

THE
HBCU
RADIO PRESERVATION PROJECT

In collaboration with **91.3**  **wyso**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WYSO Public Radio receives \$5 million grant for HBCU radio preservation work

YELLOW SPRINGS, OH, January 30, 2024—For the fourth time in as many years, WYSO has been awarded major funding from the [Mellon Foundation](#) to support [The HBCU Radio Preservation Project](#). This initiative, a collaborative effort between the [WYSO Archives](#) and the [Northeast Document Conservation Center](#) (NEDCC), supports radio stations at Historically Black Colleges and Universities throughout the country in preserving their legacies and cultural heritage.

With this latest grant, Mellon’s generous support now totals more than \$5.6 million and will allow the HBCU Radio Preservation Project to expand to all 29 HBCU radio stations and their campus archives or libraries.

“This is sacred work,” says Jocelyn Robinson, the project’s founding director and the director of radio preservation and archives at WYSO. “And now we can help every HBCU station save precious primary recordings and other historical source materials that document the diversity of the Black experience. And we’re not just preventing the loss of invaluable historical records—we’re encouraging institutions in developing a culture and practice of preservation. That will ensure they never face the looming preservation crisis this project was created to prevent.”

The project’s comprehensive and sustainable approach to preserving past, present and future HBCU radio materials has three parts:

Preservation Training & Education—includes workshops for campus stations, archivists and community members, mini-grants for professional development and hiring a fellow and intern each year of the grant cycle

Preservation—consists of field archivists collaborating with stations and campus archivists on collections assessments and follow-up field services such as inventories, reformatting, rehousing and other preservation activities

Public History & Preservation Praxis—consists of oral historians interviewing a range of community members with ties to respective stations, including former radio staff, students, alumni and listeners as well as oral history training, digital content creation, frequent public presentations and annual symposia

As a result of the HBCU Radio Preservation Project work with HBCU radio stations and their campus communities, a collection of reformatted historical HBCU radio material will be available at the [American Archive of Public Broadcasting](#) along with an oral history collection that will be housed at [Jackson State University’s Margaret Walker Center](#).

The HBCU Radio Preservation Project will officially kick off this next phase of work on February 1, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. Members of the HBCU and preservation communities and their supporters are invited to attend this free Zoom event by registering at: [HBCU Radio Preservation Project Kick-off](#).

ABOUT JOCELYN ROBINSON

Jocelyn Robinson is the founding director of the HBCU Radio Preservation Project. She has an extensive and diverse background in cultural studies and in public history/archives. Inspired by her preservation work at WYSO, where she serves as the director of radio preservation and archives, Robinson created this project in 2017, after imagining that if a small college radio station in the Midwest like WYSO held such a trove of the Black experience reflected in historical radio, then certainly the case might be the same at HBCU radio stations.

ABOUT WYSO

WYSO is a listener-supported, community owned public radio station serving Southwest Ohio with news, music and storytelling. We are the area's only NPR News station, carrying flagship programs such as Morning Edition and All Things Considered. Our own news department delivers local and state news, public affairs programming, and news specials. Our music department produces 14 different local music programs featuring hand-selected music from songwriters and bands that reach across genres. Our Center for Community Voices provides hands-on audio production and digital storytelling training from public radio professionals.

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