2021
Annual Local Content and Service Report
for KPCC-FM

As submitted to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB)
March 2022
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 Southern California Public Radio (SCPR) is to strengthen the civic and cultural bonds that unite Southern California’s diverse communities by providing the highest quality news and information service through radio and other interactive media. SCPR is a public forum that engages its audiences in an ongoing dialogue and exploration of issues, events, and cultures in the region and the world, seeking to provide greater understanding and new perspectives to the people of these communities and their leaders.

Through its station KPCC, website LAist, and podcast division LAist Studios, SCPR provides broadcast, digital, and on-demand audio stories on various topics and issues to the region, with news updates throughout the day as well as longer produced pieces. SCPR also offers multiday coverage over its produced shows and newscasts to tell stories about topics that have had a large and universal impact (COVID-19, systemic racism) and that affect many in the broadcast area (public safety, housing). This year, LAist Studios continued our daily news podcast and launched several limited series, including a reexamination of the policing legacy of a 1980 bank robbery, a supportive mental health program for young people of color, and a time capsule of stories about how the pandemic transformed the concept of home.

SCPR’s newsroom takes an audience-first approach, with engagement producers dedicated specifically to early childhood and pathways to college as well as a larger community engagement team that gathers and directly answers questions about a wide range of topics. SCPR offers multiplatform programming in order to reach audiences that no longer listen to radio. The KPCC and LAist websites offer news and information, while podcasts and mobile apps for iPads, iPhones, and Android smartphones allow SCPR to reach out to new and younger audiences who do not consume news through traditional sources.

This year, in the light of the ongoing pandemic, SCPR’s events team continued to produce virtual event discussions in which the newsroom’s reporters and hosts examined current topics or interviewed community leaders, panel experts, and other notable individuals. Audiences could watch events live, follow the conversation through social media posts, or access archived video later. Event topics ranged from the impact of homelessness on youth mental health to how to start a new career. This multiplatform approach—on air, online, and via live events—ensures that SCPR is both reaching out to new audiences as well as keeping its existing audience informed and engaged.
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.

SCPR’s most impactful collaboration was with local public health officials. KPCC’s flagship radio program AirTalk brought audiences the latest information from doctors, nurses, epidemiologists, and other medical professionals about COVID-19, vaccines, and how the virus and pandemic have affected the lives of Southern Californians. These regular segments proved so valuable that LAist Studios adapted them into a weekday podcast. In addition, the newsroom’s early childhood reporting team worked extensively with community organizations for its Child Care, Unfiltered project, in which childcare providers, educators, and caregivers were asked to document their work through photos. These organizations included the Armory Center for the Arts, Crystal Stairs, El Nido Family Centers, the Los Angeles Education Partnership, the Koreatown Youth and Community Center, and the LA Best Babies Network.

SCPR extended its reach nationally and statewide through reporting partnerships with other media outlets, such as ProPublica on systemic racism, the Local Media Foundation and newsrooms across the country for the Covering Climate Collaborative, and CalMatters (Sacramento) and KPBS (San Diego) on nursing homes. AirTalk also hosted an Earth Day call-in special about the climate emergency that featured reporters from California, Nevada, Arizona, and Colorado NPR affiliates. Locally, virtual events were held in partnership with the Los Angeles Times (surviving a major earthquake) and Scripps Presents (race, gender, and generational difference).

In addition, SCPR worked behind the scenes to support the public media ecosystem. The organization established a mentorship program for other public media newsrooms to help them operationalize the practice of engaged journalism, with an initial cohort consisting of WBEZ (Chicago), WBUR (Boston), and MPR (Minneapolis/St. Paul). SCPR’s newsroom also moderated webinars about funding local journalism with The Current.
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.**

This year, the newsroom actively addressed vaccine misinformation with guides and explainers, including how to get a first, second, and third COVID vaccine shot in Southern California; how to find mental health support; and tips and tools for how to talk to friends and family about the vaccine. SCPR also published several impactful news investigations, including the following:

- **Immediate Jeopardy: Death And Neglect Inside A Troubled California Nursing Home Chain** dove deep into a company called ReNew Health connected to at least 26 nursing homes across California. Members of California’s congressional delegation expressed their outrage, and Governor Gavin Newsom’s campaign announced that it would redirect a political contribution from ReNew Health to charity. Lawmakers demanded dramatic changes to the state’s nursing home licensing program after citing SCPR’s investigation.

- **In The Antelope Valley, Sheriff’s Deputies Settle Schoolyard Disputes. Black Teens Bear The Brunt**, a yearlong joint project with ProPublica, found that deputies disproportionately cite Black teens, often for minor infractions. LA County’s Inspector General is looking into the racial discrimination allegations raised by this investigation.

- **Pushed Out: LA’s Unhoused Women** explored how some women in Southern California experience homelessness as a result of domestic or intimate partner violence through conversation with survivors, homeless service providers, and experts. This report described the lived experiences of women surviving abuse and homelessness, examined where the social safety net has failed them, and featured advocates finding ways to keep survivors out of homelessness in the first place.

- **Death In A Crosswalk: The Killing Of A 4-Year-Old Shows LA’s Failure To Stop Traffic Violence** exposed the failures of LA’s traffic policies and their devastating effect on one family in Koreatown. The writing conveys the depth of this research and complexity of the issues while the accompanying photos and art connect readers to the family – together creating an incredibly moving report.

These activities generated positive responses from audiences, policymakers, and journalism peers. Below are some examples of their comments and feedback:
COVID-19
“To help make your vaccination plan, check out Carla Javier’s handy guide on LAist with information on how to book, what to bring to your appointment, what to expect after your first shot, and other important info.” –LA Councilmember Nithya Raman

“The access to a daily COVID update with medical experts provided by Larry Mantle and KPCC has been vital to negotiating these complicated times. We’ve used explanations from the doctors to change the minds of vaccine reluctant relatives and kept our aging parents safe. The team of doctors has become part of our extended family. We can’t thank you enough for the value this public health information provides our community.”

“As an RN at a local hospital, words can’t express my gratitude for informing our community with calm, up-to-date, fact-based information on Covid. Being able to sort out what we know, what we don’t know, and determine an action plan with ever-changing guidance has been near impossible! And yet here you are Larry – with your team – doing just that for our Greater LA area and beyond. Bless you!”

“LAist speaks in terms the public understands rather than government-speak. Understanding which government entity is delivering the vaccine by site and the third parties contracted to do scheduling is very helpful. I have been able to explain the next steps to our 87-year-old mom and her 92-year-old sister and really appreciate LAist and the efforts to calm the confusion. LAist should be in charge!”

Investigations and special projects
“The reporting explainer for Pushed Out shows that journalists understand how audiences might feel about complicated reporting. It doesn’t take for granted that the journalists will be given the benefit of the doubt and automatic trust for being ethical and respectful. It invites accountability and builds trust.” –Joy Mayer, Trusting News

“Thanks for the thorough reporting on the terrible tragedy of the 4-year-old that died in a car crash. It’s that kind of hard-hitting and writing that made me glad I donated to LAist. It also makes me understand why so many just write a few sentences and reprint press releases....it’s hard work to get the full story that includes personal narratives, legal standing, history, data, existing plans, etc.”

“Child Care, Unfiltered from LAist is some of the best reporting on childcare, ever. But also some of the most aching beautiful reporting on the lives of humans, especially children and their educators, during a global pandemic.”

Race and diversity
“I have been very impressed with KPCC improving reporting on black communities. So often it feels tokenized or that trauma is the only thing that gets attention or highlighted. I
wanted to congratulate you how you chose to handle the current lack of diversity in Hollywood especially with the confrontation the Golden Globes are having with their lack of representation. It felt timely and nuanced. I really hope to see more of type or informed and textured reporting on our community in the future.”

“I am Mekbib. I am an immigrant from Ethiopia. I came to LA 10 months ago. Usually, I try to listen, read, and watch different social and mainstream media to get informed about the country I am living in and to improve my English skill. Finally, I found out that your station (KPCC) is amazing, informative, and well structured. I like the way you present the news. You have helped me in many ways.”

“Thank you so much for continuing to report issues that matter and issues that have been silenced by the mass media. Your honest reporting and journalism continue to educate me. Whether it be about cultural experiences or political injustices, I never fail to learn something new. As an Asian-American, I appreciate you for reporting on the issue related to the Georgia shooting and hope that you continue to report on issues that matter.”

“Civic engagement thrives on fact-based local news. Democracy dies in silence. Diligent radio journalism that uplifts the diversity of voices, experiences, and knowledgeable sources, including about women’s and LGBT equality, and environmental justice, is essential to honest government. And I am proud to do my part, alongside so many others, to invest in KPCC as a needful lifeline for a free society.”

Member testimonials
“I am a proud KPCC member and want to thank the station, all the journalists, editors, producers, technicians, and other staff who kept doing your critical job of keeping us informed. Many of you risked your physical health and arrest (were arrested!) to bring us coverage during the protests last summer. Just like the health care workers and first responders, your work is an essential service to our democracy. Thank you so much!”

“We’re donating today because we appreciate all of the talented people at KPCC working so hard gathering information, editing, producing and presenting the programs you provide all of us. You’ve all been there every day keeping us informed, entertained and especially keeping us company during the bizarre days of this pandemic.”

“While I mainly listen to the radio when I’m driving, I thrive on all the reports and discussions on KPCC and feel a part of a larger community of concerned and caring citizens that way. There is always something particularly elucidating about your guests and on-air personalities/journalists that helps combat some of the incredibly depressing events we’ve all been through for the past more-than-just-a- few years. Thank you for all you do, and if I could give more (I’m retired and a part-time tutor these days), I would definitely contribute more.”
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 2021, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2022. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

Nothing defines Southern California more than its role as a magnet for people who are seeking a better life for themselves and their children. Whether they come from different parts of the United States or other locations around the world, this region provides a level of optimism about the future that is fundamental to understanding civic, cultural, and religious life. The search for the “American Dream” continues to make the Los Angeles region one of the most diverse and multiethnic populations in the nation, and the generations of immigrants that have settled here create an evolving definition of both “Angeleno” and “American.” With that in mind, SCPR’s daily news reporting and programming must reflect these diverse ethnic cultures and communities.

SCPR aims to provide the Southland with coverage that mirrors the makeup of Southern California—its hope, optimism, and cultural richness as well as the serious challenges that must be addressed daily. Immigrant Communities Correspondent Leslie Berestein Rojas posted stories about churches using Día De Los Muertos to honor those lost to COVID-19, the closing of a shelter for unaccompanied migrant children, the revival and expansion of the Central American Minors program, Afghan refugees trying to find affordable housing, people on the front lines of Latino vaccination efforts, and how the return of an East LA football rivalry offered hope for two communities devastated by the pandemic. Asian American Communities Correspondent Josie Huang reported on rent relief bypassing some immigrant tenants, AAPI mental health experts on processing the trauma of anti-Asian hate, Japanese American activists demanding reparations for Black Americans, Los Angeles becoming the largest city to apologize for atrocities against Chinese residents, a ship-naming campaign to honor Filipino Americans in the military, Olympic figure skater Michele Kwan’s path to international diplomacy, and fans of K-pop band BTS injecting millions of dollars into the local economy. SCPR also posted more essays in the series Race In LA, which invited community members to share their experiences with race and ethnicity and included “The 8 Percent,” dedicated to the experience of Black Angelenos.

This is considered normal daily reporting, but it is not the only coverage that SCPR provides. This year, other reporters and correspondents told stories about South LA struggling to get its fair share of the COVID-19 vaccine and Black Angelenos having the highest case and death rates; Latino teens remaining wary of the vaccine; vaccines for high-risk farmworkers; a state bill decriminalizing jaywalking, which Black pedestrians are cited for at higher rate; universities pushing Black, Latino and Native American students away from lucrative majors; Latinos remaining underrepresented in higher education; a new virtual
library for California’s youngest multilingual learners; local events recognizing Black maternal health; and the difficulty in finding shelters for unhoused trans or nonbinary people.

SCPR-produced shows also offer segments that cover the melting pot of Southern California and address the racial justice movement and anti-Asian hate:

- **Take Two** tells stories of the ethnic, cultural, and economic diversity of Southern California authentically and organically, without the fanfare that might be needed elsewhere. Stories covered last year included an interview with the activist who created #OscarsSoWhite, state proposals to help make home ownership more affordable for residents of color, California’s history of anti-Asian hate, the launch of the African American Historic Places Project, Cal State LA holding its first Native American graduation, the contemporary and historical influence of Black sororities, and breaking down the model minority myth with research showing the traits of individual Asian American communities. Take Two ended its nearly nine-year run in June 2021 with the departure of host A Martinez to join NPR’s Morning Edition as a national co-host.

- **AirTalk** offers longer, in-depth conversations on local, national, and international topics. Discussions last year included USC awarding posthumous degrees to Japanese American students incarcerated during World War II, addressing racism within the fantasy genre, NextDoor’s efforts to make its app less discriminatory, local Asian communities’ reactions to the Atlanta spa shootings, how LA County’s highways serve as historical examples of inequitable infrastructure, how Latino communities are disproportionately impacted by bike stops and searches, how Greater Los Angeles is more segregated now than thirty years ago, local reaction to the United States officially recognizing Armenian genocide, and why many Latinos have mixed feelings about the term “Latinx.”

SCPR’s reporters work daily in the diverse communities of Southern California, and this staff has the technology, training, and ability to produce timely coverage for SCPR’s platforms: broadcast, digital, podcasts, and events. Several members of the news staff are fluent or conversational Spanish speakers, and news and production staff have skills in a variety of other languages spoken in the LA metro area.

Southern California is one of the most multiethnic and diverse regions in the nation. In 2022, KPCC is committed to continuing to tell the stories of its people—whether they have been here for a few days, their whole life, or anywhere in-between. With Take Two leaving the airwaves, we are building future shows to be hybrid concepts, equally consumable through traditional broadcast as well as in shorter form for podcast apps and smart devices. These new efforts will captivate our loyal listeners in new ways and resonate with the younger, increasingly diverse audiences of Southern California. The first of these, currently in development, will become our flagship local news brand, and is being envisioned as one franchise with multiple expressions: as a daily podcast, a weekly radio
show, and as a strong presence on social media.

5. **Please briefly assess the impact that your CPB funding has on your ability to serve your community. What can you do with your grant that you wouldn’t be able to do if you didn’t receive it?**

   Continued funding from CPB makes possible the kinds of on-air, online, podcast, and event programming described above. SCPR would not have had the resources to produce a daily newsmagazine, a daily discussion program, and a daily news podcast and to broadcast stories from our newsroom last year without support from CPB. SCPR would be forced to make cutbacks in other areas that would be detrimental not just to the station but to the broadcast audience as well. Almost as important, CPB’s support makes it possible to have this information available on SCPR’s websites, mobile apps, podcasts, and social media. Finally, CPB’s continued support also makes it possible for SCPR to create partnerships with other institutions in the community and to leverage these partnerships creatively to improve the depth, breadth, and quality of its programming and public service.