



Press Release

KCUR Selected as Key Station for NPR's New Midwest Enterprise

Kansas City, Mo., May 19 -- NPR has chosen KCUR 89.3 to help lead a new Midwest regional news hub that will create a greater capacity for investigative reporting in the Kansas City metro area.

KCUR – along with St. Louis Public Radio, Iowa Public Radio and NET in Nebraska – will play a major role in bringing the regional newsroom to life, ensuring the Kansas City community will be well-served by the reporting produced through this new collaboration.

The Midwest regional hub is made possible through a \$3 million grant to NPR's Collaborative Journalism Network by philanthropists Eric and Wendy Schmidt. An additional \$1.7 million will go toward an existing regional newsroom in California, NPR announced (Tuesday).

Through the Midwest hub, public radio stations in Missouri, Kansas, Iowa and Nebraska will coordinate and expand their local and regional reporting, providing content to national news programs and digital platforms. The 25 public radio stations serving the four-state region will have access to stories produced by the Midwest newsroom.

The startup investment by the Schmidts will allow KCUR and its partners at the three other stations to launch the hub and develop it into an essential contributor to the NPR network.

"This incredible decision to support local journalism is an exciting opportunity for KCUR," said Sarah Morris, KCUR's interim general manager. "The new collaboration not only will boost our own coverage of issues affecting Kansas City and the region, but also will allow us to bring more Midwestern voices to the rest of the nation."

The Midwest hub is NPR's fourth regional news collaboration, joining regional newsrooms already operating in Texas, California and the Gulf States of Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana.

With a focus on in-depth reporting, the new Midwest team will include a three-person investigative unit and two editors, as well as a coordinating producer based at NPR in Washington, D.C. The team will bring public service reporting to a region dominated by rural news deserts as local publications have fewer resources for extensive projects.

KCUR is no stranger to the concept of collaboration, having built a national reputation for developing and sustaining multi-station partnerships. Harvest Public Media, a four-state partnership that covers issues related to food and agriculture, started at KCUR more than 10 years ago. The Kansas News Service, a collaboration of four public radio stations from Kansas

[KCUR 89.3 | NPR in Kansas City | 4825 Troost Avenue, Suite 202, Kansas City, Missouri](#)

City to Garden City, is based at KCUR. And KCUR is the lead station for America Amplified, a national elections project focused on community engagement.

About KCUR

KCUR 89.3 is a public radio service deeply rooted in the Kansas City metro area since 1957. It is the flagship NPR station in Kansas City, connecting people to ideas and to each other through relevant news reporting, thoughtful conversations, and vibrant expressions of arts and culture. The station serves the public by reporting on and sharing information about local governments, politics, education, health care, arts and culture through the voices of the people living those stories. It spotlights the creative works of artists, musicians and innovators who make the world and our community more vibrant. It brings people together through events intended to inspire and engage. The station is operated as an editorially independent community service of the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

About Eric and Wendy Schmidt

Eric and Wendy Schmidt have been active philanthropists since 2006, when they started The Schmidt Family Foundation to address the global crisis of climate change through grants and impact investments in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, human rights and marine technology. Since then, they also founded Schmidt Ocean Institute to advance oceanographic research through the development of innovative technologies. The institute operates the only year-round, seagoing philanthropic research vessel in the world. Most recently, the couple founded Schmidt Futures, a philanthropic initiative that finds exceptional people and helps them do more for others together. Eric Schmidt led Google as CEO for a decade and as executive chairman for four years. He also served as executive chairman of Alphabet for three years and as technical advisor until 2020. Wendy Schmidt worked in marketing communications in Silicon Valley and then started and ran a residential interior design business for 16 years before turning to philanthropy. She has led The Schmidt Family Foundation as its president since 2006.

About NPR

NPR's rigorous reporting and unsurpassed storytelling connect with millions of Americans every day — on the air, online, and in person. NPR strives to create a more informed public — one challenged and invigorated by a deeper understanding and appreciation of events, ideas, and cultures. With a nationwide network of award-winning journalists and 17 international bureaus, NPR and its Member stations are never far from where a story is unfolding. Listeners can find NPR by tuning in to their local Member stations (npr.org/stations), and now it's easy to listen to our stories on smart speaker devices. Ask your smart speaker to, "Play NPR," and you'll be tuned into your local Member station's live stream. Your speaker can also access NPR podcasts, NPR One, NPR News Now, and the Visual Newscast is available for screened speakers. Get more information at npr.org/about and by following NPR Extra on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.