

Grantee Information

ID	1357
Grantee Name	WUSF-FM
City	Tampa
State	FL
Licensee Type	University

6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story

Jump to question: [6.1](#) 

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.**

Joint licensee Grantees that have filed a 2022 Local Content and Services Report as part of meeting the requirement for TV CSG funding may state they have done so in the corresponding questions below, so long as all of the questions below were addressed as they relate to radio operations in such report. You must include the date the report was submitted to CPB along with the TV Grantee ID under which it was submitted.

6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story

Jump to question: [6.1](#) 

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.

WUSF continues its mission of being an important public service to its community. WUSF strives to produce content that reflects the diversity of our community. WUSF News Journalism seeks to explain and provide solutions to pressing issues that impact our audience. Health (with the ongoing pandemic), environment (with the impact of Red Tide), politics (with the election of a new President), and local culture stories were prominent this reporting cycle. WUSF continues its transition from being a traditional broadcast radio station into a multi-media, cross-platform organization focusing on creating content the audience can engage with on its favorite platform. Attracting a new and growing audience is essential to the long-term success of the station and also helps fulfill the role of being a public service to the community. WUSF news journalists are required to identify community issues, find sources within said communities to understand and explain the issue to a broader audience and keep track of the on-line response and engagement. As the pandemic continued, more and more events began to be held in person, and WUSF journalists transitioned with the community to do more in person reporting to reflect the real-time changes that were taking place throughout society. After seeing impressive growth in FY21 across all digital platforms, WUSF's digital audience ended FY22 flat, retaining the audience it gained from the pandemic. While not continuing its impressive growth, it also did not lose audience like other media outlets in the region. There are 2 key outliers: the WUSF Jazz website grew by about 50% compared to the end of FY21 and Health News Florida grew by more than 200% during the same time period, largely driven by the community seeking information on the COVID-19 variants. On social media, WUSF continues to grow audience slowly, but steadily across all platforms, with thousands of followers on each platform, including about 3,300 on Instagram; more than 13,000 on Facebook; and nearly 15,000 on Twitter. The latest strategy is to produce engaging, short videos to place our content before a younger and diverse audience. In support of this strategy, a TikTok channel was launched in FY22. It has led to dozens of videos with hundreds of views and a handful have gone viral with thousands of views, including one that surpassed 38,000 views. Online listening on the WUSF stream continues to see audience growth: the Average Time Spent Listening for streaming increased by 17% in FY22 versus FY21. As for podcasts, The Zest showed robust growth with a 61% increase in downloads at the end of FY22 compared with FY21, while downloads for the Arts Axis Florida podcast basically remained flat during the same time period. Interestingly, Google search console results grew from about 3.93 million impressions a month at the end of FY21 up to 6.48 million impressions in FY22—an indication that our SEO efforts are paying off. A look at our broadcast audience numbers from WUSF Spring 2022 indicates that about 12% of our audience is Black and continues a growing trend of listeners from this demographic. About 11% of our listeners were Hispanic during this same time period, which is a slight drop from the previous fiscal year. Combined, Black and Hispanic listeners remain about one-quarter of the listening audience. WUSF also saw gains with younger listeners—which make up a bigger portion of the Black and Hispanic audience—with about a 50% increase with listeners in the 25-34 and the 35-44 age ranges. WUSF robust coverage of the Coronavirus pandemic and its impact on our community continued. We are especially proud of the series "Unequal Shots", which focused on the health of communities of color and gave them a chance to share how Florida's handling of the coronavirus pandemic and vaccine distribution has affected them. It produced hours of important content and won numerous journalism awards, including an Edward R. Murrow in the category "Excellence in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion". The Health News Florida team continued to be a key resource for the ongoing and constantly changing response to the Coronavirus pandemic, by providing credible updates on multiple platforms so that our audience could make important decisions for themselves and loved ones. Last fiscal year, Health News Florida's website had nearly 500,000 users and 900,000 page views. In FY22, the number of users more than doubled to just over 1 million users and just over 1.65 million page views. Newsletter subscribers remained flat at about 3,500, with an open rate of about 34 percent. Health News Florida's team continued to provide updates on the Coronavirus pandemic, including need-to-know information involving case numbers, testing and treatments—including vaccines. Another highlight this past fiscal year: WUSF continues to engage with the activities of its licensee, the University of South Florida.

Activities include collaborations with students, faculty and community groups and highlight the contributions of, and issues related to, African Americans, women, veterans, older Americans, disabled citizens, migrants, under-served communities, Latinos, Asian and Indian Americans. Subjects discussed/covered include—science, education, culture, politics, and healthcare. WUSF's jazz programming featured music from diverse performers and composers, including: Afro-Cuban, Brazilian, Jamaican. Our classical music programming on WSMR featured African-American, women, Asian and Hispanic composers, conductors, and performers. In March of this past fiscal year, nightly jazz programming went from an average of 8-hours every evening to 3-hours. This change served our audience with vital information from the BBC at the start of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. WUSF quickly saw the benefits of focusing more of its programming hours to its main mission of providing news and information to our audience, and the change remained in place throughout FY22. The Coronavirus pandemic initially shut down many local arts venues and performance organizations. Arts Axis Florida was launched to provide a rich and vital community resource during uncertain times. The free and comprehensive platform provides an arts "hub" for the West Central Florida market and beyond that is accessible to everyone. During FY22, more organizations began opening to in-person events, and Arts Axis pivoted by promoting in-person events and posting them on the website and social media. The Arts Axis podcast was launched to promote website content during this time period, and it ended the fiscal year with an average of 1,000 downloads per episode. WUSF continues to partner with other public media entities across the State of Florida. In FY22, WUSF collaborated with WLRN Public Media in Miami and WJCT in Jacksonville on The Florida Roundup, a live, weekly program that engages the audience through phone calls and social media. The focus is on the biggest issues and WUSF reporters are frequently featured as guests. The WUSF Newsroom produced robust content, including ongoing coverage of the Coronavirus pandemic, the environment and explosive growth. A solutions-based journalism approach—featuring local voices—allowed reporters to continue to focus on community issues this past fiscal year, including: Health Stories – WUSF News produced 1,661 stories Politics – WUSF News produced 1,225 stories Environment – WUSF News produced 1,365 stories Public Safety – WUSF News produced 1,051 stories Arts — WUSF News produced 223 stories Underserved Communities – WUSF News produced 584 stories

6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story

Jump to question: [6.1](#) ▼

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.

Stories from partner stations in Miami, Orlando, Tallahassee and other parts of the state were frequently heard by our audience and informed them on important issues, ranging from politics to the environment and immigration on all of our platforms. Conversely, WUSF stories were also broadcast and published on the platforms of our statewide partners. Fortunately, 2021 was another mild hurricane season for our region. Nevertheless, our partnership with the Florida Public Radio Emergency Network (FPREN) continued to grow and remains a vital and important state-wide collaboration by assisting stations throughout Florida with reporting and tracking severe weather. Our partnership with FPREN allows for live updates and "phases" for extended coverage and live two-ways with our local reporters. This past year, WUSF Public Media and FPREN have updated this community on severe conditions from tornadoes to major storms. WUSF also continues to collaborate with local partners, including: Spectrum Bay News 9 – a 24-hour, TV news service. The two organizations share daily newsroom budgets and audio. Further, WLRN public radio in Miami collaborates on state health policy reporting through Health News Florida; WMFE, WJCT and WLRN also collaborate on education reports; The Sarasota Herald Tribune Newspaper on major stories with a regional impact, plus their journalists have been featured guests on our shows; and with the University of South Florida on story ideas, student cross-training, and outreach. In FY22, WUSF continued to participate in the Florida Climate Reporting Network, which includes dozens of state media organizations, from newspapers to public media who have agreed to share content and collaborate on projects that help residents understand what climate change means to them and their communities. In support of this effort, WUSF has reached out to our audience (on-air and on-line) to learn about their experiences with climate change. Specifically, they have shared stories about weather-related issues like heat, flooding, poor health, loss of wildlife, as well as the impact on their homes and livelihoods. It resulted in the telling of real stories in their voices. Also, WUSF continued to work with our national partner NPR to share the experiences of our audience with the larger country and the world. WUSF's commitment to the student intern program continued, with students returning to the newsroom and reporting in person during this fiscal year. Also, thanks to a generous donation, interns are now paid at WUSF—which should help promote equity to this important part of our community. Like the previous fiscal year, WUSF interns made up a diverse group of students who went through an application and interview process. Once selected, they are trained to research, write, produce, and report on air and online; they are guided through newsroom ethics; and edited like all reporters before delivering a final product—just like WUSF's professional reporters. Interns were assigned GA and digital stories in the subject areas of the Coronavirus pandemic, environmental issues, education and the economy. A great example of WUSF's success in community engagement during FY22 was the "Teacher Voices" series, which allowed the community to hear from this group that was being directly impacted by numerous issues. From the series page: "Between the coronavirus pandemic, staffing shortages, and legislative initiatives, it has been a particularly difficult time for some teachers. We asked some about their biggest challenges, and we're sharing what they had to say, in their own words."

6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story

Jump to question: [6.1](#) ▼

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.

WUSF Public Media continued to respond to our community's increasing need for credible information in FY22. We engaged with our audience by focusing more resources and intention on meeting them where they live, work and play. We have also worked diligently to make our content more accessible to our core audience—and any other person who feels it necessary—by continue to add resources to bolster our audio streams, digital devices, digital engagement and web services. WUSF's saw great success in FY21 with the voter-centric election coverage focused in particular on Black and Hispanic voters in our region, as part of the CPB-supported America Amplified community engagement project. Done in partnership with WMFE in Orlando, WUSF held multiple listening sessions with minority college students. A series of voter audio postcards broadcast before the election highlighted the voices of several minority voters. WUSF and its partners decided to replicate the project in FY22 with the mid-term elections and began planning and laying the groundwork for this important collaborative to get more community members engaged in voting and democracy. WUSF Public Media once again hosted the Florida edition of NPR's Next Generation Radio in January 2022. From the series page: "WUSF Public Media is honored to host the Florida edition of NPR's Next Generation Radio, a workshop for college students and new journalists. Here we highlight their work — audio and digital stories about the experiences of Floridians affected by issues ranging from the COVID-19 pandemic to climate change. These stories were produced in partnership with NPR and WUSF Public Media. Our reporters are students and recent graduates in Florida." The WUSF Public Media weekly newsletter continued to provide credible news and information to audience members who chose to consume content through the format of email in FY22. The newsletter highlighted top local news stories, along with local arts and cultural events in our community. Just like last fiscal year, the newsletter open rates continue to perform above the national average. WUSF's Florida-centric food podcast, The Zest, kept finding a growing audience interested in food, culture, and the history of Florida. We continue to see the benefits of the addition of an associate producer which continued to allow for a wider, more diverse variety of stories and guests and weekly episodes. And the numbers show that the community appreciates it: The Zest Podcast saw a 60% increase in Unique Listeners in FY22 vs FY21. Further, The Zest Podcast

received a 61% increase in Downloads during the same time period—both numbers indicate new audiences for WUSF Public Media.

AWARDS: WUSF continued to receive recognition from a variety of prestigious news organizations throughout the country: Florida Association of Broadcast Journalists: WUSF received 22 awards, including first place in 17 categories that honored a total of 11 journalists. Among Florida's commercial and public media broadcasters, WUSF won first place for: Continuing Coverage: COVID-19 vaccine rollout in Florida General Assignment: Critical race theory prompts curriculum removal General Assignment | Long: Toxic bus tour highlights inequity Series/Franchise | Light: The Pandemic Year Feature Reporting | Hard: Lung transplants for Covid patients raise ethical questions Feature Reporting | Cultural & Historic: Finding the lost children of migrant farmworkers Use of Sound: Preserving coastal habitats can mitigate climate change impacts Sports Reporting: Tampa is the epicenter of sports during a pandemic Online/Web/Digital: WUSF News Investigative Reporting: Finding the lost children of migrant farmworkers Investigative Reporting | Series: Unequal Shots Health Reporting | Single: Pandemic has strained mental health for Black Americans Health Reporting | Series: Unequal Shots Reporter: Kerry Sheridan Best Radio Newscast: All Things Considered – Aug. 6, 2021 Digital Programing: Class of COVID-19: An education crisis for Florida's vulnerable students Series/Franchise | Hard: Class of COVID-19: An education crisis for Florida's vulnerable students PMJA: WUSF News won four awards this week in a national journalism contest for local public media newsrooms. In addition, a Florida Public Media collaboration that WUSF participated in also won three First Place honors in the large newsroom division. The awards include: Enterprise Reporting: Finding the Lost Children of Migrant Farmworkers Newscast: Morning Edition Newscast Feb. 9 Special Feature Category: COVID-2021: "The pandemic strained mental health for Black Americans. It's also amplifying calls for change" Interview: "The People Trying To Save The Florida Panther" Edward R. Murrow: WUSF was honored with multiple regional Edward R. Murrow awards, including the top honor for Overall Excellence. Other categories included: Breaking News Coverage: Thousands Gather for Rallies on Reproductive Rights Continuing Coverage: COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout Excellence in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Unequal Shots Excellence in Sound: Preserving Coastal Habitats Can Mitigate the Impacts of Climate Change Excellence in Writing Green Eyeshade (Society of Professional Journalists southeastern United States): WUSF earned three honors, with WUSF reporter Kerry Sheridan won first place in the Investigative Reporting / Radio category for her story, "Finding the Lost Children of Migrant Farmworkers"; Sheridan, reporter Stephanie Colombini and editor Julio Ochoa won second place for Public Service in Radio Journalism; and second place for the Best Radio Newscast / Radio. Host Lisa Peakes and editor Mark Schreiner produced the All Things Considered newscast from August 6, 2021. Sunshine State (SPJ Florida): The newsroom took home 16 honors, including first place in eight categories, including health, environment and education.

6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story

Jump to question: [6.1](#) ▼

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.

The series "Unequal Shots" investigated how decisions by leaders on how they chose to distribute the COVID-19 vaccine and the impact on the need for these vulnerable communities to be protected by this virus. It further exposed inequities in Florida's health care system and sought to hold decision makers accountable for their actions. WUSF continues to engage all audiences and seeks to air diverse voices from our community on our weekly public affairs program Florida Matters. The program's producer and the new, permanent host embrace WUSF's goals to reach the audience across all platforms – with the continuation of a podcast version available for anytime-anywhere listening, plus airing it on our sister station WSMR, which has a stronger signal on the southern end of our listening area. The program also continues engaging with listeners via social media and through phone calls. Highlights on Florida Matters include: -- Conversation with elected officials, ranging from mayors to state legislators to members of the U.S. Congress. -- How Democratic and Republican clubs want to change the conversation around politics -- Rising housing costs are prompting protests and possible solution from lawmakers across Tampa Bay These episodes show how Florida Matters was able to reach sources of key news and information and share it with the audience to inform them so that they can make important decisions in their lives.

6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story

Jump to question: [6.1](#) ▼

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?

Florida to offer robust coverage of the mid-term and Florida Governor elections, which will take place in November 2022, during the first half of FY23. WUSF will replicate the voter-centric election coverage that it deployed for the 2020 Presidential election and will continue outreach to Black and Hispanic voters—all part of the CPB-supported America Amplified community engagement project. CPB funding has allowed WUSF the freedom to report from wherever and whenever it wants on whatever subject it chooses—or on whatever subject the audience is clamoring for—without the pressure of modern, commercial media to produce rating, page views and profits. CPB funding has given WUSF the resources to equip our station and journalists with the tools and equipment necessary to serve the public with the news and information it needs to make informed decisions about the issues in their lives. This includes engineers, IT, and managers. Continued funding from CPB confirms what our audience tells us every day—that WUSF is worthy of the investment. CPB Funding has also allowed WUSF to be able to quickly pivot to the ongoing societal changes due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic during FY22. We kept our audience informed as to the rapidly evolving response by decision makers to COVID-19 and on the options and resources that were available to deal with the changes. FY22 extended the "new reality" of FY21, and it has allowed WUSF to work in innovative and efficient ways—all to the benefit of the audience. A steady and reliable source of funding makes all of this possible and allows us to plot out FY23 to innovate ways to best serve our audience. The areas that we would like to focus on include: Health Politics Diversity, inclusion, and equity issues Housing The Economy Sustainability Flooding and climate change Education The Environment Transportation Life post-pandemic CPB funding means freedom to pursue in-depth and investigative reporting, smart analysis from top minds and resources to go into communities and amplify their voices and issues across the region. It allows us to provide the audience with the information they need, when they need it, and wherever it is needed, to make smart decisions about the important issues they face.

Comments

Question

Comment

No Comments for this section