



Strategic plan

FY2024 – FY2028

Mission:

Iowa Public Radio connects you to news, music, information, and ideas that shape your world every day.

Vision:

IPR tells Iowa's story, connecting more Iowans to relevant information, diverse perspectives, and culture that enriches our lives. We help create a more informed state, leading to engaged and vibrant communities.

Values:

- **Integrity:** We maintain the highest standards of journalism, providing trustworthy and relevant content with meaningful context.
- **Curiosity:** We serve an inquisitive audience by asking questions, seeking knowledge, and exploring new ideas.
- **Belonging:** We strive to reflect Iowa's cultural complexity by offering a supportive, equitable space for individuals and communities to tell the stories unique to their lived experiences.
- **Respect:** We create a culture of respect for our audience, sources, and staff.
- **Innovation:** We support creativity and embrace new ways of serving our audience.

North Star:

Grow the number of Iowans who make IPR an essential part of their day, every day.

Introduction:

Iowa Public Radio formed in 2004 to manage the stations owned by Iowa's public universities. We incorporated in 2006 and, over time, created a significant statewide public radio network for the people of Iowa. Our mission since has been to enrich the civic and cultural life in the state through high-quality news and cultural programming.

In June of 2022, the Iowa Board of Regents transferred the licenses owned by the universities to Iowa Public Radio, and we became both the owner and operator of the stations. We are now an independent, non-commercial public radio and media network with a renewed energy to connect Iowans to news, music, information, and ideas that shape their world every day. In previous strategic plans, we laid a strong foundation for the work ahead.

Over the next five years, a focus on audience growth is essential to our success. This means:

- Building an audience-centered work culture;
- Delivering excellence in the content desired and needed by Iowans;
- Being brilliant at the basics of radio audience-building;
- Reaching new, younger, and diverse audiences where they are; and
- Pursuing smart opportunities for partnerships and new broadcast signals.

Strategic Outcomes:

Increase and appropriately serve a diversified audience.

IPR News becomes the best source for information on what is happening in the state. Our broadcast shows, website, streaming services, newsletters, and podcasts together set the bar for statewide news in Iowa.

We identify key coverage areas to go deeper and invest, providing daily digital and on-air reporting on issues critical to the civic dialogue in our state. We increase our reporting, services, and relationships with the Latino community in Iowa and connect that audience to IPR services. Our regional reporters — along with relationships with local newspapers, stringers, writers, digital publications, and influencers that share news and information about the state — help us provide a broader flavor of Iowa, including how issues are playing out on the ground. We put new emphasis on increasing online content as we shift to being a multimedia, multi-platform organization. Increased arts and culture reporting helps bridge the gaps between the news and music needs of our audience. Local for us requires relevance statewide, but we dive deeper into the local communities and issues that reverberate around the state. Our website looks like a statewide publication, and provides a more vivid picture of what it means to be Iowan. Audience for our news and talk content grows significantly across platforms.

Studio One evolves its programming mix and sound to serve more music fans in the state, while staying true to its AAA roots. In doing so, Studio One becomes a pillar of the music community and fills an important music discovery niche in the Iowa music scene. We provide a blend of familiar and new artists, and lift up talented Iowa musicians as they build their careers. Studio One hosts raise their profile in the Iowa music scene and IPR is seen as a music leader in the state. Listening to both the stream and broadcast hours grows, delivering membership and underwriting revenue growth.

IPR Classical continues to offer a place of inspiration and respite from life's challenges. We train the next generation of classical music professionals and bring fresh voices to our air. We lift up talented Iowa musicians as they build their careers. We replace a translator with a full-service IPR Classical station in Mason City, providing an opportunity for audience growth.

Expand our signals and partnerships.

We study — and perhaps pursue — acquiring stations to increase our broadcast audience. We anticipate this focus would be around a news station in western Iowa and a new FM signal in the Des Moines area, allowing News and Studio One to separate and have their own 24/7 service in central Iowa.

We pursue partnerships that extend our reach and help fill gaps in coverage for Iowans. We know that the number of journalists and journalism organizations has shrunk dramatically over the last 10 years, and we are committed to working with others to provide essential public service journalism to as many Iowans as possible. We also pursue partnerships with organizations that bring diverse voices to our coverage and service.

Increase and diversify revenue.

Our successful “A Resounding Future” campaign kick-starts our growth, and ongoing fundraising fills in to sustain the work after five years. Increased audience fuels growth in membership and underwriting. Salesforce and new traffic software help us optimize our work and better target fundraising efforts to our increasing digital audience. We ride the momentum of the capital campaign to strengthen major giving as a third pillar of annual revenue. Regular events build loyalty and promote connections between lowans and with our organization. We introduce new audiences to the new IPR brand with a commitment to marketing and outreach. Other revenue diversification opportunities are uncovered and, where relevant, pursued.

Attract and retain talent.

IPR creates a culture where people wish to come and stay for a while. We provide competitive salaries and benefits that effectively support the needs of staff. We have aligned job descriptions and responsibilities that allow for appropriate work-life balance. Staff see opportunities for growth, and IPR helps them grow. We cultivate new talent for both IPR and the public media system as a whole, whether that be students, interns, or career-changers. The diversity of our staff mirrors the changing makeup of our state. A sense of belonging, creativity, fun, and respect are central to what we are as an organization.

Build and maintain critical infrastructure and operating systems.

We complete transmitter and antenna replacement projects at all three major stations — WOI-FM, KSUI-FM and KUNI-FM — and have a strong equipment upgrade plan for all stations. Endowment revenue starts to help pay for these necessary equipment upgrades.

Our studio and office footprint adapts to our service plans, recognizing the needs of a hybrid work world. We strategically place studio and technical support in locations to best serve our staffing and audience needs. We begin development of a 10-year studio and office plan.

Our service units, including accounting, operations, IT, facilities, and engineering, evolve to meet our changing business needs, ensuring we deliver on our mission consistently and successfully.