January 2022 SAS
CPB Local Content and Service Report for KGNU

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.

KGNU’s overall Strategic Goals tie into the approach that KGNU adopts to fulfill our mission and to offer vital local services.

KGNU continues to strive to identify different community issues, needs, and interests through a variety of means. During 2021 KGNU developed an audience research survey project together with support from the NFCB’s Community Counts Initiative and with support from Paragon Media. The survey will launch during the first quarter of 2022 to better understand local media interests in our region.

We continue to produce our Dot Org segment, a 3 min interview slot currently broadcast once a week at 8:25 am, which highlights local non-profits. KGNU featured over 50 different local non-profit organizations during FY 2021. Topics covered a wide range of issues that local non-profit organizations tackle in our community. During 2021 we continued to air regular community and arts calendars highlighting arts and cultural organizations’ upcoming presentations/events.

During 2021, we had interviews and coverage focused on information and services for affordable housing, seniors, veterans, young children, teachers, mental illness, visual artists, teenagers, homeless, the working poor, college students, musicians, immigrants, storytellers of color, among others. KGNU continues to run its Spanish language and bilingual Afternoon Headlines Service and Afternoon Community Calendar running Monday through Friday at 2:55PM. We continued other Community collaborations hosting several remote broadcasts throughout the year including partnerships and live broadcasts from the Mapleton Porchfest, Suave Fest, Destination Freedom and others. KGNU also broadcast many educational programs with guest organizations, providing information and resources on understanding local and state ballot initiatives and state redistricting that took place.

The News Department worked tirelessly to provide COVID-19 pandemic coverage on-air and online in order to keep the communities that depend on us informed and safe. KGNU continued to air community conversations in English and in Spanish with specialists including City and County Health Departments to help dispel rampant disinformation circulated on social media, to address vaccine hesitancy, and to provide accurate information on available resources. Several of these conversations, and in particular the Spanish language community conversations, were live-streamed on Facebook, and we opened phone lines and email to take questions from the listeners/viewers.

More so, 2021 was an intense year for the City of Boulder and Boulder County, first with the ongoing pandemic, then with the March 2021 King Soopers mass shooting, followed by the most destructive fires in the state’s history with the Marshall Fire on December 31st 2021. KGNU, with its tiny but mighty News and Public Affairs department dedicated as many resources as possible to open our airwaves to cover, follow, support, and broadcast the ongoing conversations, response efforts, and provide accurate information about the resources available for community members to recover and process the devastating events that took place in our immediate communities.
In May of 2021 KGNU launched a new mobile app, with Public Media Apps, to engage a changing demographic in our region, to better connect with younger more diverse community members as listening and media consumption patterns have changed dramatically over the last ten years. We will continue to improve on the curation of the content and resources available on the app as we gain more insight to usage patterns, which by the end of December 2021 had dramatically surpassed our initial goals.

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.

2020 uprooted many previous and long standing engagement partnerships but 2021 offered an opportunity for KGNU to explore many new partnerships and virtual engagement activities. We continued to develop key initiatives and partnerships with many different groups within our community, across the state, and nationally.

During 2021 we worked very closely with the Rocky Mountain Community Radio coalition (RMCR) a coalition of more than 19 Rocky Mountain based community radios across Colorado and now expanding to New Mexico and Wyoming. KGNU and RMCR continued to explore strategic plans for strengthening collaborative production and training including a collaborative on-going production series on the impacts of the Oil and Gas industry across the state, and a broad Solutions Journalism Network supported collaborative series on Economic Mobility focused on the lack of affordable housing across the state. By the end of 2021 RMCR began to develop a proposal and win funding to establish a Managing Editor position to support on-going state-wide collaborative reporting and content sharing among our stations.

In 2021, KGNU finalized its move and installation of our Denver-based studios, into a new collaborative media hub in Denver at the new COlab facility on the third floor of the Buell Media Center. KGNU continued its partnership with the Colorado Media Project and the COlab, in part; this collaboration is working to strengthen local media and journalists as a means to respond to increasing news deserts across the region and country with a focus on equity in the media.

In 2021, KGNU wrapped up the “TRENDS Reporting Fellowship” in partnership with the Community Foundation Boulder County, providing media training to 11 existing and emerging journalists over a nine-month period, started in late 2020. We established a Community Advisory Committee reaching professors from CU Boulder in Journalism, Media Studies, Latinx leaders within the County, the local LGBTQ+ advocacy group and award winning Motus Theater (centering voices of undocumented migrants). The fellowship partnered with local DEIJ trainers, Solutions Journalism Network, and Free Press’ News Voices program to center social and racial equity reporting in Boulder County. Five local newsroom reporters from distinct outlets joined the inaugural cohort along with community story tellers and independent journalists resulting in a wind range of published and aired stories.

In 2021, KGNU continued the partnership with Sacred Voices, who hosts an open mic venue in the Denver metropolitan area, with a space focused on family and youth. They also conduct highly engaging and culturally relevant spoken word/poetry workshops for underserved youth throughout Colorado.
In 2021 the Radio Book Club collaboration with the Boulder Bookstore, a local independent bookseller, continued to grow in popularity. Each month, a new book is selected and listeners are invited to read along and join the author on air for a discussion about the book.

During FY2021 KGNU continued to work throughout the year with Lafayette Youth Advisory Committee. The group composed of several students from the Lafayette high schools was trained in radio production. Their productions were aired during 2021, including teen reflections on coping under pandemic lockdown, the Black Lives Matters local movement, and youth BIPOC representation in local government.

We continued to collaborate with local music festivals including live broadcasts from festivals such as RockyGrass, Suave Fest, and we returned to the Boulder City Farmer’s Market, and added additional live broadcasts from the Mapleton Porch Fest, and the Louisville Street Faire. Additionally we hosted thirteen “Sunday Live at Five” virtual local-artist live Facebook broadcasts and a series of radio dramas of Destination Freedom’s Black Radio Days on our Kabaret program through the year.

KGNU continued partnerships with the local education community this year, including:
--Continued worked with the Denver Public Schools to host a paid virtual summer internship for creative young students who worked with the KGNU News and Public Affairs department.
--Continued to work, returning to in person trainings, with New Vista High School in Boulder offering a youth radio training class as an elective for high school students each quarter at school.
--Continued a partnership with CU Environmental Studies program hosting a monthly class on environmental justice and media at KGNU. Each student in the class works on co-producing short features called the Brink that was aired during the reporting period.

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.

Our partnership with Boulder County Suma and the Latinx Cultural Brokers Collaborative to support the production of critical information spots in Spanish to help inform the Spanish speaking community of resources for economic and health relief in response to COVID-19, vaccine hesitancy and accurate information on vaccination resources to support underrepresented populations in Boulder County continued throughout 2021 and was seen as impactful. The partnership continued to generate interest by City and County staff to engage in community conversations and the partnership highlighted the rapid response of the cultural brokers collaborative to attend urgent community needs. In the words of Thia Gonzalez, it “Feels like KGNU is thinking outside the box when hosting these types of conversations with the community on different topics in particular in understanding Latinx and youth community interests.”

Our partnership with local youth organizations and High School programs with our bilingual Media Gardens youth training program continued to have a real impact on both the youth and facilitators involved in the process despite the challenges we faced in 2020 of shifting to virtual trainings. During most of 2021 we were able to reconvene in person youth trainings and the program began to expand
significantly in late 2021 with new partnerships that will come to fruition in 2022 with the I Have a Dream Foundation and Boulder High.

During 2021 we continued our partnership with the Community Foundation Boulder County continuing our TRENDS Podcast and the TRENDS Diary which aired once a week during the first half of the year highlighting an audio diary submission from local individuals on their unique efforts to engage and support community based movements. During 2021 the TRENDS Podcast generated increased visibility of local leaders, cultural brokers and lesser seen leaders in our communities who perform critical roles bridging cultural barriers by responding to local issues in their communities and neighborhoods.

In March of 2021, KGNU was featured in a national report called “Healthy Local News & Information Ecosystems: A Diagnostic Framework,” by Impact Architects, with support from the Knight Foundation, Democracy Fund, and Google News Initiative. KGNU’s TRENDS Podcast and equity reporting initiative in collaboration with the Community Foundation Boulder County (CFBC) were highlighted as a case study in this report on local media. The report measures the strength of news environments across nine different communities nationwide, including Boulder County. Despite dramatic cuts to newsroom funding within the local media landscape, KGNU has worked hard to grow and strengthen local news coverage in the past few years, and hire and train more journalists and communicators across the Front Range while expanding bilingual and Spanish-language programming.

“KGNU is a unique voice and institution in the country that needs to be heard. It’s on top of politics, news, & music, and the integrity of the volunteers really shines. KGNU is powered by the HEART! The times we are living in right now require that we have a place like KGNU” says, Patrick in Denver about the station’s efforts to have community impact.

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 2021, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2022. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

Throughout FY2021, despite the many ongoing pivots caused by the pandemic, KGNU continued to investigate and meet the needs of diverse audiences through several programs and virtual spaces.

In 2021, KGNU continued a Spanish language headlines service pushing these to facebook and adding them to a regular on air afternoon slot. The headlines service created the opportunity to partner with a network of local Spanish language Cultural Brokers to produce an in depth series of Spanish PSA’s offering hard to get information on local resources to respond to specific COVID-19 needs of migrant and Spanish speaking community members. Our Bilingual Reporter continued to increase the monthly number of reports produced both bilingually and in Spanish only, while centering bilingual and diverse community members in those regular reports. Her community outreach and engagement has been crucial in strengthening relationships with Spanish and bilingual speaking communities.

Ms. Galicia, a regular contributor, and public health specialist referred to the bilingual and TRENDS programming in the following way, “Me encanta la estacion y disfruto mucho los programas de Rossana Longo y su pasion y dedicacion [a los distintos temas de nuestra comunidad].”
During 2021, KGNU became the first station on the Colorado Front Range to begin to air Radio Bilingue’s *Linea Abierta* programming as a five day a week service in Spanish. During 2021, KGNU continued our partnership with *Barrio É and Raices* Brewing live streaming the Suave Fest and working further to envision *Cultura Viva*, a quarterly live broadcast that celebrates Latin American and Caribbean multiculturalism, diverse local talent and Latinx owned businesses while offering a family friendly cultural celebration in each broadcast. Although, we did find it increasingly difficult to conduct the live remote broadcasts as pandemic protocols were constantly in flux.

KGNU hosts and broadcasts Colorado Chinese radio which is produced by the Colorado Asian Culture and Education Network, a non-profit show that provides service and education to the Chinese community in Colorado. Topics shared include immigration, law, tax, insurance, education, health, investment, lifestyle, community event. Colorado Chinese radio is transmitted every Sunday in Mandarin.

In 2021, KGNU’s bilingual Media Gardens project continued collaborating with the Lafayette Youth Advisory Committee and New Vista High School focusing on audio/radio training skills and creating narratives to offer diverse youth the opportunity to explore distinct media formats to amplify issues important to them. As mentioned, that program will be expanding with new partnerships during 2022.

Our weekly LGBTQ show Outsources highlights issues facing local LGBTQ+ people and organizations and promotes resources for the community in the state has grown significantly and begun to delve deeper into the web component of radio to help boost distribution of the show in order to broaden the reach and access to this crucial community resource.

For over thirty years we have been airing Indian Voices, a local award winning program focusing on issues faced within Native American communities locally and nationally.

In 2021, KGNU expanded the length of a new program founded in 2020, led by and in collaboration with the local chapter of the NAACP, called Black Talk – highlighting the reality faced by the Black population in Boulder County.

In partnership with donnie l. betts (intentionally lowercase) and No Credits Production, KGNU continued to broadcast a series of radio dramas live from our studios, from the Destination Freedom series. Black Radio Days, produced for Destination Freedom by NCP were each followed by community conversations. During 2022 KGNU will air the next series of Black Radio Days produced by No Credits Production.

During 2021, KGNU’s Bilingual Reporter launched a new series, emanating from a series of community conversations called Latinx Voices (led by News Voices and COLab), titled Storytellers of Color which runs once a month in a long format – highlighting the inequities faced by journalists, storytellers, media workers and artists of color across the Colorado Front Range.

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?

In FY2021, KGNU’s CPB grant accounted for approximately 10% of our operating revenue prior to receiving the additional ARPA Relief grant through the CPB. This CSG funding supports critical program acquisition, operations, as well as training of volunteers and many of our partnerships with the local
education community. It creates the opportunity for KGNU to offer better services to the broader community. In a time of uncertainty, the unexpected CPB ARPA grant funds concretized KGNU’s ability to not only sustain current staffing, but rather add new positions and build on part time positions to adjust for the increased workload caused by the pandemic and to continue to implement many new systems to maintain operations.

Without CPB, we would have to significantly reduce our service to the education community. We would not be able to air crucial news services that we have historically provided, nor would we be able to develop or implement increased digital engagement, a project we are delving deeper into this year.

Furthermore, CPB is critical to our music licensing requirements—without CPB we would face cost prohibitive licensing fees for our music broadcast and webcasts. As our on-line audience grows, CPB’s music licensing support is invaluable.