is a member of the Khmer community and also works with a nonprofit housing provider. The work was published in December 2022 and January 2023.

KUOW continues to be part of the Northwest News Network, producing regional news relevant to audiences across the Pacific Northwest.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

KUOW's community engagement team continues to provide new avenues for community feedback and input in our reporting, including a texting feedback group for general news and our midday show Soundside, feedback forms on our stories, and community discussions related to reporting topics.

The feedback is consolidated and shared with the content division on a weekly basis. Last year we collected 4,966 pieces of feedback, a 21% increase from the previous reporting period.

In early 2023, we entered a partnership with StoryCorps's One Small Step program, an initiative that brings strangers with different political beliefs together for a conversation—not to debate politics—but to get to know each other as people. We ended up with 22 pairings and recordings, 3 of which were aired on Soundside, KUOW's noon talk show.

## **YOUTH WORKSHOPS**

During the reporting time period, KUOW's RadioActive youth media program offered introductory and advanced journalism workshops for teens all over the region, as well as short community programming with young people in their schools and neighborhoods.

From October 2022 through September 2023, RadioActive worked directly with just over 800 youth: 751 through Community Programming, 18 in Intro Programming, 40 in Advanced Programming. Community programming included 22 mobile workshops (1-2 hours in length), 1 pop-up workshops (1 or more days in length), and 8 tabling outreach events. Community partners included the Muslim Association of Puget Sound, Kentridge High School, Tye High School, Lincoln High School, and Washington Journalism Education Association. RadioActive hired or retained 7 youth employees as Outreach Assistants during this time.

In July-August 2023 RadioActive offered an Intro to Radio Journalism Workshop for 18 youth, ages 15-18. The workshop lasted 4 ½ weeks, plus two online prep sessions in advance of the start date. Participants worked individually and in small groups to produce feature radio stories and podcast episodes. Each participant earned \$1,000 for completing the program. A public listening party event was held at the conclusion of the summer to share the work produced in the workshop and celebrate the work of the participants.

40 youth participated in RadioActive “Advanced Producer” programming in the reporting time period, including 6 youth who produced podcasts in a three-month intensive workshop; 11 youth who produced feature stories in a four-month intensive workshop; 3 youth who produced feature stories in an independent study workshop; 2 youth who co-produced an episode of Seattle Now on gun violence in schools; 3 youth who produced two separate hour-long on-air showcases; and 4 youth who participated in KUOW reporter job shadows on election night.

Between October 1, 2022 and September 30, 2023, RadioActive published 44 youth-produced podcast episodes. 28 of those episodes were produced in Advanced Producer workshops.

RadioActive youth-produced stories were recognized for five national journalism awards during this time frame. "They can never lock your mind up.' Three stories from juvenile jail," produced in RadioActive's community workshop series with incarcerated youth, was a finalist for Media by a Person who is Incarcerated in Evident Change's media for a Just Society Award. "What 'working hard' means to two teens, separated by a generation," produced by Jennifer Nguyen in our 2022 Intro to Radio Journalism Workshop, won the Asian American Journalists Association's Student Excellence in Audio Storytelling award. "How the pandemic gave me courage to explore my feminine side," produced by Antonio Nevarez in our 2022 Advanced Producers Workshop, won the NLGJA's Excellence in Student Journalism Award. And RadioActive youth-produced story won two awards from the Public Media Journalists Association (First place, Student Interview Podcast for "They can never lock your mind up.' Three stories from juvenile jail," and Second Place, Use of Sound for "What I heard when I returned to School" by Charlotte Engrav).

## **SEATTLE NOW PODCAST**

Throughout FY22 KUOW's daily local news podcast Seattle Now, one of the only daily local news podcast options in our region, brought in guests, subject matter experts and reporters to highlight a multitude of top-of-mind news and information to our community.

**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?**

## **IMPACTFUL STORYTELLING**

KUOW seeks to inform, engage and inspire our community with trusted reporting that focuses on the Puget Sound region. Here are some examples of demonstrable impact our reporting had on our community.

In a collaborative reporting project, KUOW and the Seattle Times are working to tell the story of how Washington state's treatment of mentally ill people over the past 50 years has impacted the crisis of people experiencing homelessness.

Stories will be published and broadcast in spring 2024, but reporting began late summer of 2023.

KUOW hosted a series of recorded debates between candidates for The Seattle City Council. The debates were open to community members, taped live, then broadcast on the local program, Soundside.

## **AMPLIFYING DIVERSE VOICES**

From youth journalists in KUOW's RadioActive program, to stories from neighborhoods across the Puget Sound region, KUOW works to reflect our whole community. We believe it is imperative to include diverse voices in our storytelling. Here are some examples of projects in FY23 that amplified underrepresented voices.

Across eight episodes, The Blue Suit series focused on Asian American stories, told through commonplace objects and the memories they hold. The series was hosted by Seattle civic poet Shin Yu Pai. The podcast was renamed 10,000 Things. 10 episodes were released during the spring and summer of 2023. KUOW is producing an additional season 10,000 Things, for release in Spring 2024.

KUOW's midday show Soundside had a distinct goal to broaden the geographic diversity of our coverage, reporting stories from neighborhoods and communities historically underrepresented in local news. In its first year, Soundside brought listeners 835 stories from more than 130 places in Washington state.

RadioActive Youth Media won several national awards for youth journalism in 2023, including an award from the Public Media Journalists Association for Rahmah Abdulazeez's story about how [public schools serving halal meat at lunch](#) affects Muslim students, and a New York Festivals award for Lily Turner's story about [teens with disabilities missing out on educational opportunities during the pandemic](#).

**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 2022, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2023. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.**

In FY23, KUOW continued to work towards its vision of broadening conversations and deepening understanding by reaching out to diverse audiences through its storytelling and community outreach.

**Diversity of Sources:** Since 2015, we have tracked the diversity of sources for our local broadcast features and of guests on our local programs, events and podcasts.

KUOW has also implemented a new source tracking database, Source 360. The goal is to better share and diversify available sources to KUOW journalists.

KUOW is working with the Wing Luke Museum of the Asian American Experience to source three stories of the KUOW-produced podcast, 10,000 Things. Three of the stories are centered on events in Seattle's Chinatown-International District neighborhood.

**Narrative Screening:** KUOW story pitches begin with a set of questions developed with input from the station's Racial Equity Team. These "foundational questions" are meant to make sure reporters, editors and producers consider the context of systemic racism, include a diversity of voices and offer solutions led by affected communities.

**Partnerships:** KUOW's partnership with Artsfund directly supports local arts organizations, prioritizing organizations that are BIPOC owned and led. KUOW is partnering on a podcast, Lost Patients, to provide historical context and a current examination of how people with mental illness are cared for by the State of Washington.

**Ethics Policy:** Our newsroom leadership has reviewed and updated our Ethics Policy to take a critical look at our policies around "objectivity" and "fairness." The policy is reviewed regularly, to meet station goals and objectives and to ensure policies are still timely and relevant.

**Community Engagement:** Our Community Engagement team ensures that KUOW has a meaningful and interactive relationship with the dynamic communities of the Puget Sound region and beyond. The team is committed to diversity and intersectionality, and to amplifying BIPOC voices, listening to their feedback and ideas, and creating innovative opportunities to connect them to our newsroom. New efforts include providing opportunities for real-time feedback on our coverage, by text, email or phone.

**Community Feedback:** In addition to our digital avenues for community feedback, we have and will continue to hold meetings with community groups to listen to their feedback on our coverage and its impacts. In this past reporting period, we established a community council made up of 10 diverse community members that have agreed to provide detailed feedback on KUOW reporting.

**Transparency:** Again, we will be publicly sharing our progress in our anti-racist work, source diversity and staffing diversity as a way to hold ourselves accountable to the community we serve.

**Audience Research:** In FY23, KUOW is investing in thorough audience research to better understand the needs of our local community and opportunities to better serve new audiences and communities.

**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 continues to help us move forward with our many goals and initiatives in all areas of content and community engagement.