



LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICES REPORT FY24 (7/1/23–6/30/24)

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.

KUOW Puget Sound Public Radio is dedicated to addressing the pressing issues facing the Puget Sound community through in-depth journalism, diverse storytelling, and direct audience engagement. As Seattle's NPR news station, KUOW is an independent, nonprofit news organization committed to producing high-quality journalism, thought-provoking podcasts, and interactive community events that ensure transparency, accountability, and accessibility to critical information.

To address community needs, KUOW prioritizes investigative journalism that uncovers systemic issues affecting the region, including housing affordability, public safety, environmental sustainability, and education. Our newsroom has increased coverage of underreported topics, such as the economic struggles of small businesses in historically marginalized neighborhoods and the challenges faced by undocumented communities in accessing healthcare and legal resources.

KUOW has also strengthened its digital reach by doubling its production of online articles, podcasts, and video content. The expansion of our flagship midday program, "Soundside," has allowed us to provide deeper analysis on critical issues such as the state's mental health system, school funding disparities, and the region's evolving public transportation landscape. We have revamped the KUOW Politics Newsletter to serve as a trusted source of election coverage, answering more than 100 listener-submitted questions on ballot measures, local races, and voter accessibility.

A key component of our work is audience engagement. KUOW has used more than 6,000 listener emails, text messages, and direct communications to inform our reporting and ensure that community concerns guide our coverage. Our Community Feedback Club has grown to over 7,000 active participants, whose insights shape editorial decisions and influence story development. KUOW has also hosted a series of public listening sessions in

partnership with local libraries and community centers to connect with historically underserved populations and gather firsthand accounts of the challenges they face.

Ahead of the 2024 elections, KUOW organized and broadcast a series of candidate debates for key local races, providing voters with essential, unbiased information. Our voter education initiatives included multilingual resources and explainer segments on KUOW.org to assist first-time and non-native English-speaking voters in navigating the election process.

By continuously adapting to the needs of the community and leveraging multiple platforms to distribute content, KUOW remains an essential resource for residents of the Puget Sound region, ensuring that fact-based, community-focused journalism is widely accessible and responsive to the people it serves.

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 continues to form meaningful partnerships with a range of organizations to bolster our reporting efforts and deepen our engagement with the communities we serve. In our commitment to uplifting local arts, we have sustained a valuable partnership with ArtsFund, which has allowed us to provide critical support to underrepresented arts organizations. This initiative has enabled us to offer free on-air promotional opportunities to these organizations, ensuring that their work reaches a wider audience and contributes to the vibrancy of the Puget Sound arts scene.

Our newsroom's collaborative journalism efforts remain a key component of our strategy. In FY24, KUOW partnered with The Seattle Times to produce an investigative series examining Washington State's mental health policies and their direct impact on the region's homelessness crisis. This partnership underscores our commitment to holding institutions accountable and shedding light on pressing social issues that require systemic change. Additionally, KUOW has deepened its work with community stakeholders to ensure that our reporting remains responsive to the needs and concerns of our audience.

Beyond journalism, our engagement efforts have expanded significantly. We hosted voter panels leading up to the 2024 elections, providing a platform for individuals across the political spectrum to share their perspectives and engage in meaningful discourse. The feedback we received from these discussions allowed us to fine-tune our election coverage, ensuring that it was reflective of the diverse concerns held by the community. We have also strengthened our direct audience engagement by enhancing our Community Feedback Club, which has seen an increase in participation, with nearly 6,000 listener comments collected annually. Furthermore, KUOW introduced the Community Council, an advisory body composed of demographically and politically diverse members who provide in-depth feedback on our reporting and content strategy.

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?

The impact of KUOW's work is evident in the tangible changes and community engagement it has fostered. Our investigative reporting has led to greater transparency and accountability within local institutions, such as the Seattle Police Department and Seattle Public Schools, investigation into King County youth program funds where our coverage has prompted critical policy discussions and reforms. KUOW's extensive investigation of the malfeasance of Seattle's chief of police led to his dismissal. The collaborative journalism initiatives we have undertaken, particularly our investigative series with The Seattle Times, have deepened public understanding of complex societal issues such as mental health care and homelessness.

Our efforts to elevate diverse voices have been particularly impactful. The "10,000 Things" podcast, created in partnership with the Wing Luke Museum, has highlighted the experiences and histories of Seattle's Asian American community, providing a platform for stories that have historically been underrepresented in mainstream media. Similarly, our audience engagement initiatives have ensured that KUOW remains responsive to the community's evolving needs. The thousands of listener responses we receive annually help shape our newsroom's editorial direction, ensuring that our reporting remains both relevant and impactful.

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 2024, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2025. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

KUOW is deeply committed to inclusivity and strives to meet the needs of minority and diverse audiences through intentional programming and editorial policies. We have implemented a new dashboard tool designed to track and diversify the sources used across our journalism. This system enables our reporters and editors to actively seek out and include voices from historically marginalized communities, thereby enriching our storytelling and ensuring a more representative media landscape.

Our editorial process incorporates a rigorous narrative screening framework, which requires all story pitches to undergo equity-focused review. This ensures that our reporting acknowledges systemic inequities, represents a broad spectrum of perspectives, and includes solutions-driven approaches informed by affected communities. Additionally, KUOW remains transparent about our diversity and inclusion efforts, publicly sharing data on our progress in anti-racist initiatives, source diversity, and staffing demographics.

To further expand our accessibility, KUOW launched a new app in FY24, designed to provide an improved user experience and enhanced accessibility to our programming. By meeting audiences where they are, we continue to remove barriers to information and ensure that our journalism reaches as many people as possible.

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?

Funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) is a crucial component of KUOW's ability to provide high-quality, fact-based journalism. In FY24, CPB support has allowed KUOW to maintain essential infrastructure, ensuring that locally generated funds can be directed toward in-depth reporting, community engagement, and technological advancements that improve access to our content. This funding has enabled the station to expand its digital storytelling capabilities, making news and analysis more accessible across multiple platforms and reaching a wider audience beyond traditional radio.

CPB funding has also played a pivotal role in KUOW's audience engagement efforts. It has supported the expansion of voter education programs, increased feedback mechanisms that allow listeners to directly influence coverage and strengthened our initiatives to reach underserved communities. By facilitating these critical initiatives, CPB funding helps KUOW fulfill its mission of informing, engaging, and empowering the Puget Sound community through rigorous and thoughtful journalism. As the media landscape evolves, KUOW remains committed to adapting to new challenges while maintaining its core public-service mission, ensuring that audiences continue to have access to independent, fact-based reporting.