A MISSION THAT MATTERS
Immigration & Emerging Communities Mission

“Southern California is home to many new immigrants – about a third of LA County residents are foreign born. Immigrants are creating an evolving definition of ‘American.’ We deepen the understanding of how immigrants are changing the region and how LA changes immigrants.”

Erick Galindo, Reporter

Politics Mission

“Democracy can be messy. In Southern California, the political system is changing in front of us, from how we vote to who is running for office. Many voices are shouting to be heard. I examine who gets listened to, and why, and provide a guide to anyone who wants to more fully participate in civic life.”

Libby Denkmann, Reporter

Investigations Mission

“How does who you are and where you live affect what kind of justice you get in Southern California?”

Elly Yu, Reporter
Aaron Mendelson, Senior Reporter
Yingjie Wang, Intern

Higher Education Mission

“I focus stories on college students who are at a crossroads, particularly those on the first rung into higher education. Many of those students are trying to overcome academic and other challenges because they believe college will be the path to a better life. How do the people around them – in their personal lives and at the institutions they attend – help or hinder their success?”

Adolfo Guzman Lopez, Reporter

Infrastructure Mission

“Infrastructure is what we build together to make life better (and the things that break). My role is to reveal the often-surprising and important systems that make life possible in and around LA.”

Sharon McNary, Reporter

Daily News Mission

“I bring you onto the scene of the stories Angelenos are talking about today and help you understand how they’ll affect you. I’m always on the lookout for news and unique stories about Los Angeles – let me know if you have one.”

Emily Elena Dugdale, Reporter

Listeners  KPCC brings people together by making us all a part of the conversation. It’s our mission to be informed, get active, and stay engaged with the world around us and KPCC allows us to do that by being a unique resource to build and share knowledge, experiences, and stories from within our own community.

Mother and Daughter Toni and Alexis Robles (on the cover)
WE ARE ON A MISSION

Our mission 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. We will be a public forum that engages its audiences in an ongoing dialogue and exploration of issues, events and cultures in the region and in the world, seeking to provide greater understanding and new perspectives to the people of these communities and their leaders.
LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

DEMOCRACY NEEDS TO BE HEARD

Through powerful storytelling, Southern California Public Radio serves our community and strengthens our democracy. We do it with your support thanks to a dynamic collaboration between the team that produces our content and the audience that consumes it. Together, we explore, express and advance the issues that inform our lives.

The best journalism today comes from the people whom it is meant to serve. That’s why our partnership with Southern California communities is so impactful: By sourcing stories from residents, we are reflecting their concerns and serving as a vital platform for critical conversations across our region.

Our commitment to a free and robust press can be seen in SCPR’s role as a leader in engagement journalism, which directly involves listeners in reporting stories. We are recipients of a prestigious, national Online Journalism Award reflecting our pivotal role in pioneering this new era in our industry. The awards committee looked at the newsroom’s reporting on black infant mortality, our census and early childhood education coverage, our Human Voter Guide and Unheard LA, our popular series of live performances in communities throughout Los Angeles. They praised our innovative approach to gathering news, from leafletting neighborhoods to holding local meetings as a way of enlisting neighbors to share their experiences, and they cited our example as offering a playbook for reporters in other communities.

Because engagement journalism relies on relationships, we have published mission statements for each of our reporters, enabling people to learn more about – and to connect directly with – them. In our view, this degree of transparency is essential to accuracy, fairness and excellence as we work to keep our democracy vital.

We also reflect Southern California through LAist.com, shining a light on local news and culture, lifestyle, food and events. And we are increasing our visibility with the launch of LAist Studios, our new podcast development and production studio, which will elevate LA stories and values to the world. As we expand our podcast offerings, we will introduce compelling, diverse voices to global audiences from all walks of life.

These are tumultuous times. At SCPR, we feel a strong sense of urgency to rise to the moment, providing reporting that is insightful, honest and independent. We are proud of the role we play in chronicling Southern California’s limitless potential for innovation and reinvention, and we are grateful to you for the contributions that make it possible.

Ultimately, SCPR is sustained by a reciprocal trust and a mutual understanding among all the organization’s stakeholders that we are creating something extraordinary. Thank you for your passion, participation and enduring investment in media that matters.

Herb Scannell
SCPR President and CEO

Ana Valdez
SCPR Board Chair
Homelessness is the underside of a booming economy in our new Gilded Age. Amid a city of glittering splendor lie tent encampments and people struggling to put a roof over their heads. Tackling the problem requires sophistication and nuance—hallmarks of Southern California Public Radio’s homelessness coverage. “It’s an extremely complicated topic, with multiple underlying factors,” says Kristen Muller, SCPR’s chief content officer. “Our goal is to approach it from a systemic point of view, helping listeners untangle the web of causes and understand what’s driving them.”

From the offshoring of manufacturing jobs to the financialization of housing stock, KPCC and LAist take an in-depth look at those causes. They also explore the tangible impact homelessness has on our community. “It’s happening right before our eyes,” points out Matt Tinoco, the newsroom’s housing and homelessness reporter. “People see it creeping into their neighborhoods and often feel powerless to do anything. My job is to try to provide good information and guidance. A lot of the assumptions we have about who homeless people are, and what has them seeking shelter on the street, are just wrong. Little by little, I feel like we are starting to move the discourse forward.”

A critical component of that momentum is activating Angelenos’ interest and concern—and, judging by listeners’ responses to SCPR’s homeless coverage, the newsroom is making a difference. “Whether we’re reporting on efforts to build permanent supportive housing, healthcare for homeless in Orange County or how homeless are being affected by devastating wildfires, people across the city are contacting us with their ideas and opinions,” says editor Jill Replogle. “We’re also hearing from top officials who are clearly listening and thinking about the issues we’re surfacing.”

The issues have implications that go beyond the practical. “Homelessness is one of the defining moral issues of our time,” opines Rina Palta, a former correspondent on SCPR’s investigative team whose previous beat was California’s social safety net. She sees a stark choice ahead for Los Angeles. “I believe homelessness is the central issue our city faces and will ultimately determine what it will be in the future,” she says.

“OUR GOAL IS TO APPROACH HOMELESSNESS FROM A SYSTEMIC POINT OF VIEW, HELPING AUDIENCES UNTANGLE THE WEB OF CAUSES AND UNDERSTAND WHAT’S DRIVING THEM.”

Stories on KPCC and LAist are playing a role in shaping that future. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) modeled an investigation into conditions in Southern California homeless shelters on work done by Palta. Similarly, People Assisting the Homeless (PATH) and the League of Women Voters Homeless Action Committee have relied on Tinoco’s reporting to advance their own vital missions.

Tinoco observes that there is a lot of ground to cover, but there is also room for optimism. “I wrote a story about a group of Silverlake residents trying to effect change on a local level by getting to know the homeless people living around them,” he says. “That simple act was amazing because it helped restore the homeless individuals’ humanity and showed that, even if we can’t solve the problem ourselves, we can work together to make a dent in it.”
LOS ANGELES IS A GLOBAL FORCE OF DIVERSE CREATIVE ENERGY – A LAUNCHING PAD FOR STORIES THAT MOVE AND INSPIRE AUDIENCES AROUND THE WORLD. THIS IS THE ANIMATING IDEA BEHIND LAIST STUDIOS, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA PUBLIC RADIO’S NEW PODCAST DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION ARM. THE GOAL, SAYS SCPR’S PRESIDENT AND CEO HERB SCANELL, IS TO CAPTURE THE THINGS THAT MAKE LA SO FASCINATING – ITS DIVERSE VOICES, DISTINCT TOPOGRAPHIES AND LEADERSHIP POSITION AT THE FOREFRONT OF SOCIAL, CULTURAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC TRENDS – AND TO TRANSLATE THEM FOR AUDIENCES BEYOND THE CITY’S BORDER.

“THE WORLD HAS ALWAYS HAD A FASCINATION WITH LA,” SCANELL NOTES. “WITH LAIST STUDIOS, WE ARE MAKING A COMMITMENT TO TELLING STORIES THAT REFLECT LOS ANGELES’ RICH DIVERSITY AND EMBRACE ITS UNMATCHED EYE TOWARD INCLUSION.”

STORIES WITH REACH: LA STORIES TO THE WORLD

INTRODUCING LAIST STUDIOS

Muller points to SCPR’s recent successes with podcasts like The Big One and Tell Them, I Am as examples of where LAist Studios is headed. “Both of those shows were uniquely LA in tone but spoke to a large national and international audience, demonstrating that the issues that matter to Angelenos matter everywhere, and that the fascination with LA-centric stories is universal,” Muller notes. “Future projects will do the same, embracing stories that are touching on universal truths. We want to hear from and partner with the people telling those stories, providing the resources that will help bring their ideas to life.”

Joining LAist Studios as a senior advisor is Angela Bromstad, a television veteran and former president of primetime entertainment for NBC and Universal Television Studios. Bromstad, who worked on groundbreaking programs like 30 Rock, The Office and Friday Night Lights, will oversee the initial slate of podcasts.

As envisioned by Scannell, the new initiative will give listeners outside of Los Angeles a glimpse of where the world is heading in decades to come. “LA is the American city of the next 20 years,” he points out. “We want to use this as an opportunity to champion its forward-thinking mentality.”

Los Angeles is a global force of diverse creative energy – a launching pad for stories that move and inspire audiences around the world. This is the animating idea behind LAist Studios, Southern California Public Radio’s new podcast development and production arm. The goal, says SCPR’s President and CEO Herb Scannell, is to capture the things that make LA so fascinating – its diverse voices, distinct topographies and leadership position at the forefront of social, cultural, political and economic trends – and to translate them for audiences beyond the city’s border.

“The world has always had a fascination with LA,” Scannell notes. “With LAist Studios, we are making a commitment to telling stories that reflect the city’s rich diversity and embrace its unmatched eye toward inclusion. The nature of LA today is exciting, and that’s what we want to bring out to the world.”

The focus of LAist Studios will be creating podcasts in three categories: stories that tap into the LA conversation by leaning into cultural and socioeconomic crosscurrents, factual and fictional narratives shaped by Southern California and programs that emerge out of SCPR’s award-winning journalism.

“As expert audio storytellers sitting in the middle of the biggest creative community in the world, we are continually identifying voices that haven’t been heard and conversations that can only happen in LA,” says SCPR’s Chief Content Officer Kristen Muller. “We want to capture those and make them accessible to people, leveraging a format – the podcast – that is exploding in popularity and really coming into its own.”

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For every Angeleno, new or native, there are some things that need no explanation. Sunny days. Gridlocked traffic. Occasional celebrity sightings. Yet, the sheer size and scope of the city (the diversity, the geography, the seemingly endless sprawl) make inevitable that all of us, at one time or another, could use a map – a “how-to” guide offering practical tips on the ins and outs of living in la-la land.

This is the premise of How to LA, an ongoing series of guides on LAist.com for navigating life in Los Angeles. As envisioned by Brianna Lee, SCPR’s associate editor of audience engagement, the initiative is a resource for anyone who has ever struggled to make sense of what it means to call LA home.

“I’m a California native, and I’d visited LA many times, but I had nothing but questions when I first moved here,” Lee recalls. “How big is LA? Why are there so many strip malls? Why is Los Feliz pronounced that way? How to LA is essentially a collection of tips, tricks, history, explainers and recommendations to help people find their way.”

The guide is built around five core sections (“eat,” “live,” “play,” “work” and “understand”) and is constantly updated and maintained by SCPR’s LAist team. Lee says that, “Is it useful?” is the main criterion for inclusion.

“No matter how long you’ve spent in LA, there’s something new to learn every day – maybe a hack for taking a certain bus route during rush hour, a guide for how to recycle certain items in your city properly or a phone number to call if someone’s car is blocking your driveway,” Lee says. “Ultimately, the goal of How to LA is unravelling the mystery of how things work here and how to make things better. It can also be a jumping-off point for people who may not have been civically engaged to connect the dots and feel more confident advocating for the change they want.”

The audience leveraging How to LA is also central to its plans for growth. “There are all different aspects of living in such an incredibly complex region that might not be intuitive,” observes Megan Garvey, executive editor of SCPR. “If you have a question, the chances are other Angelenos have it, too. The more that listeners reach out to us, the more we’ll be able to expand the guide so that it speaks to an even larger number of people.”

For all its practicality, says Kristen Muller, SCPR’s chief content officer, How to LA also addresses a less tangible concern: How do we think about cities in the 21st century? “We may not have all the answers,” she laughs. “But we do have a lot.”
Southern California Public Radio is on a mission to spread public awareness – and dispel pervasive myths – about the United States census. This constitutionally mandated count of the US population occurs every 10 years, and 2020’s is expected to present numerous challenges, especially in Los Angeles. “We’ve known for some time that LA County is likely to be the most undercounted in the country, for a wide variety of reasons,” says SCPR Executive Editor Megan Garvey. “We have a lot of homeless, immigrants, children under five and people who don’t speak English as their first language. All these things can make locating, and connecting with, people extremely hard.”

Despite the difficulty involved, counting people in the census has never been more critical. “Participation is beyond important, not only as an act of civic engagement but especially because of the funding and political representation that come out of it,” says Data Journalist Dana Amihere.

Kristen Muller, SCPR’s chief content officer, concurs. “We want to make sure people understand the stakes so they can be better informed about this foundational part of our democracy,” she says. Muller points out that census results have a major impact on many aspects of our daily lives, determining everything from allotment of congressional seats to government funding for schools, social assistance programs, scientific research, road maintenance and more.

Driving home the urgency of census participation has been on SCPR’s radar for some time now. “About a year and a half ago, we began looking at opportunities for programming around the topic,” recalls Ashley Alvarado, SCPR’s director of community engagement. “As we gained a better understanding of information needs and barriers to participation in our community, we realized we can’t change issues of access or vulnerability, but we can help people get better informed about the census and how it affects them.”

In May, the station convened a meeting of community, ethnic and in-language media outlets from around the city to strategize about a census-related collaboration. “It was a great match, because all these newsrooms brought an in-depth knowledge of their specific audiences, and we shared our research and data expertise,” Alvarado says. “We realized that by partnering, we could build an information ecosystem that would amplify all of our voices.”

One outcome of the gathering was a decision by SCPR to hire an editor dedicated to overseeing its census-related reporting. The station also hosted data training for its partner newsrooms to help familiarize them with techniques for data analysis. Amihere is developing an online tool that will allow users to discover more about the census and how it affects them.

“There’s nothing out there like it,” Amihere says. “It’s another example of SCPR working at the cutting-edge.”

This project received support from The Leonetti/O’Connell Family Foundation for the initial research phase. SCPR’s census coverage is funded by The Roth Family Foundation, Mr. Greg Steffire and Mrs. Judi Steffire, and all our members and donors. Thank you.
It takes a big appetite to tackle civic challenges in a place as complex as Los Angeles, but Susan Steinhauser has ambition to spare. Her dizzying list of positions in public service (including membership on Southern California Public Radio’s Board of Trustees) is a testament to an individual’s ability to make a difference in her community.

As a lawyer blazing a trail to alternate and renewable sources of energy at Southern California Edison in the early part of her career, Steinhauser honed the skills she would need as a full-time public advocate – a role she took on beginning in the 1990s. She left the utility company to start a coalition focused on encouraging women to seek appointments on city, county and state boards and commissions. “Ours was one of the first groups to spread the word that you could participate in public service without being a government employee or running for office,” she recalls. “Before that, women simply didn’t see themselves as eligible for those positions.”

Steinhauser’s profile began to rise and so too did requests for her involvement. She sat on the Library of California Board for 12 years, serving as legislative chair and working with renowned historian Kevin Starr; was part of the California Arts Council for eight years, chairing the group’s Strategic Planning Committee; and held the post of both president and vice president of LA’s Board of Fire and Police Commissioners. She is currently a member of the Los Angeles County Law Library Board, having served for a quarter century (including more than a decade as president).

For Steinhauser, partnering with SCPR is a logical extension of her lifelong work to strengthen the fabric of our society. “We need an informed electorate to run a vibrant democracy,” she points out. “SCPR connects people to what’s happening in our city and in the world.”

The newsroom also builds trust and fosters mutual understanding, she says, which is crucial in helping people bridge partisan divides. “Especially now, with the wealth of diversity in LA, it’s so important to understand each other,” she observes. “SCPR is one thing we all have in common, and its programs start the conversations that can bring us together.”
Herb Scannell joined Southern California Public Radio as president and CEO last February. Previously, as CEO of mitú, he led the top digital media brand for Latino millennials. Prior to that, he served as president of BBC Worldwide, North America and as CEO of Next New Networks, an innovator in online video, which was acquired by Google/YouTube in 2011. The majority of Scannell’s career was at Viacom/MTV Networks, culminating in the position of Vice Chairman MTV Networks/President Nickelodeon Networks, where he launched audience favorites including Spongebob Squarepants, Blues Clues and Dora the Explorer. In 2000, Scannell assumed a board position at New York Public Radio, serving as chairman from 2009-12. He is thrilled to be continuing his work in public media as part of the SCPR family.

You spent many years in New York. How is Los Angeles different?
The energy. I definitely enjoyed New York but LA is a revelation. It has an electric, buzzy feeling of youth and innovation and that’s a seriously potent combination. You feel diversity here like nowhere else. It charges you up. Los Angeles is a spectacular cultural mashup.

What’s your impression of the SCPR audience?
Our audience is not traditional. They aren’t passive consumers of media product. They don’t have a spectator mindset. They’re about being involved with their community.

How does that show up in the programming?
Engagement journalism is a prime example. When you hear us say we report a story, the “we” is the community and our staff. That’s a fundamental shift in the traditional journalistic paradigm. I think it’s incredibly exciting, and there couldn’t be a better time for it than right now.

What makes this an opportune time?
There are so many reasons. Our culture is undergoing an audio renaissance. Voice is a resurgent medium. Radio, podcasts, voice-activated technologies, storytelling. There’s a hunger for real conversation. And there’s a palpable jolt of energy in our communities with the Olympics returning and the Metro coming to completion. The city is in its ascendancy, and SCPR is a fluid, responsive, passionate conduit for that dynamism and drive.

If you had one message for the SCPR community, what would it be?
It’s a very basic message: A free press is important to our democracy. We’re here for all – whatever your politics, origin, race, ethnicity, religion. We are united by our love for our democracy!
Dani Imura comes by her love of KPCC honestly. “When I was young, my grandfather supported public radio,” the El Segundo resident explains. “He listened every day in the car and used it as a teaching tool, helping me understand how to process information.” Today, Imura can draw a direct line between those early lessons and her devotion to KPCC as a place both to process the news and to feed her soul. “KPCC programs keep me grounded and unafraid to be my authentic self,” she says. “When I listen, my mind is blown.”

For Imura, a budding writer and storyteller, public radio shows like This American Life and The Moth have particular resonance. “It’s so amazing to hear the experiences and viewpoints of others who hail from such diverse backgrounds,” she says. Listening inspired her to keep writing – and to submit one of her own pieces to Unheard LA, a free, community-driven storytelling series organized by KPCC all over Los Angeles County. When she was selected to participate at a theater in Claremont, she was over the moon.

“Being part of the show was fantastic!” Imura exclaims. Unheard LA attendees enjoy live, onstage storytelling by fellow public radio fans, then mingle over drinks. “It was great meeting so many interesting people, who I would otherwise never have crossed paths with,” she says. “It’s just one of the ways KPCC does an amazing job of building community in Southern California.”

Imura’s passion for the station and its services inspired her to sign up as a sustaining member, making ongoing monthly donations. “These programs are not free,” she points out. “Especially given what’s going on in the world today, we need to keep the channels of unbiased information open – and that’s only possible if we all contribute together.”
In Fiscal Year 2019, SCPR spent $21 million directly on our Programming, Live Event, Digital, On Demand and Broadcast activities. This allowed us to produce local shows (AirTalk, The Frame, Take Two), local podcasts (The Big One, Tell Them, I Am), information through our websites (LAist and KPCC), national and international broadcast shows (Wait Wait... Don’t Tell Me!, BBC Newshour), and events. Our financial position continues to be strong. A consolidated balance sheet shows total assets of $32.3 million with total liabilities of $6.4 million.
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Mark Sandelson
Alexander and Mariette Sawchuk
Lee Shalat Chemel and David Chemel
Diane Sherman
Linda Silverman and Ercl Brown
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Greg Stone and Cindy Vail
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Carl Volpe
WHH Foundation
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Michael D. Coleman and
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Linda Claxton
James E. and Melanie Clark
City National Bank
Joon Chung
Adam Shell
Carla Christofferson and
Raissa and Bill Choi
Ramon C. Pineda
Judith Chirlin
Richard and Karla Chernick
Terry Cheng
Flora and Kaiwen Cheng
Terry Cheng
Richard and Karla Chernick
Judith Chinlin
Echo Y. Chiu and
Ramon C. Pineda
Raissa and Bill Choi
Carla Christofferson and
Adam Shell
Joon Chung
City National Bank
James E. and Melanie Clark
Linda Claxton
Paul Clay
Janice K. Clifford
Barbara and David Cline
Elizabeth Woodford Coffman
Michael D. Coleman and
Odile Nicolette
Sandia and Edward Collett
Robin S. Collins
Elizabeth Comley
Gary Conrad
Laurie Content
Robert and Ana Cook
Zack Cooper
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Jordan Corngold and
Susannah Blinkoff
Joseph and Susan Courtney
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Zane Dalal
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JOURNALISTIC EXCELLENCE

ACHIEVEMENTS

From the everyday moments to life-changing earthquakes, our work was recognized beyond Southern California:

THE BIG ONE
Awards
Adweek, Best Episode of the Year 2019: The Earthquake
Best of Lists 2019
TIME 50 Best Podcasts to Listen to Right Now
Atlantic - The 50 Best Podcasts of 2019
Apple Podcasts - Best Listens of 2019
Recognized through FEMA for Disaster Preparedness in a Narrative

TELL THEM, I AM
Awards
Adweek Producer of the Year 2019 - Misha Euceph
Best of Lists 2019
Spotify: Best of the Year
TIME: Best Podcasts of the Year So Far
Esquire: The Best Podcasts of 2019
Cosmopolitan: Best Podcasts of 2019 (So Far)
Harper's Bazaar: 10 Podcasts You Should Be Listening To in 2019
Atlantic: The 50 Best Podcasts of 2019

We worked across our platforms to bring ambitious editorial projects to our audience:

🌟 For the 25th anniversary of Prop 187 – the ballot initiative that barred undocumented immigrants from using many public services – we offered listeners and readers unique perspectives, political analysis and a chance to share their experiences.

🌟 We joined with more than 300 other media outlets worldwide for Covering Climate Now, a week-long spotlight on the climate crisis.

🌟 We partnered across the country in the Purple Project for Democracy. We’ve highlighted the U.S. Constitution and the amendments that laid out – and changed – the nation’s course.

Here are some of the awards our newsroom won this year:

🌟 The first-ever Gather Award for Engaged Journalism, Portfolio from the Online News Association.

🌟 The First Amendment Coalition’s 2019 Free Speech & Open Government Award for our leadership in helping to found a project involving 40 California newsrooms dedicated to fighting for the release of once-secret police records.

🌟 A National Murrow for environmental reporter Emily Guerin’s work on why we keep building houses in places that burn down.