



2020 Station Activity Survey – Section 6. Local Content & Services Report

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.

KEXP-FM Seattle is a public radio station that serves passionate music lovers and artists by producing high-quality - and highly engaging - music discovery experiences using world class curators and a world class distribution and interaction platform. KEXP-FM is owned and operated by Friends of KEXP, an independent 501(c)3 nonprofit arts organization.

Friends of KEXP’s platform is constantly shifting and evolving to bring new opportunities for music and discovery, and includes a broadcast service, online programming, online editorial coverage, performance archives and podcasts, online video content, mobile device services, and, during normal times, in-person music engagement events and concerts at our facility at Seattle Center and throughout the Pacific Northwest. In-person engagement was cancelled in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and continues to be on hold. Artist performances since March have been done virtually and posted to KEXP’s YouTube channel and other online platforms. Through this programming, KEXP serves a broad range of content to music lovers, and gives voice to emerging Pacific Northwest artists, providing an outlet for artistic expression and an opportunity to connect with audiences and music industry professionals. This exposure can assist these artists in growing their careers and inspires ongoing creativity.

Our aim is to delight and engage music lovers from the Pacific Northwest and all over the world with quality music experiences they can’t find anywhere else. Our work inspires curiosity, creativity and connection within and among people and we believe this leads to a more creative, diverse, and bonded community. And we believe that when people are inspired by discovering music, they will engage others in music discovery.

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.

In addition to providing broadcast and online programming that bring community members together around a shared passion for music and discovery, KEXP strives to create opportunities for enrichment and personal, face-to-face interaction throughout the local area. These efforts were moved to virtual experiences with bands performing from their homes and posted digitally via Instagram and Facebook Live, and YouTube. KEXP has hosted new virtual events such as panel conversations among DJs, and KEXP Vision which showcased DJs favorite past in studio performances. KEXP has continued participation in campaigns that benefit artists and the music industry, Keep Music Live and Save Our Stages, participation with basic needs and food drives, engagement with government and educational partners, and shared fundraising efforts with other local public radio stations.

In 2020, key partnerships initiatives included:

KEXP’s Music Heals program featured three special programming days in 2020, offered in partnership with the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance and other community groups, with all-day programming dedicated to experiences with cancer, mental health and death, dying and grief. In addition to delivering on-air and online content, these programs contained in-person event activation at our facility pre-pandemic.

Working with two distinct groups of community members, KEXP participated in online fundraising concerts for the Seattle Artist Relief Fund, a grassroots effort to provide direct relief funds to artists experiencing the impact of the pandemic, with a priority on

serving artists from communities that have been historically and systemically economically disadvantaged in the Seattle Area: BIPOC artists, transgender & nonbinary artists, and disabled artists. These two community concerts – the Refill Festival and Shelterfest - were presented in partnership with local organizers and promoters.

The City of Seattle and King County have been consistent partners for KEXP. Our Executive Director formerly served as a member of the City of Seattle’s Music Commission, participating in the City of Music Initiative, an effort to raise awareness of the economic impact of music and advocate for policies and issues that affect the local music industry. KEXP’s Afternoon Show Producer and Programming Education Manager, Sharlese Metcalf, serves as a member of the Seattle Music Commission. In this role, she participates in the City initiatives boosting the music industry, including efforts to raise awareness of the economic impact of music and advocate for policies and issues that affect the local music industry, as well as providing leadership in advancing the City’s equity and inclusion agenda. As a tenant of the Seattle Center (a part of the Seattle Parks system), KEXP worked closely with the city to offer free and low-cost programming for Center visitors in 2019, including over 100 free live performances attended by over 12,000 visitors throughout the year.

KEXP continued the Youth DJs Program, an education program instructing youth in the art and technology of music curation and radio presentation. The goal of the KEXP Youth DJs program is to provide confidence skills, identify career goals, build positive thinking, learn curation, technical and programmatic knowledge and training through the art of broadcast journalism and DJing.

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.

KEXP’s community initiatives generate two kinds of measurable impact for local residents. First, there is the easily quantifiable measure of amount of dollars/goods raised for partner nonprofit service providers, and the number of people attending each event or performances. Second, KEXP measures the impact of broadcast programming through standard industry metrics, such as Nielsen and Tapscan, as well as a periodic listener impact survey, which takes into account how our programming and partnerships contribute to the community. We also receive feedback through more informal means, such as the compilation of qualitative reviews from programming participants and audiences.

KEXP created a virtual benefit series, *And To All A Good Home*, with Starbucks benefiting Mary’s Place and the No Child Sleeps Outside campaign. KEXP tracks impact on the community through a periodic listener impact survey and through standard broadcast metrics, such as Arbitron audience statistics. The last update to the listener impact survey took place in 2018. In the 2018 survey, we found that among core KEXP listeners, 81% reported that KEXP enriches their life, while 78% reported that they believe KEXP is important to the community.

Throughout the year, listeners provided feedback to DJs and other staff via email and web comment forms. Examples include:

KEXP is so much more than great music programming, it’s an active community partner that is in part the heart and soul of Seattle. KEXP sees music for it’s magic, as a healing potion, a unifying force and a celebration of life. – Mark, West Seattle

Music has always been a huge part of my life. I love discovering new music from emerging and established artists. Love the people in your organization and the work you all do to promote music. – Michael, Chicago

As we all evolve our understanding of what it means to be actively anti-racist, KEXP has been an example of how there is always room for more voices, that making space for others gives us more, not less. I have so enjoyed hearing new artists, new DJs, different sounds integrated into the regular weekday shows. Thank you for being open to change, we so dearly need it. – Jen, Fremont

I love the wide range of music that’s played; I’m always learning about new artists and new genres. But more importantly, I love KEXP’s commitment to the community and to learning and growing while diversifying their line-up. Thank you! – Anne, Columbia City

KEXP plays great music, but more than that it’s a part of my community and my everyday routine. – Rachel, Seattle

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 2019, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2020. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

To KEXP, championing music and discovery often means giving airtime to artists that might not otherwise be heard. This can mean opportunity for emerging local and touring acts in a wide range of genres, from folk and punk to electronic and hip-hop. KEXP's curatorial staff prides itself on presenting a "wide and deep" range of voices.

In July 2020, KEXP made several programming changes to bring a wider range of DJ voices, experiences, and expertise to its radio programming. Changes were also made to KEXP's creative and content teams, including the addition of two new full-time leadership positions in music curation and editorial direction, and the expansion of several production roles. These changes served as an initial public step in advancing KEXP's commitment to becoming an anti-racist organization, and are aimed at making the station's music programming stronger overall.

Programming changes include:

- An updated radio programming schedule and the addition of KEXP DJs Gabriel Teodros and Larry Mizell, Jr. to weekday daytime slots
- Larry Mizell, Jr. became Director of Editorial; Gabriel Teodros became Associate Music Director
- The introduction of *Overnight Afrobeats*, a new specialty show focused on Afrobeats music, hosted by Seattle DJ and musician Lace Cadence
- The introduction of *Mechanical Breakdown*, a new show focusing on dark wave and post-punk, hosted by long-time KEXP DJ Sharlese Metcalf
- Albina Cabrera became co-host of KEXP's modern Latin music program, *El Sonido*, and joined the station full time as Latin American Content Producer
- KEXP welcomed Reverend Dollars as a host of *Overnight*

As we did in 2020, KEXP plans a number of efforts to highlight music created by minority communities and communities of color in 2021, including our programming honoring Black History Month, Asian and Pacific American Heritage Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, Indigenous Peoples' Day, and a continuation of the Immigrant Songs performance series.

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?

KEXP's entry into the CPB's Radio Community Service Grant funding program beginning in Fall 2014 has given our organization the resources to continue to operate as an independent, non-commercial source of music discovery across a range of genres. This support is especially crucial in maintaining KEXP's ability to produce and distribute high-quality original content, and was hugely helpful in KEXP's pivot to virtual events and daytime DJs broadcasting from home due to COVID-19.

The content and experiences produced with the support of CPB have allowed KEXP to serve the community in a number of ways. Through CPB's support of our in-studio performances, we have given emerging local artists an opportunity to connect with their earliest audiences, and have introduced touring artists to new fans locally. This exposure encourages the local music community to flourish, and provides music lovers with countless opportunity to discover new music to become passionate about. By supporting KEXP's efforts to introduce the new and unexpected, the CPB has helped to enrich the cultural lives of all who encounter KEXP's programming.

Support from the CPB has also allowed KEXP to create and distribute a live performance program, *Under the Needle*. In 2020, *Under the Needle* was renamed "*Live on KEXP*" and introduced as a stand-alone podcast as well as an on-air program. *Live on KEXP* features live performances captured in the KEXP studio, along with editorial content about the featured band and their music. Now with over 225 episodes, including *Under the Needle* episodes, *Live on KEXP* is distributed free of charge to radio stations around the world, primarily college and university-run public radio stations. Over two dozen stations air this content on a regular basis, and the

network that has aired *Live on KEXP/Under the Needle* includes over 60 stations in the United States, as well as stations in Canada, United Kingdom, Israel, and Australia.