Grantee Information

ID 1492
Grantee Name KUFM-FM
City Missoula
State MT
Licensee Type University

6.1 Telling Public Radio’s Story

The purpose of this section is to give you an opportunity to tell us and your community about the activities you have engaged in to address community needs by outlining key services provided, and the local value and impact of those services. Please report on activities that occurred in Fiscal Year 2022. Responses may be shared with Congress or the public. Grantees are required to post a copy of this report (Section 6 only) to their website no later than ten (10) days after the submission of the report to CPB. CPB recommends placing the report in an "About" or similar section on your website. This section had previously been optional. Response to this section of the SAS is now mandatory.

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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.

The mission of Montana Public Radio (MTPR) is to enrich the mind and spirit, inspire a lifetime of learning, and connect communities through access to exceptional programming. We serve western and central Montana with terrestrial broadcast and globally with digital content. The station’s news division has a news director, six staff reporters, and three student employees from the University of Montana School of Journalism. News reporters are based at the Montana Capitol (Helena), northwest Montana (Flathead Valley) and southwest Montana (Butte) in addition to Missoula. The news department produces multiple in-depth stories each week along with eight daily newscasts that are inserted into the NPR news magazines. All the MTPR/Montana news content is accessible at mtpr.org and as podcasts. MTPR also files all news content with NPROne, and offer all MTPR news content, free, to Yellowstone Public Radio (the public station serving eastern Montana.) MTPR news reporters have also created multi-episode news podcasts for on-air and online. MTPR, YPR and the Montana Free Press have collaborated on a number of reporting and podcast ventures. MTPR produces the nation’s longest-airing children’s radio programs, The Pea Green Boat and The Children’s Corner. Diverse music programs are produced by MTPR staff and volunteers. MTPR features signature interview programs in the literary and music genres that profile local, state, regional and Native American musicians and writers. The programs are also available digitally on demand and as podcasts. MTPR has added in-depth reporting podcasts dealing with bison, invasive species, entrepreneurship, climate change and Superfund reclamation as well as community-led journalism through the program/podcast The Big Why. MTPR has attended community fairs, internship fairs and parades. Also MTPR has sponsored Generation Listen type events for younger listeners, visited a majority of the communities we serve and host open houses to kick-off new seasons of local and national programs. MTPR broadcasts a daily performing arts calendar. We air a Native American music program and National Native News for our listeners on Montana’s reservations and beyond. The station acts as a media partner and broadcast outlet for a growing number of large, summer arts and music festivals across our listening area.

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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.

MTPR has ongoing collaborations with Yellowstone Public Radio, Montana Free Press, MontanaPBS and the UM School of Journalism. MTPR offers Yellowstone Public Radio (YPR) their pre-recorded news content and features for free. YPR returns the favor for MTPR. This broadens both stations service impact, because listeners want to know about issues affecting the entire state. MTPR hopes to continue discussions on sharing other non-news programs as well. MTPR, YPR and the Montana Free Press have collaborated on a number of programs and podcasts including Shared State and Montana Legislative coverage. All content is offered to print publications across Montana through the Montana Newspaper Association as well. The MTPR News Director actively works with Journalism School faculty to bring student work to MTPR’s air. The news department employs up to four students per semester, training them in public broadcasting newsroom reporting standards. The students gain valuable career experience, and MTPR adds depth to our newsroom. The MTPR Program Director works to air audio documentaries produced by UM School of Journalism and other university faculty and their students. MontanaPBS is another MTPR media collaborator. Both stations trade ongoing cross promotion throughout the year and periodically focus on an issue or event with joint programming. The stations collaborate on election coverage, debates, election night, State of the State live coverage and more. In the past
few years and before the current pandemic, MTPR had increased its involvement with community cultural events and festival serving as a media sponsor for the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival in Missoula, MT; Festival Amadeus in Whitefish, MT; the Montana Folk Festival in Butte, MT; the Martin Luther King Jr. “Living the Dream” celebration in Whitefish, MT; the International Guitar Night in Helena, MT; First Night in Missoula, MT; the Missoula Symphony Orchestra in Missoula, MT; the Montana Repertory Theater; as well as other music events featuring faculty, students and visiting artists from the University of Montana School of Music in the College of Arts and Media. In addition to providing on-air and online promotion for these festivals, MTPR has been able to bring live or recorded concerts to air from many of these events to listeners.

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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.

MTPR has increased its capacity to provide news from western Montana and has developed a collaborative relationship with the Yellowstone Public Radio news department in response to listener requests for more coverage of news and issues of both western Montana and the whole state. MTPR, YPR and the Montana Free Press have collaborated on news coverage including the podcast Shared State. More and more, our reporters’ stories are being picked up by the national NPR newscasts and national outlets like National Native News. We were able to add a full-time reporter in Montana's Flathead Valley three years ago and added another full-time reporter in southwest Montana last year that has helped raise awareness of our news coverage. MTPR will be adding another reporter to cover agriculture news in north central Montana in 2023. MTPR and YPR also work together on broadcasting events of statewide interest such as candidate debates, legislative coverage, election night coverage and the State of the State address. In the past year, we covered all of Montana elections with special interest from national outlets on the Montana U.S. Senate race. Listeners have reported to us that they enjoy our news service. Here are a few quotes:

“Your news coverage is always my go to source. Thank you!” “Public Radio news is my source of info on the world and Montana.” “You've done a fine job with Montana news, especially appreciate stories with more depth” “I appreciate so much about MTPR... and statewide news” “Really like the Montana news. Listen all the time.” “So glad you’re covering the news in the Flathead.” Before the current pandemic, the cultural organizations for whom we serve as a media partner tell us that partnership with MTPR fills seats and build audiences for the arts and music. The community outreach has helped MTPR increase our membership numbers and donations to our station.

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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 2022, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2023. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

MTPR serves the Flathead Indian Reservation (and the Blackfeet Indian Reservation starting in 2023) as well as other off-reservation Native peoples throughout the service area. MTPR employs a news reporter in Montana's Flathead region who covers tribal issues when appropriate. MTPR reporters generally feature stories about Native peoples and issues on a regular basis. Many of those stories are featured on the National Native News program distributed nationally. MTPR broadcasts National Native News five days a week. MTPR airs a nationally produced music show produced by Native Voice One. Additionally, MTPR’s weekly literary program devotes roughly 20% of its programs to regional and Montana authors including indigenous authors. MTPR’s partnership with Yellowstone Public Radio in eastern Montana has added to our stories on native issues in our state.

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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?

MTPR acquires a majority of the national programming with the Community Service Grant (CSG) funds. Without the CSG, MTPR's current programming selections, especially national programs, would be unsustainable. MTPR needs the CSG to be able to continue our mix of international and national news, cultural programs, local music, and news programs. That mix makes MTPR valued and treasured by the Montana community MTPR serves.

Comments
Question Comment
No Comments for this section