



Local Content and Services Report FY21 (7/1/20-6/30/21)

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: Create and serve a more informed public.

Our vision: Broaden conversations. Deepen understandings.

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 midday local show 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.

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 more than radio. While live events were curtailed during the pandemic, we fostered meaningful conversations on difficult topics using online and social media tools, with virtual events, youth workshops, new local content, and community partnerships.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In FY2021 KUOW's Community Engagement team launched a new way to connect with community members via text. Listeners who opt into the Community Feedback Club, receive periodic texts asking for simple feedback on stories and story ideas. This input helps us toward our vision of broadening conversations, and deepening understanding.

The community engagement team also launched a digital tool to collect feedback on local stories. The feedback is consolidated and shared with the content division on a weekly basis.

VIRTUAL EVENTS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

KUOW, Northwest Public Broadcasting (NWPB) and Spokane Public Radio (SPR) partnered with Humanities Washington to produce two collaborative projects:

Re:Building Democracy, a special series examining voting and civic reconciliation as essential habits for a healthy democracy.

On Asian America, a special series with the goal of amplifying Asian voices and sparking an ongoing dialogue about the experiences and contributions of Asian communities in our state.

In the lead-up to the November 2020 election, KUOW and Center for an Informed Public presented [Stand with the Facts](#) – a series of five live virtual events - offering information and tools on how to spot misinformation in our daily lives from some of the University of Washington's leading misinformation experts. A [Stand with the Facts toolkit](#), was developed to go alongside the series, helping the community to combat fake news and misinformation.

YOUTH WORKSHOPS

KUOW's RadioActive youth media program offers 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.

In FY2021, RadioActive worked with 359 youth (296 through community programming and 63 through Intro and Advanced programming).

The community programming saw them partner with 22 unique community organizations including Powerful Voices, DO-IT (UW's center for empowering students with disabilities), WA-BLOC, Gay City, and BIPOC Infrastructure Services.

They held 27 mobile Workshops and 2 all-virtual pop-up workshops: free multi-day partnership programs where teens learn radio storytelling skills and produce original short radio stories, one with middle school students at Seattle Housing Authority's Rainier Vista and New Holly housing communities, and one with incarcerated youth at King County's Children and Family Justice Center.

Twelve youth graduated from their first all-virtual summer Intro to Radio Journalism workshop, an additional twelve youth graduated from the all-virtual spring Advanced Producer workshop in "narrative" and "news" tracks.

182 adults attended public RadioActive workshops/events, including those presented at Seattle's MLK Day, AIR Media, and NW Folklife Festival. 313 people watched RadioActive's 2020 virtual Listening Party on YouTube.

SEATTLE NOW PODCAST

Throughout FY2021 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.

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

Impact can mean many things. Stories of heartbreak, justice and community. Stories that expose corruption or abuse. Stories that offer a new perspective or refute false claims. Stories that amplify overlooked voices and hold those in power accountable. Here are the stories we thought had the most impact on our community, and our democracy, in FY2021.

COVID-19 Reporting – Navigating The New Normal

As communities continued to adapt to pandemic changes and uncertainty, KUOW took listeners along for [long-awaited first job appointments](#) and highlighted [how the state vaccine rollout failed communities of color](#). We documented an [anxious/excited return to in-person school](#), and [the joys and trials of giving birth during lockdown](#).

From a physician's assistant working at a drive-in testing site, to a local restaurant owner, to a respiratory therapist putting people on ventilators, KUOW's [Voices of the Pandemic](#) series gave focus to the diverse experiences of a community in crisis.

Holding businesses' mask policies to account

KUOW reporter Ashley Hiruko reported that [Home Depot was not following Washington's mask mandate](#), after a whistleblower complaint from an employee. Two days after the story broke, [Home Depot reversed their mask policy](#) — requiring customers nationwide to wear masks inside stores.

Amplifying voices in the movement for racial justice

KUOW's story series '[Beyond the Protest](#)' highlighted the human impact of local anti-racism movements — sharing [first-person accounts](#) from protesters, generations of civil rights leaders, students, journalists and more. KUOW also reported on the [dangers of police use of tear gas](#) against protestors, from its impact on the spread of Covid-19 to reports of effects on reproductive health.

Combatting mis- and disinformation

As our community faced a pandemic, protests and an election, we hosted free community conversations and [weekly segments on The Record](#) with misinformation experts, in partnership with the University of Washington's Center for an Informed Public.

Exposing abuses in Seattle Public Schools

Following a [2020](#) investigation led by reporter Ann Dornfeld that resulted in three Seattle Public Schools teachers being removed, KUOW reporters continued to investigate and report on [school abuses](#).

RADIOACTIVE YOUTH MEDIA

RadioActive's vision is a new generation of empowered storytellers and civic leaders, and a world in which youth voices are respected and expected in the media. RadioActive has launched careers and produced stories garnering such honors as Regional Edward R. Murrow awards, Gracie awards and Korva Coleman Excellence awards.

In FY2021, KUOW aired 26 youth-produced feature stories, shared 10 youth-produced podcast episodes, and presented a 1-hour on-air showcase. 14 RadioActive graduates are currently working for KUOW as hourly staff members and two RadioActive graduates were hired as full-time KUOW staff members.

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.

In FY2021, 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 midday show The Record. This year, we are working to expand source tracking into more kinds of stories to gain a deeper picture of our source diversity across platforms.

Narrative Screening: The KUOW Racial Equity Team has developed a Narrative Screening document with foundational questions to ensure reporters and editors ground our reporting in the context of systemic racism, center the voices of communities of color, challenge — not perpetuate — racist narratives or stereotypes, and offer solutions led by communities of color.

Partnerships and Fellowships: KUOW has regularly hosted Next Generation Radio training projects and has recruited and hired graduates of the program. In addition, we have piloted a Fellowship in our newsroom to recruit and train diverse next-gen journalists. Finally, we have and will continue to establish partnerships with independent BIPOC journalists to enhance our coverage.

Ethics Policy: Our newsroom leadership has reviewed our Ethics Policy to take a critical look at our policies around "objectivity" and "fairness."

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 Community Engagement team's work, KUOW has instituted annual audience surveys to gain a better understanding of our current audience and gaps in our coverage. We also have and will continue to hold meetings with community groups to listen to their feedback on our coverage and its impacts.

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.

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.