Grantee Information

ID	1514
Grantee Name	WAMC-FM
City	Albany
State	NY
Licensee Type	Community

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 occured in Fiscal Year 2024. 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 2024 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.

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 overall goal of WAMC is to provide programming as varied as the human experience. Our mission is to serve the public by preparing and presenting non-profit and non-commercial educational, instructional and cultural radio and live programs that celebrate the diversity of our broadcast and live audience. Our two discrete program schedules, ever growing social media presence and Internet streams provide a unique blend of national and regional news and information, opinion and commentary, artistic, cultural, and musical programming. 29 translators and transmitters serve over 400,000 listeners in portions of seven Northeastern states. Recognizing the reality of media consolidation, the scarcity of substantive local radio news services, the dearth of opportunities for cultural venues to promote the work they do, and the fundamental necessity of having an informed citizenry, WAMC is committed not only to our cities of licensure but to the broader, regional community we serve. We have news bureaus in the Capital District (Albany, NY), the North Country (Plattsburgh, NY), the Pioneer Valley (Springfield, MA), the Berkshires (Pittsfield, MA), the Hudson Valley (Poughkeepsie, NY) and the Southern Adirondacks (Saratoga Springs, NY). In addition to our local presence on Morning Edition, we air 18 regional newscasts daily, a one hour, magazine format program at noon and half-hour regional news programs at 3:30 and 6:00 pm. During FY24, WAMC focused on more in-depth, long-form reporting to cover the presidential election and regional reaction, infrastructure projects, and the environment. One way in which WAMC determines the issues most vital to our listeners is through our annual Ascertainment Survey, which helps to guide our news coverage over the coming year. This long-standing survey examines organizational leaders' opinions on a set of pre-selected issues. We also invite listener participation on our Community Advisory Board, which reviews our programming and makes recommendations to our Board of Trustees. We offer ample opportunity for listener engagement through a 24/7 Listener Comment Line, inviting reaction to any of our programs. Comments are aired weekly, including comments that may be critical of the station. Our afternoon phone-in program, Vox Pop, sparks listener discussion on a variety of subjects, through social media as well as on-air conversation. WAMC has an extensive web presence at http://www.wamc.org, providing Internet streaming of WAMC and WAMC-HD 2. We offer a number of different podcasts as well as on-demand listening for many of our programs and we integrate our on-air and on-line communities through social media. WAMC has developed numerous media, educational, performance venue and community partnerships. Examples include Fund Drive partnerships with other local nonprofits to help raise awareness and hosting members from the U.S. State Department of International Visitor Leadership Program for radio production discussions and studio tours throughout the year. Several of our colleagues in the broadcast and print media are regular panelists or co-hosts on a number of WAMC programs. WAMC's performing arts studio, The Linda, collaborates and partners with a variety of organizations to empower and give back to the community. The Linda has nurtured relationships with organizations from all sectors, such as the City of Albany Mayor's Task Force, the Black Women's Association of Albany, and the Central Business Improvement District. Keeping WAMC's greater mission in mind, The Linda brings relevant social issues to the public through the performing arts.

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.

Collaboration and connectivity across the communities WAMC serves is of the utmost importance. WAMC works closely with other NY public media stations. In 2024 in an unprecedented partnership of four of the Capital Region's leading news organizations, WAMC partnered with the Times Union, WMHT Public Media, and WNYT NewsChannel 13 (and its My4 affiliate) to form The Upstate Debate Consortium, covering debates in the 19th, 20th and 21st congressional districts as well as the U.S. Senate race. WAMC continues to be an active partner in the New York Public News Network, providing better journalism for all New Yorkers through collaboration and information sharing. WAMC continues to air content cross-promoted with WMHT's New York Now, coordinate with WFCR to share audio of western Massachusetts newsmakers, and conducted regular interviews with WNPR in Connecticut about Connecticut politics and government. WAMC's fund Drive partnerships continued over the past year, raising awareness for other nonprofits and worthy causes. They included partnering with the The Food Pantries of the Capital District (NY), the South Community Food Pantry (MA), the Animal Protective Foundation, and the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society. WAMC continued the partnership with the New York State Museum to produce the podcast A New York Minute In History which includes offering Continuing Teacher and Leader Education (CTLE) credits for select podcast episodes. The Linda hosted its

first ever indoor community marketplace in November featuring over twenty vendors with free admission and parking, underscoring the commitment of WAMC to increase in-person engagement from the culturally diverse neighborhoods surrounding WAMC and The Linda.

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.

The impact of our initiatives can be seen in the unprecedented success of our fund-raising, the measurable success of our Fund Drive partnerships, the scores of awards we have received, and the growth in our online community as evidenced by increases across the board in page views, visitors to live audio and video streams, Twitter and Facebook followers, online contributions, and users of our mobile applications. Anecdotal evidence also comes from specific feedback from listeners, both throughout the year via their online e-mails and comments, and during our on-air fund-raising campaigns when they are invited to comment on our programming. Awards: Massachusetts Broadcasters Association - 2024 WAMC has won 3 Massachusetts Broadcasters Association “Soundbites” Awards First Place Award for Spot News Story: “It was just survival:” Miss Hall’s alumnae describe a decades-old campus culture of open student-faculty relationships, fear, and repression in wake of emerging sex scandal. Merit Award for Sports Feature: New challenge for Will Brown, Golden Knights in return to The College of Saint Rose. Merit Award for Feature Story: It’s all downhill: Montague Soapbox Races return to Turners Falls in Massachusetts. New York State Broadcasters Association - 2024 WAMC was honored with two Excellence In Broadcasting awards for Outstanding Election Coverage: Election Night 2023 and Outstanding Podcast: A New York Minute In History. Regional Edward R. Murrow Award - 2024 WAMC received two Regional Edward R. Murrow Awards. The first award is for Breaking News Coverage, for WAMC’s reporting on the 2023 floods that devastated Northeast communities in New York, Vermont, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. The second award is for News Documentary for a piece that originally aired on Lucas Willard’s syndicated program “The Best of Our Knowledge.” The special feature about a high school steel drum band that began in the 1970s is called “The Story of 'Goin' Places' and the New York Novelty that Traveled the World.” In FY24 the annual Fund Drive partnerships allowed participating community partner agency staff to sit in on live pitches and inform listeners of their missions, their community impact and how their services can be accessed by those in need. The feedback WAMC received was that the marketing opportunities were unmatched and that they were grateful for the opportunity to reach WAMC’s listeners who support the station so generously. Several station members commented that they “wait for the community food bank partnership matches” to make their fund drive pledges because it feels like a win-win to support their station and those in the community who are in need.

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 2024, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2025. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

WAMC’s daily, locally produced programming regularly covers issues of relevance to minority groups including people of color, women, children, and people with disabilities. Our subject-specific public affairs programs which are distributed nationally to other public radio stations free-of-charge also address minority and diverse audience needs. 51% is dedicated to women’s viewpoints, and The Academic Minute covers a wide array of subjects to help us better understand the world around us through academic research. We constantly check various sites and emails for new shows that address the needs of a wide range of people. In 2024 we added From The Top, a show celebrating young classically-trained musicians. We also air Open To Debate, a debate show that features two people from various backgrounds and varying opinions. We launch an ascertainment survey every February for feedback regarding programming: what types of programs listeners want to hear, what topics are important to them, etc. Our social media channels, emails and phones are always open and available for those pitching show ideas and voicing their opinions. We plan on adding more diverse programs in general, given they are available, and, if produced in house, we can secure the resources required to do so.

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?

Since the bulk of WAMC's CPB community service grant is used to purchase national programming, any decrease in the amount of that grant would either necessitate our seeking other funding to purchase such programming or would result in our cutting back in the carriage of national programming. Without CPB funding, WAMC would have to redirect funds used for infrastructure, community conversations, educational programming, and local journalism.

Comments

Question	Comment

No Comments for this section