



ANNUAL REPORT 2020



Photo by: Eli Brownell



Photo by: Jim Bennett



Photo by: Dusty Henry



Photo by: John Richards



Photo by: Morgen Schuler

A LETTER FROM TOM

CONNECTION, COMFORT, RESPITE, COURAGE A BRIGHT SPOT IN TOUGH TIMES

Music has always brought all this to our lives. And KEXP's quest has always been to help music play a larger part in your life.

But in 2020 these things were more sharply felt, more deeply needed. We heard this from more of you than ever before. Thousands and thousands. A community tuning in through uncertainty, trauma, conflict, challenge and change. We heard from you how music became a lifeline, a way to connect to a community while staying physically apart. How music was helping you process what was happening in the world, or just get a much-needed break from it all. (Maybe both at once.) How music helped you through a school day or a frontline shift or a sense of isolation.

In 2020 the KEXP listener community grew—to a historic high point, in fact—and **I believe it was because our collective need for music grew, too.**

2020 was very tough. However, it was not the time to let up, though the year battered us financially, emotionally, and operationally; in all honesty, KEXP has never been in such a precarious position.

But an extraordinary thing happened: our donor community grew, too. **2020 was a year where listeners played a timely and critical role in powering KEXP—and in propelling us forward.** Throughout the year, I witnessed you share your financial support, your creative energy, your vulnerability, your critique. We drew courage from you.

And the issues we faced in 2020 did not end at the turn of a calendar page or a fiscal year. How we pursue our mission. How we serve artists and music lovers with the platform we have. How we hold ourselves accountable on our commitment to racial justice. The following report—a summary we're able to share after our financial audit is completed each summer—is a high-level look at all these things, and part of a continuing story.

Above all, when I reflect on the year, it summons a sense of awe. At the KEXP community—and at what music means in our lives. Music helps and heals. God forbid, if we ever face such a daunting crisis again, I'll have an even greater confidence in music. And in you. And our listener-powered community. **Your support in 2020 brought a bit more joy, comfort, and human connection to so many lives, in so many places, when it mattered more than ever.**

With appreciation and gratitude,



Tom Mara, Executive Director

2020: BY THE NUMBERS

45 LIVE
ON KEXP
SESSIONS




77 LIVE
ON KEXP
AT HOME SESSIONS



 **27,998**
DONORS

26.7%
GROWTH
IN DONORS
(V. 2019)



58%
OF DONORS
ARE AMPLIFIERS



 **94,493**
LISTENER TEXTS

1,300 **ON AIR**
SPOTS DONATED

MUSIC MATTERS

IN YOUR OWN WORDS

The real story of KEXP in 2020 is the story of this community—all of *your* stories.

Here's a tiny cross-section of the literally thousands of messages we received over the year—texted to the DJ booth, shared on social media, mailed via USPS. Sent with canceled Amplifier gifts in a time of hardship, and sent by those paying it forward on behalf of others not able to give.

These stories are profound. Your willingness to share them is an act of generosity that deeply impacted the rest of the KEXP community, and helped us all understand that we are not alone. Thank you for being there for KEXP, and for your fellow music lovers.



YOUR STORIES

Although it was a struggle to move forward without friends and family, we were bound and determined to get married on our chosen date. When Morgan put out the call for requests [that day], I wrote in to surprise my husband-to-be with our story and "I'll Come Running" by Brian Eno. On the day of our rooftop pandemic wedding, music helped us share and celebrate our love.

Hannah Seattle, WA

"I'M A REGISTERED NURSE AND I WORK THE NIGHT SHIFT."



WHEN I'M THE CHARGE NURSE KEXP IS STREAMING ALL NIGHT



IT'S A BREATH OF FRESH AIR IN THE MIDST OF THE CHAOS ON THE MEDICAL FLOOR. 2020 IS BEARABLE.*

ANTHONY — OAKLAND, CA

As I sit here at work this morning listening to John alone in the booth I realize that KEXP is one of the absolute most important things to my mental well-being. The last week has made it possible to imagine my life without many things that I previously thought were necessities, but I still can't imagine my life without KEXP.

Rocky Montana

"DURING THIS PANDEMIC KEXP HAS BEEN A LIFE PRESERVER FOR ME."



AS A HEALTH CARE WORKER, IT HAS KEPT ME AFLOAT AS I DRIVE INTO WORK EACH DAY. KEXP HAS HELPED ME MAKE IT.*

ERIN — SEATTLE, WA

I'm a teacher with kids of my own at home. Today as I was "teaching" my 6th graders online, and my husband started his "work day" ankle deep in Legos with our boys, he cranked Dance Yrself Clean and texted me: KEXP is what's giving us life right now. He's right, we can't really make mornings happen around here without KEXP. Thank you for all the spontaneous dance parties.

Alicia Seattle, WA

"EVERY DAY KEXP HAS PROVIDED A BRIGHT SPOT"



WHILE ALSO NEVER SHYING AWAY FROM CONFRONTING THE DIFFICULTIES OF OUR PRESENT REALITY THROUGH MUSIC.*

JUSTIN — RUSSIA

YOUR STORIES

**"WE ARE HUNKERED
DOWN & PRACTICING
SOCIAL DISTANCING.
LISTENING TO KEXP HAS
HELPED A LOT BECAUSE**

**I FEEL LIKE I'M
CONNECTED IN REAL
TIME TO SOMETHING
VIBRANT & ALIVE."**

STEVEN — MASSACHUSETTS

As a Nurse Practitioner, I was seeing patients, gowning, gloving, doffing, donning, and masking in an endless cycle. KEXP was my refuge and my only sense of normalcy during what was otherwise a very chaotic time. Without music, without the KEXP community; I don't know that I would have fared as well as I have. KEXP saves lives, I know it's kept me sane. Thank you.

Katie Bothell, WA

Like many states, our schools closed this week for the foreseeable future. I am the Facility Manager (aka maintenance dude) and, like you, am alone here in the building this week, deep cleaning and disinfecting the school. I am incredibly grateful to you and everyone at KEXP for being on the air for us. It really means a lot as we once again lean on the music we love to get us through yet another of life's tribulations. Thanks to you all so much for making our lives a little brighter and more bearable with the power of music. If you get time could you please play "Rainbow Connection" for all of the kids and teachers who would normally be here with me today. I miss them very much. Thank you.

Jon Rock Falls, IL

**"JUST SO GRATEFUL
FOR KEXP RIGHT NOW,
DURING THIS TIME WHEN
IT'S EASY TO FEEL ALONE
AND DESPAIRING.**

**KEXP TELLS PEOPLE
EVERY DAY THAT
THEY ARE SEEN, AND
THAT THEY MATTER."**

JEANIE — SEATTLE, WA

I moved to Seattle almost exactly a year ago. I'm always so impressed with the vast knowledge of international music of various genres. I'm multicultural/mixed race and it helps me feel welcome here during these scary times.

Sherida Seattle, WA

KEXP has remained my constant connection to Seattle since I moved away nearly two years ago. It has been a safety net, that anytime I need to be distracted from the world or feel a little less alone I can tune in and be part of a community. It has also opened my eyes over the years to stories of grief, loss, addiction, and right now the importance of being vocally anti racist and taking action.

Mason Wisconsin

I'm getting through the lockdown by working as a delivery driver ten hours a day, seven days a week. KEXP has been playing on my radio the entire time, and it's like having a friend in the car with me.

Kyler Seattle, WA

ADAPTING TO THE PANDEMIC

YOUR SUPPORT KEPT THE MUSIC COMING IN UNPREDICTABLE TIMES



Black Ends playing a "Lawn in the Morning" session
Photo by: Jim Bennett

Broadcasting from basements, taping interviews in blanket forts, front-lawn performances featuring garbage trucks rolling by on live radio ... 2020 demanded a little extra creativity and flexibility.

And your support in 2020 made sure KEXP had the resources we needed to keep DJs live on the air 24/7, while staying safely distanced; and to keep booking artists without missing a beat, through *Live On KEXP At Home* and other reimagined programming. Your support also helped us use our platform in positive ways—by sharing resources, donating airtime to nonprofits and relief organizations, reporting on issues affecting artists and venues, and partnering with local aid efforts. Thank you for keeping this community going strong at a time when so many were searching for music and connection.



DJs Larry Mizell, Jr. and Evie share a show from separate booths
Photo by: Dusty Henry

A CHANGE IN THE AIRWAVES

YOUR SUPPORT IN 2020 BROUGHT MORE MUSIC AND MORE VOICES TO KEXP

In July 2020, KEXP announced the addition of new hosts, new shows, and new and expanded roles behind the scenes. These changes increased representation of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) staff on the radio and in programming leadership, and served as an initial public step in advancing KEXP's commitment to becoming an anti-racist organization. We want you to know these changes in 2020 were possible, in part, thanks to your support. Listener power means KEXP can stay responsive—and accountable—to our community. While this work is ongoing, it's an important part of living up to our stated mission and values, and an investment in making our programming better and stronger. Learn more below.



STATEMENT OF SOLIDARITY

- JUNE 2020 -

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

ANNOUNCING PROGRAMMING CHANGES

- JULY 2020 -

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

REFLECTIONS AND UPDATE

- SEPTEMBER 2021 -

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

**WHAT MADE
THE BIGGEST
DIFFERENCE?**

**THE ANSWER
IS THIS: MANY
MANY MORE
PEOPLE DECIDED
TO POWER
KEXP IN 2020.**

Put simply: it was a turbulent and complicated year. And that's why we're going into a little more detail than usual in this section—we want you to know what went into the decisions we made, and why.

In 2020, **Covid impacts at KEXP led to a loss of approximately \$1.7 million, or nearly 17% of our original budget.** These losses were primarily from sources that depend on gathering in person, including events, space rental, and business support.

Filling the gap required us both to make significant budget cuts and find new sources of funding. And timing was also key. Early in the pandemic, a federal PPP loan carried KEXP through the critical months between a first round of budget cuts and our fundraising drives later in the year.

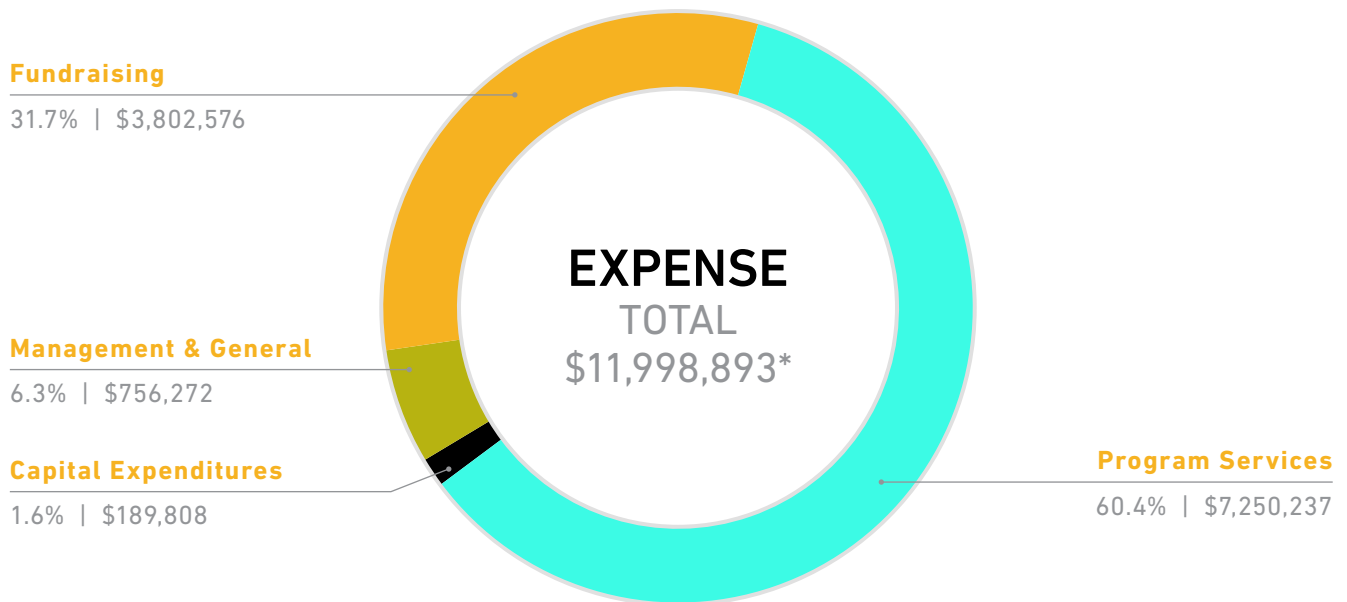
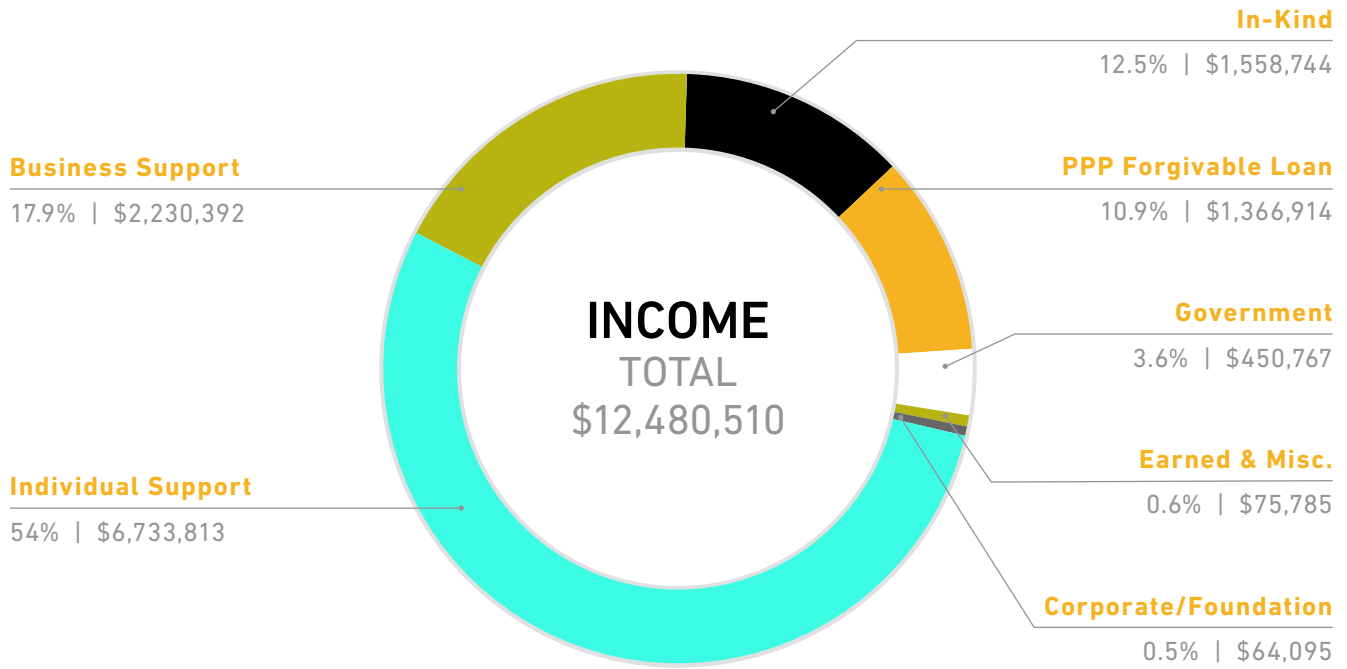
But what made the biggest difference? The answer is this: many, many more people decided to power KEXP in 2020. Nearly 27% more than in 2019. In other words, all of you made the difference. Taking that step to become a first-time donor. Digging deep to give more than once during the year. Giving on behalf of fellow community members. You encouraged us and reassured us.

Put together, KEXP ultimately finished the year with a balanced budget. It makes for a neat-looking result that masks a messy reality—and the enormity of the achievement. It was an extraordinary year for listener power. It was a year of significant differences between what we planned on doing, and what actually happened. A year of tenuous timing, and tough decisions, and a reimagining (or three or four) of what KEXP is and can become.

We are proud of our community-funded model. And it showed its true strength in 2020. Covid-related losses will continue to impact KEXP for many years. We must continue the investments made in 2020's programming changes, as well as expand on our commitment to antiracism. But there is no question that listener power—all of you—carried KEXP through to this point. Thank you for all you do.

-Tom Mara, Executive Director

2020 INCOME & EXPENSES



INCOME & EXPENSE NOTES

INCOME

KEXP's total operating revenues for 2020 were \$12,480,510.

INDIVIDUAL AND BUSINESS SUPPORT

The largest portion of KEXP's support came from 27,998 individual donors, donor-directed funds, corporate matching programs, and family foundations. The \$6,733,813 raised by these combined groups made up 54% of the organization's revenue.

Business Support totaled \$2,230,392 or 18% of 2020 total revenue. This represents a Covid-related shortfall of more than \$1.1 million, or about a third of the Business Support revenue originally budgeted for the year. A significant portion of KEXP's sponsorship and program support typically comes from industries that were themselves decimated by Covid in 2020, such as music, performing arts, sports and entertainment, restaurants, and travel.

EARNED & MISCELLANEOUS REVENUE

Miscellaneous and earned revenue totaled \$75,785 or 0.6% of 2020 total revenue. In a typical year, KEXP receives income from events and other programming; in 2020, most of these programs were cancelled due to Covid, resulting in a shortfall of more than \$374,000 against budget in this category.

GRANTS AND GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting funding for KEXP's broadcast service and annual operations totaled \$410,767 or 3.3% percent of total 2020 revenue. This amount includes a \$75,000 CPB CARES Act Stabilization Grant for Covid relief.

Additional support totaling \$105,095, or 0.8% of total 2020 revenue, was provided by: The Dean Witter Foundation, The Vilcek Foundation, Lucky Seven Foundation, 4Culture, ArtsFund, ArtsWA, and the City of Seattle Office of Arts & Culture.

Key support in 2020 was provided through a forgivable loan from the federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) in the amount of \$1,366,914, representing 11% of total 2020 revenue.

IN-KIND SUPPORT

Individuals, organizations, and businesses contributed in-kind support in the form of goods and services totaling \$1,558,744 or 12.5% of total revenue, a major portion of which came from key partner University of Washington. Additional major in-kind support was provided by Edelman Seattle and Publicis North America (now Saatchi & Saatchi).



EXPENSE

KEXP's total 2020 expenses were \$11,998,893.

Of that figure, 60.4% was dedicated to programs, while fundraising and administrative costs accounted for 31.7% and 6.3% percent, respectively.

KEXP LEADERSHIP

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Seattle Theatre Group

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KEXP LEADERSHIP

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MARK MIRABILE
Dos Rios Films

TOMO NAKAYAMA
Musician

MATT SABLAN
Totem Star

THANK YOU

THANK YOU FOR POWERING KEXP

Listener power is the reason why KEXP can face tough times, make big changes, and respond to whatever is going on in the world. Why we can play whatever you tell us you need to hear, and say whatever needs to be said. Listener power is part of how you know you're part of a community—how you know you're not alone. And in the last year, all of these things became more important than ever before.

In 2020, you made sure KEXP not only pulled through, but came out sounding better than ever, and pointed in the right direction. And you kept the music coming for your fellow music lovers, for a community searching for a bright spot. Thank you so much.

