

Minnesota Public Radio  
Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) – Station Activity Survey: Local  
Content Report  
Fiscal Year 2023  
CPB Grantee Name: KSJN-FM | ID 1466

**FY23 Q1. 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.**

Minnesota Public Radio (MPR) serves as a statewide convener by actively engaging, and informing citizens, fostering lifelong learning, broadening perspectives, and strengthening communities. With a steadfast "local-first" focus, MPR has expanded the knowledge, information, and access to the news, music, arts, and cultural heritage for all Minnesotans during fiscal year 2023.

Positioned to authentically convey the stories of Minnesota, MPR has been dedicated since its founding to serving the public. Delivering a service that informs and inspires while facilitating connections within Minnesota is an essential aspect of MPR’s vision, service, and purpose.

With a broadcast signal that reaches 95 percent of the state, MPR captures nearly one million weekly listeners across its regional services—MPR News, YourClassical MPR, and The Current. The introduction of new talent and content along with a physical presence in numerous communities has propelled MPR beyond geographical. MPR plays a pivotal role in providing essential regional news and is a vital source of information for many communities.

Embracing the need for and importance of virtual accessibility, MPR has made digital transformation a central focus and is creating multi-platform content. This strategic shift has resulted in significant increases in digital engagement, social media interactions, and virtual event attendance, making MPR more accessible to Minnesotans.

MPR's unwavering commitment to public service continues to enhance, magnify, and accelerate the production and delivery of indispensable content and experiences. Looking ahead, MPR seeks to connect people and their communities, ensuring that everyone feels seen and heard in the evolving landscape of media and connectivity.

The following examples illustrate how MPR addressed community issues, needs, and interests through its three services—MPR News, YourClassical MPR, and The Current.

**MPR News:**

- The MPR News Arts team highlighted more than 100 arts and culture stories. Weekly programs dedicated to showcasing the richness of creativity in Minnesota showcase this comprehensive exploration of artistic endeavors.
  - [Art Hounds](#): Minnesotans shared highlights of community art events taking place throughout the state.
  - [Art Briefs](#): A guide to the dynamic and constantly evolving art scene in Minnesota.
  - [Ask a Bookseller](#): Connected with booksellers nationwide to discover their recommended reads.
  - [Cube Critics](#): Engaged in discussions about noteworthy movies and TV programs.
- [The Future of Us](#) was a series by MPR News that aimed to address the question, 'How have the past three years changed us?' Amidst a pandemic, an internationally recognized police murder, and a city in turmoil, MPR News presented a series of stories that mirrored the sentiments and responses of Minnesotans. Stories included:
  - [“How the Pandemic has and hasn’t changed the ‘Land of 20,000 Nonprofits’”](#) discussed the transformation of philanthropy in Minnesota and how foundations are giving money to state-wide nonprofits after the pandemic.
  - [“The pandemic brought Americans outdoors but racial barriers remain”](#) delved into the juxtaposition of the pandemic and the murder of George Floyd, revealing a surge in interest in outdoor recreation among people of color. It also explored the complex interplay of systemic racism within the realm of nature.
  - [“What’s next for education in Minnesota?”](#) reflected on what way the pandemic changed how schools educate students and how the murder of George Floyd had institutions examining their Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policies.
  - [“Applauded during the pandemic, now nurses want to be heard”](#), reported that as COVID cases decreased, the vacancies of hospital staffing rose which resulted in nurses advocating for better safety in the workplace.
- Host Cathy Wurzer of [Morning Edition](#) and [Minnesota Now](#) was inducted into the Minnesota Broadcasting Hall of Fame, the first woman from MPR News to receive the award. This recognition was a true testament to hard work, excellence in journalism, and the ability to connect Minnesotans to not only the news of the day but also to their concerns, interests, and community.
- In a record-breaking winter of cold and snow, MPR News took a fun approach to share a variety of winter pastime activities throughout the state. Some examples of stories included in the series [Winter Play](#) were:
  - Rochester reporter Catharine Richert spent time [dogsledding in Southern Minnesota](#).
  - Bemidji reporter Mathew Holding Eagle III went kite skiing across a frozen lake in [Let’s go ride a kite](#).
  - Worthington reporter Hannah Yang learned about ice fishing in [family tradition hook, line, and sinker](#).

- Duluth reporter Dan Kraker, ascended a challenging [\*Ice Climb on the North Shore\*](#) by Lake Superior.

### **YourClassical MPR (YCMPR):**

- YCMPR created digital features comprised of narratives centered around classical and diverse musical experiences in Minnesota. Notable features included [\*Northern Lights Music Festival bring classical music to the Iron Range for 20 years\*](#) and [\*Known Minneapolis choir director leads a musical quest for community healing\*](#). Notably, 38 percent of the featured content was from Greater Minnesota and 46 percent highlighted diverse artists.
- The unveiling of the revamped [YourClassical MPR](#) website was a significant milestone in MPR's continuous digital transformation initiative. The updated YourClassical site has evolved into a community-supported streaming platform with the goal of making classical music accessible, enjoyable, and engaging for all. Featuring a user-friendly interface and extensive collection of classical music, this platform simplifies the discovery, listening, and appreciation of various genres within classical music. It was designed to elevate user experience and cater to diverse preferences by offering:
  - Enhanced streaming capabilities offering playback, audio quality, and faster loading times.
  - 'For You' section personalizes recommendations tailored to users' listening habits and preferences.
  - Introduction of options for users to 'save' their favorite albums and composers.
  - Engaging and interactive features to test music-related knowledge to understand users' preferences to provide tailored recommendations for streams, articles, and programs.
- YCMPR is committed to promoting accessibility to music education. The program [Class Notes](#) launched a new website. This platform consolidated years of Class Notes content, comprised of over 100 lesson plans, into a user-friendly format tailored for both teachers and parents.
- Through programs like [Weekend Picks](#) with John Birge and [Project DJ](#), YourClassical MPR offered increased exposure and a deeper understanding of classical musicians and performance groups in Minnesota through online features and on-air broadcast discussions. In fiscal year 2023, twenty Project DJs, aged 14 to 24 shared their background and passion for music, introduced pieces from the playlist, and highlighted their favorite compositions.

### **The Current:**

- [Live from the Current Studio](#) presented music enthusiasts with the chance to experience full concerts and exclusive interviews with musicians. This program offered an intimate and up-close glimpse into the world of international, national, and regional artists, providing a unique opportunity for audiences to connect with their favorite musicians on a variety of digital platforms.

- [Discover Music](#) showcased the best in new and groundbreaking music through features like [Song of the Day](#), [Albums of the Week](#), [The Scouting Report](#), [March Music Madness](#), the Top 89, and carefully curated playlists. Additionally, [The Gig List](#) and Current [Happy Hours](#) kept audiences informed and engaged with live music events.
- Highlighted the vibrant world of Minnesota’s musical heritage with the guide, [Where to find Minnesota’s iconic music mural and public art](#), provided audiences with the unique opportunity to experience larger-than-life tributes.
- The [Emerging Artist Showcase](#) played a pivotal role in enabling and empowering musicians in the early stages of their careers. This event provided them with the opportunity to cultivate their craft and build a portfolio of recorded works to advance their artistic career. Hosted by Duluth Local show host Brittany Lind, along with two community curators, this inaugural showcase introduced the music of [Laura Hugo](#) (Dine Navajo) and the [Oshkii Giizhik Singers](#) (Fond du Lac Anishinaabe). Live footage from the concert can be found on The Current’s YouTube channel.

### **Additional Examples:**

- Committed to addressing the evolving climate and environment, MPR and American Public Media (APM) took a leading role in delivering news, special series, and podcasts. Utilizing various platforms, such as Marketplace’s podcast “[How We Survive](#)” and MPR News series “[Getting to Green](#)”, thousands of individuals were reached with up-to-date and pertinent information.
- Minnesotans love their state fair and MPR embraced the festive atmosphere with a [camp-themed](#) extravaganza. Over 12 days, MPR was dedicated to delivering captivating live music programming, conducted live broadcasts, registered new members, and engaged with thousands of fairgoers. All three MPR services – MPR News, The Current, and YourClassical MPR – actively participated and daily updates were shared across MPR’s social media platforms.

**FY23 Q2. 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.**

Minnesota Public Radio (MPR) maintained strong and long-term partnerships with a diverse array of media companies, community radio stations, and a range of education, civic, arts, and cultural organizations. In the fiscal year 2023, collaborations with influential entities such as the Star Tribune (daily newspaper), TPT (Twin Cities PBS), KARE-11 News (NBC affiliate), and Sahan Journal (nonprofit media focused on Minnesota immigrants/communities of color) enhanced MPR's capacity to deliver comprehensive content across the entire state.

By leveraging statewide resources through alliances with Low Power FM and Community Radio stations, as well as various educational and cultural organizations, MPR actively contributed to strengthening the public media ecosystem, ensuring its vitality for both present and future audiences.

Strategically established regional hubs in Bemidji, Duluth, Moorhead, Rochester, St. Paul, St. Cloud, and Worthington allowed MPR to work closely with regional organizations and allies to address local challenges and opportunities. This approach ensured that MPR remained deeply engaged with the diverse needs of different communities. Collaborative efforts resulted in the delivery of reliable news, informative content, captivating music, and enriching cultural services to a broad audience across the state.

The work of listening and engaging with people around the state is a company priority, with MPR's partnerships playing a pivotal role in facilitating connection, information, and resources. By collectively working to inform, include, and inspire, MPR is a catalyst for building more vibrant and equitable communities.

The commitment to serve and collaborate with communities remains at the forefront of MPR's mission and its work to foster understanding among diverse audiences. The following are examples of collaborations addressed by MPR through its three services — MPR News, YourClassical MPR, and The Current.

### **Partnerships with Public Media Outlets:**

- [Next Challenge for Media & Journalism](#) is a national start-up competition and is a key initiative of the Glen Nelson Center at American Public Media Group. In collaboration with prominent organizations AT&T, Knight Foundation, Thomson Reuters, UNMET, and YouTube, this initiative partnered with MPR as well as public media partners around the country including WAMU, KERA, WHY, and SCPR/LAist. This competition provided opportunities for media startups to refine their pitch, strengthen their business

plan, and establish connections with influential media mentors and potential investors and resulted in 8 startups winning an award and cash prize.

- [MPR Archives](#) contributed 176 MPR selections to the American Archive of Public Broadcasting, expanding access for researchers globally. The items showcased MPR News content that focused on Minnesota's BIPOC communities including East African Minnesotans, Asian Americans, Latino and Hispanic, Black, and Indigenous Minnesotans. These selections serve as a resource of historical content for MPR's news, information, and music services.

### **Partnerships with Community Nonprofits, Educational Institutions/Teachers and Parents, Business and Government:**

#### **MPR News Partnerships:**

- MPR News collaborated with ThreeSixty Journalism at the University of St. Thomas, MIGIZI (Twin Cities organization supporting native youth), and KRSM-FM (a low-power, inner-city neighborhood station) to host Radio Camp. Twelve students of color received mentorship from MPR Newsroom staff and partners to gain valuable skills in writing and interviewing for radio content. Student [projects](#) involved interviews with Angelique EagleWoman (legal scholar and Chief Justice on the Sisseton-Wahpeton Supreme Court), Ramona Kitto Stately (Santee Sioux Dakota Nation member), Reuben Kitto Stately (musician), and Marlena Myles (Spirit Lake Dakota /Mohegan /Muscogee artist).
- Available on the Sahan Journal website, MPR News curated and presented nearly 150 stories on the news, democracy, arts, and culture of BIPOC communities across the state. They included the MPR News series, [ChangeMakers](#), along with some feature stories translated into Spanish, and voter guides in Somali, Hmong, and Spanish. Notably, in partnership, they organized a community conversation, '[How can we protect mosques in Minnesota?](#)' aimed at bridging the Muslim community and law enforcement, that share contentious history, to engage in dialogue. This collaboration ensured a broader reach and was live streamed on the MPR News YouTube channel for wider accessibility.
- Through collaborations with an educational institution and businesses, MPR News successfully extended the reach of two renowned programs across the state. In an inaugural effort, [Talking Volumes](#) events took place in two locations outside the metro area, gathering over 400 in-person attendees for these events held in Rochester and Duluth. MPR News' program, [Appetites](#), showcased stories from four restaurants across the state, providing them with increased visibility. These events were not only experienced in person in Bemidji, Duluth, St. Joseph, and Rochester but were also made available on digital platforms and social media, with Facebook posts reaching over 50,000 individuals.

## **YourClassical MPR (YCMPR) Partnerships:**

- YourClassical MPR collaborated with thirteen Minnesota musicians and ensembles, recording their performances, often multiple times, to enhance the presence of classical music across the state. Several of these partnerships with YCMPR, such as those with the Minnesota Orchestra, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, and the Minnesota Beethoven Festival in Winona, have been long-standing partnerships. Weekly broadcasts of regionally recorded, produced, and live performances engaged thousands of listeners during the concert season.
  - YCMPR collaborated with the Schubert Club to commemorate its [140 years of music-making in Minnesota](#). In tribute to one of the nation's most esteemed music organizations, YCMPR dedicated airtime to showcase some of the Club's most memorable performances to honor the rich history and enduring impact of the Schubert Club.
- In partnership with the Walker Art Center, YCMPR curated a [playlist](#) designed to complement and enhance the experiences of viewing 10 pieces within the Walker Sculpture Garden. This collaborative effort aimed not only to showcase the interconnectedness of different art forms but offered a unique experience of exploring the intersection of music and sculpture.
- The [Class Notes](#) team partnered with 14 ensembles representing 41 musicians across the state, bringing performances and free music curricula to 195 schools. This collaboration with local musicians not only ensured equitable and fair compensation but also artistic freedom and professional development support. This program successfully reached new audiences and enriched the musical experience for students and teachers. This partnership exemplified the commitment to foster music education by creating a platform for artistic expression, learning, and mutual enrichment.

## **The Current Partnerships:**

- After a two-year hiatus, the Current's annual free event, [Rock the Cradle](#), returned for two events this fiscal year and reached more than 13,000 people of all ages. In collaboration with other arts organizations, such as the Minneapolis Institute of Art, The Children's Theater Company, MacPhail Center for Music, Bell Museum, and Walker West Music Academy, the events featured live music and enriching art and cultural experiences for children and adults alike.
- In partnership with the Minnesota Music Coalition, the Caravan du Nord tour presented six shows across the state. In addition to captivating performances, local musicians were offered the invaluable opportunity to participate in networking events and community workshops. These sessions facilitated meaningful connections with the touring acts and offered a platform to foster collaborations, broaden local networks, and strengthen bonds within the music community.
- To engage a younger and more diverse audience in public media, The Urban Alternative Project, supported by CPB, centered its focus on showcasing music from emerging



independent local hip-hop and R&B artists. This initiative, a partnership between the Current, KMOJ, and KMOH's HD2 station, the ICE, sought to bridge cultural gaps and share underrepresented voices.

### **Other MPR partnerships in FY23:**

- MPR has forged a meaningful partnership with 'We Are Still Here MN' over the past few years. This collaboration spans various projects, including Community Engagement and Media Roundtables, Radio Camp, and *In Focus*. Through this partnership, a group of 75 people including MPR Staff, local journalists, and Radio Camp participants attended a tailored site tour of historical and contemporary significance to Minnesota Native and Indigenous people. This initiative was part of ongoing efforts to enhance the understanding and authentically reflect Native and Indigenous communities.
- The [Little Moments Count Radio Podcast](#) was collaboratively produced and distributed in partnership with community radio partners Power Perspectives KRSM, KMOJ, Native Roots Radio, and Frogtown Community Radio WFNU. Engaging hosts from these stations conducted insightful conversations with experts, educators, and community leaders all aimed at raising awareness about the profound impact parents, caregivers, and members can have on the lives of young children. With 20 episodes available, this podcast served as a valuable resource, provided meaningful insights, and fostered a deeper understanding of the role adults play in shaping the early experiences of young children.
- "Giving back" is a concept that strongly resonates with many Minnesotans. During the fiscal year 2023 member drives, MPR collaborated with organizations such as the Future Forest Fund, Second Harvest Heartland, Alight, Wilderness Inquiry, and the Ain Dah Yung Center, to amplify their impact and allowed MPR members to "give back" by paying it forward.
- Beyond the Twin Cities metro, MPR sponsored events by collaborating with community organizations, many of which were small, nonprofit, and independent, and provided them an opportunity to broaden their impact. By partnering with 46 statewide organizations and events throughout the state, MPR successfully connected its audiences to these dynamic initiatives. Examples include the Lakes Area Music Festival, Red Lakes Foods, Loon Opera, Family Rise Together, Plains Art Museum, Lakes Agassize Wind Symphony, Rochester Pride, and Juneteenth.



**FY22Q3. 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.**

As a leader in public media, MPR remains dedicated to producing essential content and experiences that strengthen the connections among diverse audiences. In fiscal year 2023, this commitment included raising awareness, facilitating learning, and enhancing understanding of vital issues. By cultivating partnerships within the state, MPR continues to be a trusted source of information and engagement.

MPR's robust online presence, which reached an average of 834,000 monthly screen views on the MPR Radio app and an average of 1.27 million monthly screen views across all the MPR mobile apps, highlighted the commitment to meeting audiences where they are. Prioritizing outreach to a younger demographic, MPR focused on a seamless digital transition and adaptability to evolving platforms, ensuring accessibility and shareability. Initiatives like [Carbon Sound](#) exemplified MPR's commitment to amplifying diverse and younger voices. Over the past year, these efforts have contributed to serving new audiences, uplifting regional artists, and engaging with community members and partners.

The support from MPR listeners reflected their belief that public media can truly change lives and strengthen the community. One listener aptly describes MPR as an *“oasis of truth and beauty in an increasingly uncertain world. My life and the Minnesota quality of life would be diminished without MPR.”*

The following are examples of MPR's impact on its communities through its three services — MPR News, YourClassical MPR, and The Current.

### **MPR News:**

- MPR News [North Star Journey](#) has had a profound impact on reflecting the diverse voices within the state. Across its 56 stories, it amplified the voices of individuals whose narratives are frequently overlooked, reaching thousands through various channels and platforms.
  - With over 200,000 web views, the most popular video story, [Minnesota Names reveals our connections, struggles for inclusion](#) reached 1,191 YouTube views, 8,900 Facebook views, and 13,435 Instagram views.
  - Audiences spent over 4,000 hours engaged on the web, consuming North Star Journey stories.

- [Art Hounds](#) facilitated weekly arts and culture connections to the everyday listener. Using the voices of Minnesotans around the state, 123 artists and performances were highlighted and represented from 29 cities in Greater Minnesota. The impact of this program is profound. In a survey sent to the featured artists and organizations, 95 percent indicated that being showcased increased awareness of their art, and 60 percent noted that it led to new artistic opportunities.
- [MPR News](#) is available on a variety of platforms, from social media to Podcasts, for listeners to broaden their perspectives and stay informed on issues. Below are examples of listener comments:
  - *“I’ve been listening to MPR for over 25 years now. Having a reliable news source is so important for our democracy. I appreciate the quality news MPR provides.”*
  - *“In the world of pressures from varying news cycles, undependable information, bandwagons, and harsh viewpoints, I can count on MPR. The station has been with me through high school, college, and for decades after. The news quality and style have been unwavering all this time, and this allows me to form my own viewpoint, which has built a trust in me.”*
  - *“I am proud to support thoughtful reporting and current events coverage produced in the public interest and pleased to hear increasing diversity in the on-air personnel and stories told.”*

### **YourClassical MPR (YCMPR):**

- [Class Notes](#) had a remarkable year with its artists-in-schools program that collaborated with Minnesota musicians to deliver performances and curricula to K-12 schools. Schools were eager to have in-person experiences again, which led to a substantial increase in the number of students served.
  - Concerts were extended to 195 schools, a significant rise from 94 in the previous year.
  - A total of 56,140 students attended in-person concerts, reflecting a 42 percent increase compared to previous years.
  - Reached schools in 46 counties up from 30 counties last year.
  - Nearly 40 percent of Class Notes students lived near or below the poverty line.
  - The supplementary online resources provided by Class Notes received over 66,000 page views and 149,000 video views, enhancing the educational impact beyond the in-person events.
- [YCMPR](#) successfully engaged audiences across both broadcast and digital channels, generating over 3 million download requests and nearly 5 million hours of streaming listening. Thirteen digital featured stories that highlighted Minnesota music makers garnered at least 300 page views with 75 percent of these stories surpassing the 300+ viewing mark. Choral Stream had an average of over 27,000 requests per month and amassed an impressive 500,000 video views. Listener testimonials further affirm the positive impact of the endeavors to connect with and entertain diverse audiences.

- *“I’ve found listening to classical music going to and from work helped me get ready for the day and helps me decompress my mind on the drive home. There’s an added bonus of learning about the composer or musical piece.”*
- *“I appreciate the US classical composers featured, especially the recently discovered female composers of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Also, the young artists featured.”*
- *“I live in Indianapolis, and we don’t have an all-day, all classical station. I appreciate being able to access YourClassical MPR on my computer. I especially enjoy Lynne Warfel’s “Saturday Cinema” but am always able to find good listening on this station.”*
- With a combined tenure of over 100 years, four YourClassical Hosts celebrated milestones this year. Notably, John Birge and Julie Amacher reached 25 years of service, along with Mindy Ratner’s impressive four decades of commitment. In a league of his own, Pipedreams host Michael Barone celebrated a remarkable 50 years, leaving a profound impact on classical music broadcasting. These milestones not only signified the longevity of the tenure of these hosts but also underscored their deep commitment and expertise.
  - *“I listen to YourClassical MPR every day. I appreciate all the wonderful music and on-air hosts – especially Mindy, Melissa, Julie, Steve, Jeff, Lynne, and John Birge. Please keep the music flowing.”*

### **The Current:**

- [Carbon Sound](#) experienced an exceptional year, commemorating the foundational influence of Black music and culture across various genres, and pioneered a new format in public radio dedicated to serving underserved young BIPOC audiences:
  - Engaged with more than 20 BIPOC freelance content creators and produced more than 120 editorial pieces that highlighted Black or BIPOC artists, with 25 percent being local talent.
  - Received over 5,000 livestream requests per month, showcasing the strong demand for this content.
  - Recorded, produced, and distributed the music of four local Black artists, resulting in an impressive 15,000 YouTube views per month.
  - Attracted a social media audience where 77 percent of users are 34 or younger.
  - Featured 30 percent of its music from Minnesota artists, fostering local representation.
  - Developed a comprehensive music library with over 5,000 songs from artists around the globe.
- In an initiative to preserve content from The Current, hundreds of hours were spent going through raw archival footage featuring local artists. This effort resulted in the creation of 70 videos showcasing Minnesota musicians and various related topics. Additionally, 277 digital articles were published that covered everything from concerts and artist profiles to everyday stories that highlighted Minnesota's vibrant music culture. This [extensive](#)

[collection](#) of content is now publicly available, contributing to the accessibility and appreciation of Minnesota's rich musical heritage.

- [The Current](#) played an essential role in elevating the visibility of Minnesota-based artists. Through a variety of platforms, performances, and interviews, a dynamic and easily accessible avenue was created for audiences to engage with the rich and diverse Minnesota music scene. With a commitment to local music, The Current achieved the following:
  - Showcased over 900 Minnesota artists, resulting in more than 15,000 spins for nearly 1,000 hours of broadcast music.
  - Garnered an additional 150,000 plays on The Current's streaming platforms.
  - Ensured the inclusion of at least one local song every hour, every day.
  - The Duluth Local Show included up to 15 local artists and introduced one new release per week.
  - The Current Song of the Day featured over 50 Minnesota artists and attracted an average of 91,000 downloads per month.
  - Performances and interviews were shared with audiences through The Current's digital channels, featuring platforms such as their YouTube channel, which has now exceeded 400,000 subscribers.
- For almost two decades, The Current has fostered a music connection between Minnesota and audiences far beyond, with music on-air, online, and in-person events. Serving as a trusted guide for music enthusiasts, The Current remains a reliable go-to source for discovery, engagement, and the celebration of the transformative power of music.

Listener testimonials:

  - *"The Current makes me mildly pretentious; I can say stuff like 'I knew LIZZO before she was famous. I also love that I can play it in my classroom and expose my middle school students to all different types of music.'"*
  - *"The Current is part of my everyday routine. I am so glad I can stream it here in Des Moines."*
  - *"Just got home two weeks ago with our newborn baby, The Current has been playing 24/7 and is the soundtrack of our new life together. So thankful to have this station all the way up in Ely, MN!"*
  - *"I love the musical variety and the friendly on-air voices. I've never been to Minnesota but The Current is the soundtrack of my workday here in Canada, so I feel like I'd be welcome if I ever make it down there."*

### **Additional Examples:**

- The programming, stories, and news preserved and archived by MPR are essential to telling Minnesotans' stories and creating an authentic portrayal of Minnesota for future generations. [MPR Archive](#) preserved 37,471 daily broadcast audio recordings spanning the three major brands: MPR News, The Current, and YourClassical MPR. Additionally, various other archival projects were undertaken, contributing to the comprehensive preservation of Minnesota's cultural and historical legacy:

- Updated, corrected, and completed around 8,000 catalog records in the Archive’s internal content management system that allowed MPR staff internally to find, access, and use archival recordings in their research, reporting, and programming.
- Hundreds of hours were spent digitizing and migrating at-risk analog audio and digital content, which resulted in around 300 digitized audio pieces. Of note this year was the digitization and processing of the American Indian Movement analog tape recordings (collection spans 1972 – 2023).
- The MPR Archive Portal grew substantially with the addition and updating of 947 audio pieces to the website which are now available to the public.
- New MPR Archive Collections in fiscal year 2023 include:
  - [Wait 10 Minutes](#)
  - [Hispanic heritage of 10,000 Lakes](#)
  - [Farming: Minnesota’s agricultural landscape](#)
  - [LGBTQ+ Life in Minnesota](#)
  - [Labor In Minnesota](#)
- Listener support has been instrumental in MPR’s mission of fostering community connections with reliable and accurate reporting on statewide news, music, and entertainment. Listener testimonials:
  - *“MPR is all I listen to in the car, either the news to help me understand better what’s happening in the world or classical when I need to relax and escape. Saturday programs are the best for long drives.*
  - *“I spend very little on outside entertainment. MPR gives me entertainment anytime I want. I appreciate MPR.”*
  - *“MPR is my source for balanced and thoughtful information. MPR is part of what makes Minnesota wonderful.”*
  - *“I look to MPR for reliable news, from local to international, as well as informative discussions and entertaining cultural programming.”*

*Even those who live in other countries share their admiration for MPR:*

  - *“We listen to MPR so often I actually feel like an honorary Minnesotan. I have a much better grasp on degrees Fahrenheit, I have lived the State Fair experience vicariously through your broadcasts, and I often sit and listen to the Minnesota Orchestra. I could go on, but we love, love, love MPR! A day is not a day without it. Thanks for being a constant companion.”*

**FY23 Q4. 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 the Fiscal Year 2023, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during the Fiscal Year 2024. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.**

Minnesota Public Radio (MPR) is committed to fostering diversity including race, ethnicity, gender identity, beliefs, abilities, politics, and age demographics. In the fiscal year 2023, MPR provided platforms that amplified voices central to various issues to mirror the diversity of Minnesota residents and expanded its coverage of communities of color.

MPR firmly believes that embracing diverse perspectives enhances a shared understanding and strengthens connections within communities. Reinforcing the idea that every individual plays a pivotal role in shaping a more inclusive and vibrant future is reflected in the high-quality programming that MPR consistently delivers.

In fiscal year 2024, MPR is launching The Native News project, led by two Indigenous journalists with longstanding contributions to MPR. This initiative aims to cover and amplify stories significant to Native American communities, fostering cultural understanding and collaborations to advance these important conversations and voices.

MPR's future in public media depends on respecting and incorporating both its core historical audience and reaching out to a broader, more diverse public. In a commitment to effectively serving the community, MPR endeavors to build understanding and connections within and between communities. By establishing trust with audiences through a range of diverse stories and services, MPR can maintain a culture of empathy, appreciation, and celebration of the diverse narratives that constitute the rich mosaic of Minnesota.

The following are examples of how the needs of minorities and other diverse audiences were addressed by MPR through its three services — MPR News, YourClassical MPR, and The Current.

### **MPR News**

- MPR News regularly covered news stories focused on communities of color and/or stories that meet the needs of minority and other diverse audiences, including:
  - Visual Journalist Ben Hovland shed light on [Creating a space safe for Black bodies on bikes](#) and how biking represents the ultimate expression of freedom for riders of all ages.
  - The award-winning story, [Return of rare Ojibwe horse lifts spirits — but still needs help](#), by Duluth reporter Dan Kraker, delved into how the Ojibwe people are rekindling their connection with horses.



- In [\*Radio Program reaches out to Latinos living 'between worlds,'\*](#) reporter Vicki Adame documented the initiatives undertaken by Radio Jornalera Minnesota providing valuable information to individuals, particularly immigrants, navigating life in the space between cultures.
- As a guest host on Minnesota Now, Rochester reporter Catharine Richert, spoke with Dr. Brendesha Tynes about [\*Addressing the damaging impact of digital media on Black adolescents\*](#) and the way it is related to mental health.
- In [\*Young witness to George Floyd's murder tells her story of sorrow and growth,\*](#) reporter Jon Collins captured Judeah Reynold's poignant documentation of the profound impact of Floyd's murder on her life and her inspiring journey towards healing and growth.
- Reporter Mark Zdechlik's story [\*Hmong farmers celebrate 'huge milestone' of buying 155 acres in Dakota County\*](#) featured the vital role by these farmers in Minnesota's local food system and how this secured a lasting foundation for their operations.
- In [\*New generation of Hmong dancers prep for New Year celebration in SW Minnesota,\*](#) Worthington reporter Hannah Yang highlighted the significance of providing Hmong youth the opportunity to understand and cherish their culture.
- In the article, [\*'I got myself back,' White Earth project strengthen individuals to build community,\*](#) Moorhead reporter Dan Gunderson emphasized and shed light on the significance of culture within the Indigenous Parent Leadership Initiative class conducted by the White Earth-based organization, Indigenous Visioning, an effort that was supported by state, regional, and Native organizations.
- Reporter Mathew Holding Eagle III brought attention to marches that happened in [\*Minneapolis, Bemidji rallies to advocate for missing, murdered Indigenous people\*](#) to highlight the awareness of the crimes affecting Indigenous communities.
- Minnesota Now host Cathy Wurzer engaged in a conversation with Muna Scekomar on [\*'Reconnecting with the human,' Minnesota podcast tackles humanity, womanhood, and Islam,\*](#) a conversation that has resonated with an international audience.
- In a North Star Journey feature, Collegeville reporter Kirstie Marohn shared the joy and sense of connection fostered by the Apollo Majorettes, particularly among BIPOC students in [\*'They all matter:' St. Cloud high school dance team builds connections.\*](#)
- In an in-depth story, [\*How mental health programs focused on culture identity are helping Minnesota students,\*](#) education reporter, Elizabeth Shockman delved into how programs that focused on cultural identity contributed to the healing process for students and families affected by the challenges of Covid.
- Reporter Alex V. Cipolle story, [\*'It feels awesome:' Heather Boyd makes history as first woman and first Anishinaabe to lead Grand Portage National Monument\*](#) highlighted this groundbreaking appointment.
- MPR's Native News reporter, Melissa Olson covered the [\*Two-spirit powwow celebrates Indigenous spiritual and gender identity\*](#) in recognition and honor of the two-spirit theater artists and community.



- MPR News host Angela Davis led a conversation with two Minnesotans of color and children's book authors, Thuba Nguyen and Anthony Walsh, on [\*getting and giving a sense of belonging\*](#).
- [ChangeMakers](#) was a compelling series by MPR News that highlighted individuals from diverse and often underrepresented backgrounds who are actively shaping their communities. In June 2022, during Pride Month, the series featured 13 transgender and nonbinary Minnesotans. This series provided a platform to acknowledge their achievements and shed light on their collective impact in challenging stereotypes to foster inclusivity within the state.
- In a commitment to accessibility and inclusivity of election information, MPR News created comprehensive [voter guides](#) for key statewide elections translated into Spanish, Somali, and Hmong. The translated guides have cultivated a more inclusive and participatory democratic environment by providing essential information, thereby promoting a sense of engagement and active participation in the electoral process.
- MPR News is dedicated to sharing diverse and inclusive stories from across Minnesota, aligning narratives with the communities served. In collaboration with APM Research Lab, a formal source diversity tracking system produced a strong baseline report, [MPR News Source Diversity Report](#). This will set the stage on integrating discussions about sourcing into the initial stage of newsgathering practices, cultivating meaningful relationships with audiences, and enhancing the diversity of sources. It will also aid in the ongoing need for diversity and equity in news coverage and foster a more representative and responsible journalism.

### **YourClassical MPR (YCMPR)**

- [Rhapsody in Black](#) is a weekly program that offered an exploration of classical music that is aesthetically and uncompromisingly Black. Hosted by Vernon Neal, the show took a bold approach by amplifying the contributions, stories, and perspectives of Black musicians. With a commitment to breaking barriers and expanding the narrative, it not only showcased Black excellence in classical music but also created an inclusive and vibrant space for listeners to appreciate the diversity within this traditionally underrepresented space.
- In a successful collaboration, YCMPR and [29:11 International Exchange](#), a choir consisting of young singers and musicians from South Africa and the Democratic Republic of Congo now based in Minnesota, beautifully showcased the rich tapestry of African musical heritage. This collaborative effort resulted in the recording of eight videos captivating traditional African songs, unique arrangements, and original compositions inspired by rich cultural backgrounds. These videos not only celebrated diverse musical traditions but garnered widespread acclaim, accumulating over half a million Facebook views.
- YourClassical MPR presented music from diverse sources. In addition to the regular programming, streaming channels and resources are available on the website, app, and

listening platforms. To celebrate the diversity of listeners and performers, these programs were produced and broadcast in FY23:

- [Black History Month](#) included special broadcasts, YourClassical discoveries, 10 Days of Black Artists Making History Today, Pipedreams, and digital content.
- [Women's History Month](#) included special broadcasts, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra's performance by women composers, Performance Today Woman of the Year, Distinguished Rebels, and digital content.
- [Asia and Pacific Islander composers](#) highlighted six composers recognized for integrating the traditional sounds of their respective homelands with Western classical styles.

## **The Current**

- The Current curated and presented the [Emerging Artists Showcase](#) at Duluth's Sacred Heart Music Center. This intimate event focused on Indigenous artists with representation from the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, the Boise Fort Band of Chippewa, and the Red Lake Nation. Central to this showcase was Native women sharing their narratives through music, song, and stories. This event was recorded to facilitate the sharing of its rich content well beyond the event date, ensuring these powerful voices and stories resonate.
- Within its first year, [Carbon Sound](#) won a 2023 Anthem Award in the category of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: podcast and audio category. This award recognized voices that ignited transformative global change and paid homage to individuals and entities dedicated to inspiring action within their communities. This not only recognized Carbon's Sound contributions within the community but reinforced the work of celebrating Black music and culture.
- Committed to fostering and recognizing diversity, the work of The Current included dedicated playlists, programs, and awards.
  - The production of 2044 hours of programming by four radio show hosts from minority, ethnic, and racial backgrounds.
  - During [Black History](#) Month, a comprehensive listing showcasing music and readings by and about Black artists was curated.
  - In observance of [Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage](#) Month, a playlist was crafted to honor and celebrate the rich cultural contributions, including those of Minnesota musicians.
  - Dedicated to amplifying underrepresented voices [the Sirens'](#) is a 24/7 DJ-curated stream committed to honoring and highlighting women's voices and music that goes beyond Women's History Month.
  - The Current celebrated [Pride weekend](#) with on-air programming, an expanded playlist highlighting LGBTQ+ artists, and active engagement at the Twin Cities Pride Festival.
  - In a commitment to diverse storytelling and programming, the Current and Carbon Sound were honored with eight Minnesota Society of Professional

## Journalists 2023 Page One Awards.

### **Additional efforts:**

- MPR President and APMG Senior Vice President, Duchesne Drew received recognition in the prestigious listing of [The Root 100](#), which highlighted the 2022 most influential Black Americans. This annual compilation featured individuals nominated by readers, with notable names on this list that included Michelle Obama, Trevor Noah, Jon Batiste, and Tyler Perry. His recognition noted Drew's efforts to "*leverage his platform to serve the community and his overall commitment to using live audio as a conduit for change.*"
- The Employee Resource Group (ERG) Speakers Series was a collaborative initiative organized by APMG/MPR's The Equalizers ERG (GLBTQIA ERG), Women's ERG, and BIPOC (Black/Indigenous/Persons of Color) ERG. These sessions were conducted in person and accessible online for all employees. The series showcased dynamic conversations with prominent leaders, both local and national, who shared insights into their origins, challenges, and accomplishments. Notable speakers included:
  - Bo Thao-Urabe and DeAnna Cummings
  - Mahad Muhammad and Roger Cummings
  - Jess Braverman and Pahoua Yang Hoffman

**FY23 Q5. 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?**

Support from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) was vital to the success of Minnesota Public Radio (MPR) in fiscal year 2023.

MPR's extensive broadcast coverage spans 95 percent of the state through its 46 stations and 41 translators and reaches nearly one million listeners weekly across its regional services—MPR News, YourClassical MPR, and The Current. The technical maintenance of this infrastructure served Minnesota's Emergency Alert System and distributed Minnesota's AMBER Alert System to statewide broadcasters.

CPB's impact extended to local communities, especially to underserved and rural areas, as MPR delivered relevant and reliable news, cultural content, and emergency information. Cultivating a more informed and engaged citizenry involved incorporating diverse voices and perspectives into MPR's content. CPB funding enabled MPR to be creative and bold in its storytelling and offered meaningful listening experiences on a broad spectrum of topics.

Moreover, CPB funding supported innovation and experimentation in media production. MPR has been at the forefront, pioneering the adoption of new technologies and formats, contributing to the evolution of the media industry. This commitment to innovation ensured that public media remains relevant and accessible in a rapidly changing media landscape. MPR's ongoing efforts in digital transformation are increasingly important to connect people in new and meaningful ways.

Looking ahead to fiscal year 2024, MPR will strengthen digital capabilities and infrastructure to remain relevant and increase effectiveness. To ensure that MPR is building a future in public media, building brands with compelling content and experiences, and establishing a high-performing culture of equity and inclusion is essential.

The impact of CPB funding is profound and wide-ranging by fostering diversity, supporting educational programming, serving local communities, and driving innovation. CPB plays a vital role in shaping a robust and inclusive media environment. Continued support is crucial for MPR to maintain its rich tapestry of public broadcasting content that benefits communities throughout Minnesota.