

91.7 KAXE

CPB Local Content and Service Report 2023

6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story

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.

At KAXE, our mission is to unite individuals of all ages and backgrounds through the power of music, engaging conversations, and community events. As a reliable and respected source, we are committed to providing information, entertainment, and promoting positive change in the communities we are a part of. To ensure inclusivity, we actively seek feedback from our board of directors, dedicated volunteers, and Community Advisory Board. Additionally, we continuously gather insights through community listening sessions, our talk-back phone and text line, as well as public service announcements from local non-profits, government agencies, school districts, and higher education institutions.

Our stories are shared across various platforms, including on-air broadcasts, online streaming through our website, podcasts, and social media channels. Weekly e-newsletters showcase highlights from the past week, keeping our audience informed and engaged. We take pride in fostering and sustaining partnerships with a diverse array of organizations such as the MinnPost, MacRostie Art Center, Itasca Life Options, Long Lake Conservation Camp, Minnesota North, Itasca Economic Development Corp, and the Blandin Foundation, among others.

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.

Community connections and engagement are one of our Strategic Goals at KAXE. Over the past year, we have been involved with several key initiatives, demonstrating our dedication to being a hub for information, culture, and community building.

Media Collaborations:

- Collaborated with independent news organizations across the state including MN Reformer, WTIP, Timberjay and Minnpost.
- We partnered with Energy News Network on a series about low-emission steelmaking.
- Staff moderated and participated in panel discussions with IEDC, the Friends of the Arts in Aitkin, Springboard for the Arts in Fergus Falls.

Community Events and Sponsorships:

- Helped to co-sponsored and promoted various events including FinnFest, Storyhill Fest, Nature Rocks, Earth Fest, Bemidji Block Party and Back to Basics.
- Partnered with area breweries including Bemidji Brewing to host the Bemidji Block Party and Rapids Brewing Co to host Festival Rialto.

- Hosted the 3rd Annual Grand Rapids Riverfest which brought together the City of Grand Rapids, local businesses, community non-profits like Itasca Life Options and United Way and many community volunteers.

Educational Initiatives:

- Continued our impactful work with Phenology in the Schools. Training more area educators on how to engage kids with the natural world, promoting outdoor learning experiences.

These highlight the diverse way in which KAXE has been actively engaged in our community, fostering collaboration in our region.

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 key initiatives and partnerships over Fiscal Year 2023 had a positive impact on our community. Here are a few examples of the measurable impact:

- **Media Collaborations:**
 - **Increased Awareness:** Collaborating with reputable independent news organizations such as MN Reformer, WTIP, Timberjay, and MinnPost allowed us to broaden our news coverage, leading to increased awareness and understanding of local and regional issues among our listeners.
 - Listener comment - "I am very happy with the local news programming that has been developed at KAXE. I had been on the team that developed the local news program "In Our Backyard" at WORT in Madison, Wi. I know how much work goes into getting a news program off the ground."
 - "Thanks for a summer of music, news, local & regional educational and variety of topics presented . We're glad you continue to expand your programming and outreach, bringing us along with you."
 - **Strengthened Conversational Ties:** Staff-moderated conversations at the IEDC forum, the Friends of the Arts panel in Aitkin, and involvement with Springboard for the Arts in Fergus Falls facilitated meaningful discussions, strengthening ties across diverse neighborhoods and fostering community dialogue.
- **Community Events and Sponsorships:**
 - **Community Engagement:** Co-sponsoring and participating in events like FinnFest, Storyhill Fest, Nature Rocks, Long Lake Conservation, Earth Fest, Back to Basics, and Festival Rialto provided platforms for community members to come together, fostering a sense of unity and connection.

- **Direct Impact of Riverfest:** Hosting the 3rd Annual Riverfest had a tangible impact, bringing together the City of Grand Rapids, local businesses, and volunteers. This event not only showcased the vibrancy of our community but also provided economic and cultural benefits.
 - Listener Comments - “The ATMOSPHERE! It is so laid back and comfortable. Running into classmates from long ago, sitting with cousins and friends, hugging students....What a great and needed day! I love the beverage and food options. Sitting under the stars to QUALITY live music - it doesn't get any better.”
 - “Watching Amanda rock out. Dessa was amazing, I like that she was interactive. I enjoyed the laidback atmosphere. I got to the shows at the brewery on both Friday and Saturday night, that was a highlight too. I loved that there were so many women performers. Good job!!!
 - “In addition to the great artists, the entire event was well-organized with really friendly staff. And it felt like a nice size -- big enough to be fun and interesting but never felt too jammed or as overwhelming as some festivals can be.”
- **Educational Initiatives:**
 - **Outdoor Learning Impact:** Continuing our work with Phenology in the Schools and training more educators resulted in increased outdoor learning experiences for children. This not only contributed to their academic growth but also fostered a deeper connection with the natural world. We currently have over 25 classrooms participating.
 - Listener Comments: “I was reminded Tuesday morning that John Latimer is an absolute master at what he does—in his interviews with people ranging from elementary school kids to experts like Laura Erickson, with his self-deprecating humor, and the modeling of genuine appreciation for the colors, sounds, and sheer wonderfulness of living things in our natural world. He has built a community around his own observations and an ever-broadening network of teachers and kids. How great it is to learn about what’s happening around the region from kids whose observations, together with the facilitation of their teachers, are being recognized as valuable. And on Tuesday, a conversation between John and Laura Erickson to boot. Marvelous.”
 - **Feedback from Educators:** Direct feedback from educators who participated in the training indicated a positive impact on their teaching methods and highlighted the value of incorporating nature observation into the curriculum.
 - **Resource Connection:** Through our initiatives, we observed an increase in community members connecting with needed resources. Whether it was information disseminated during news coverage or resources shared at community events, our efforts contributed to connecting people with valuable services.
 - Listener Comments: “I am 74 and lived many years of my life up north. Now I live in Rockford to be closer to daughters. For the past few years, KAXE has been my lifeline. I spent many months in isolation due to Covid and ill health. KAXE has brought me sparks of joy, laughter, hearing different perspectives, like the Native News, always expanding my life and broadening my world view. I only wish I could give more. In fact, and I think I speak for most all of us, the value of KAXE to your

community of listeners is priceless. My next goal is to connect my grandchildren's school up with Phenology."

- "We are so impressed with the outreach activities that go so much farther than the weekly phenology report. The team is nurturing minds and souls. The newsletter keeps us connected to happenings up north when we can't be at the cabin. Thank you!"

The collaborative efforts with our partners have not only elevated our programming but have also contributed to even stronger connections in the communities we serve.

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 2023, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2024. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

During Fiscal Year 2023, KAXE made significant efforts to engage and meet the needs of minority and diverse audiences. This is a sampling of our efforts over the past year, including:

- **On "What We're Reading":** Tammy Bobrowsky showcased various writers including Native author Linda Legarde Grover and photographer, Travis Novitsky and astrophysicists, Annette S. Lee who collaborated on a book of Ojibwe teachings.
- **Increased Representation of BIPOC Artists on the Airwaves:** KAXE made an effort to reach out to a diverse artists to include in our music library. We also play an equal mix of male and female voices, as well as making sure we have good representation from BIPOC and LGBTQ+ artists. Last year we interviewed a wide artist including Laamar, Nur-D and Annie Humphrey.
- **Fashion Show Partnership with Native Nations Fashion:** This initiative was to celebrate and promote Indigenous fashion and culture, we partnered with indigenous fashion designer, Delina White of IamAnishinaabe Fashion.
- **Ojibwe Language Program "Boozhoo Nana Boozhoo":** This morning show segment explored the Ojibwe language through a word of the day and storytelling. This helps to preserve Indigenous languages and make content accessible to native and non-native speakers.
- **Partnership with Itasca Life Options:** We worked with this organization to provide volunteer help with adults with developmental and physical disabilities. This shows a commitment to inclusivity and accessibility.
- **Autonomous Vehicles for Transportation Accessibility:** We helped to promote the autonomous vehicles in Grand Rapids on our Morning Show and website. These vehicles aid people with disabilities and those without access to cars demonstrates a commitment to improving accessibility and transportation options.

- **"America Amplified" Program on 1st Time Voters and Tribal Colleges:** This coverage and engagement started in FY23 to help inform voters in the 2024 election. Our primary focus is with young voters and tribal college students, highlighting their perspectives and concerns.

Moving forward into Fiscal Year 2024, KAXE has plans to continue meeting the needs of minority and diverse audiences. These efforts may include sustaining and expanding existing programs, seeking further collaborations with diverse community organizations, and continuously striving to represent a broad range of voices and perspectives on the airwaves.

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?

The financial support from CPB plays a crucial role in sustaining our station. Situated in the sparsely-populated rural areas of northern Minnesota, Northern Community Radio's signals span a vast geographic region, offering a valuable service to our diverse community. CPB funding provides essential stability to our organization, enabling us to invest in high-quality programming from esteemed sources like National Public Radio and the CBC. In addition, we enhance our local content by incorporating material from PRX, Public Radio International, Native Voice One, and other reputable sources. This support not only strengthens our programming but also ensures that we can continue serving our listeners with a rich and diverse range of content.