



**WISCONSIN
PUBLIC RADIO**

WHA

FY 2022: July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022

- 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.*

Wisconsin Public Radio's (WPR) WHA is committed to community service through news, information, music and entertainment content on air, online and in communities across the state. All of the station's content is produced with the highest standards of ethics and audience service. WPR strives to serve Wisconsin's diverse communities and perspectives with content that is trustworthy, informative, useful, civil and inspiring. In FY 2022, guests, hosts and callers from across the state came together for smart, meaningful conversations on "The Morning Show," "The Larry Meiller Show" and "Central Time."

WPR regularly gathers input on community issues, programming decisions and other concerns of our listeners and the broader public. Station reporters, producers and hosts rely on state and national survey results, including regular Marquette Law School polls in Wisconsin, to help guide production of news content heard within newscasts and topic selection for 6.5 hours of daily, local call-in programs. In FY2022, results of surveys were the focus of stand-alone news stories, but the surveys also influenced story selection throughout the year.

WPR continues to provide timely, relevant and trustworthy news and public affairs programming. During FY2022, the public relied on WPR for accurate, unbiased news and information about personal and public health, the environment, policing, politics, education, sports and everyday life in Wisconsin. WPR producers and reporters across the state continued to keep Wisconsinites informed on COVID-19, including the Omicron variant and changes to public health policies as guidelines changed and our educational institutions and students at all levels adjusted. WPR's coverage of the Kyle Rittenhouse trial and verdict in Racine, Wisconsin and the on-going public conversation around racial justice and equity reached local, state and national audiences.

WPR's producers and journalists brought home the impact of the war in Ukraine with stories of local protests and vigils, the effects on Wisconsin residents of Ukrainian descent, and the

resettlement of refugees. WPR's reporters examined water quality extensively over the reporting period as the state grappled with PFAS contamination in many communities. A special series interviewed new graduates at many educational levels in June 2022, and looked back at how these students dealt with the disruptions of the pandemic.

WPR's reporters and digital team provided an in-depth look at Wisconsin politics and the state's redistricting process in the multi-part podcast "Mapped Out." The podcast looked back at Wisconsin's redistricting process in 2010 in order to shed light on redistricting decisions being made during FY2022. And in collaboration with the nonprofit newsroom Wisconsin Watch, WPR brought listeners the podcast "Open and Shut," which investigated the power of the prosecutor and what can happen if that power goes unchecked. WHA and its WPR affiliates carried every available live hearing and special coverage related to the US House investigation into the January 6th committee. During the fiscal year, WPR aired seven select committee hearings live.

WHA's daily talk show "The Morning Show" hosted live interviews with seven primary candidates for mayor of Milwaukee during the reporting period. "The Morning Show" also aired a series of conversations with mayors of other cities across Wisconsin to connect communities and share strategies for leadership. WHA's live call-in talk shows "The Morning Show" and "Central Time" both participated in a series talking with CEOs of major companies in Wisconsin over FY2022. "The Morning Show" gave listeners the opportunity to ask experienced contractors their home maintenance questions in a one-hour segment that aired weekly for 24 weeks. "The Larry Meiller Show" offered listeners a quarterly book club series that featured authors from a variety of backgrounds and experiences.

The WPR news team and digital content received numerous awards during the reporting period including multiple Regional Edward R. Murrow Awards for digital and broadcast work and multiple awards from the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association among others. WPR won an award for online breaking news coverage of the Waukesha Christmas parade tragedy and another for a story about loggers facing steep downturns in the paper industry. WPR reporters were honored for stories about semi-pro football, Afghan refugees at Fort McCoy, a series on PFAS contamination and more. WPR's regional talk shows were also honored with Best Special Programming, Best Interview, and Best Radio Show. Overall, WPR's news, digital, music and regional teams received more than 30 state, regional and national awards for their reporting, music hosting, podcasts and online work.

As part of WPR's continuing commitment to training the next generation of journalists with public media's high standards of ethics and integrity, the station has three fellowship programs for early-career journalists. Two of these fellowships—the Lee Ester News Fellowship and the Second Century Fellowship—had been paused during the pandemic. These were resumed during the reporting period.

WHA and its affiliates' news and cultural stories are also featured in articles at wpr.org where audiences can post comments, ask questions and connect with other listeners through our online forums. During the reporting period, the site received millions of pageviews and delivered thousands of articles and live-streamed and archive audio.

WPR also uses Twitter, Facebook and Instagram to distribute content, engage audiences on and off air, and for promotion. During the reporting period, WHA and its affiliates invited listeners to post questions, share information and engage with show hosts and guests on social media. WPR's main Facebook page had over 59,000 followers, as users turned to WPR's social media to stay up to date on everything from breaking news to job openings and community events. The Ideas Network Facebook page had more than 29,000 followers over the reporting period, and WPR's Twitter feed had more than 32,000 followers. WPR's Instagram, launched during FY2021, had approximately 1600 followers during FY2022.

WHA and its affiliates engaged with communities and audiences across the state with in-person and online events in FY2022. Each event was an opportunity for participants to ask questions and meet WPR staff. These included a live virtual discussion with author and plant ecologist Robin Wall Kimmerer and hosts and producers of The Ideas Network show "To The Best Of Our Knowledge," that included nearly 2,000 participants from around Wisconsin, the U.S. and several countries. Audiences got a behind-the-scenes look at WPR's new podcast "Open and Shut" at a virtual discussion with the reporter and host.

During the reporting period WPR also provided opportunities for participants to engage and ask questions of WPR staff at live outdoor MeetUp events in the spring and to enjoy live music at the Simply Folk Shindig. In total WPR connected with audiences at six live and virtual events over the reporting period, with more than 5000 total registrants. WPR's reporters and talk show hosts also facilitated community conversations at live and virtual events put on by partner organizations, including the Wisconsin Book Festival and the Wisconsin Science Festival.

In addition to community engagement events, web discussions, and social media, WPR collaborates with PBS Wisconsin to offer a toll-free phone number and email account for public feedback. Each year this in-house audience services team answers tens of thousands of requests from Wisconsinites eager to learn more about the news and information they hear on air or see online. These public comments are compiled and shared with the entire WPR staff on a regular basis.

WHA and its affiliates provide some of the best educational and life-long learning content in the state. "The Larry Meiller Show" focuses on gardening, consumer issues, and "how-to" topics. "The Morning Show" and "Central Time" feature guest experts from different perspectives on

state and national news, as well as lifestyle topics like healthy living and recreation. Listeners in Wisconsin and around the nation turn to “Zorba Paster On Your Health” for perspective on medical concerns.

The station and its affiliates are also dedicated to providing a cultural resource to listeners, with entertainment, comedy and music programs. “To the Best of Our Knowledge” is WPR’s Peabody Award-winning national program of big ideas. “BETA” features playful and provocative profiles of the people and works changing our world through arts, pop culture and technology. “Chapter A Day” is the original audiobook, aired every weekday for a half hour. “University of the Air” provides interviews on a variety of topics with experts. On Sundays, “Simply Folk” broadcasts traditional music of people the world over.

WHA’s licensee, the Wisconsin Educational Communications Board, partners with the University of Wisconsin to produce and distribute programming under the banner Wisconsin Public Radio. According to Nielsen, the partnership reached an average of 367,100 listeners in spring 2022. WPR’s websites – including WisconsinLife.org and TTBOOK.org—had more than 13.9 million page views.

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.

WPR’s WHA and affiliates provide extensive election coverage and collaborate with PBS Wisconsin to broadcast important events, including the annual governor’s State of the State address, budget address, and state celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. WPR encourages its listeners to experience the state from diverse perspectives. “Wisconsin Life,” WPR’s state culture collaboration with PBS Wisconsin, continues this commitment by featuring stories of unexpected Wisconsin people and places on WPR, PBS Wisconsin and online at wisconsinlife.org. As noted in the response to question one above, WPR partnered with the nonprofit newsroom Wisconsin Watch in FY2022 to produce the multi-part podcast “Open and Shut” investigating the power of prosecutors in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Remembers: A Face for Every Name is a traveling exhibit that features a photo for each of the 1,163 Wisconsinites officially listed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. This poignant display was created in 2016 by WPR in partnership with the Wisconsin Veterans Museum and PBS Wisconsin. Wisconsin Remembers appeared in Neillsville, Oxford, Menomonie, McFarland, UW-La Crosse, Wisconsin Dells, Ellsworth, Fennimore and Madison in FY2022.

As noted above, WHA and its affiliates also continued their commitment to educating the next generation of reporters with the Mike Simonson Fellowship for Investigative Journalism, which is a partnership with the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism. The fellowship helps attract some of the brightest young minds in journalism to public broadcasting and supports a shared commitment to in-depth reporting on issues important to all Wisconsinites.

WHA hosts regularly make special appearances at events around the state that encourage cultural diversity, the arts and more. And, each month, WPR sponsors dozens of community events around the state to help local nonprofits in the arts, science, business and more connect with our listeners.

WPR amplified the messages of many community, government and nonprofit organizations that provided vital services to listeners during the reporting period. In FY 2022, WPR offered listeners information on how to register to vote, where to vote, and how to vote in person or absentee in advance of state and local elections held on April 5, 2022. This was accomplished through on-air promotion of the voting information site of the State of Wisconsin Elections Commission, MyVote.WI.gov. WPR also partnered with state and regional nonprofits to air messages that directed listeners to providers of free over-the-phone crisis mental health counseling and gave information on accessing emergency rental assistance.

In the last quarter of FY2021, WPR partnered with PBS Wisconsin, the Public Service Commission and the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association to promote the Emergency Broadband Benefit Initiative and support access to this essential service throughout the state. When new legislation extended the program under a new name, the Affordable Connectivity Program, WPR continued the promotional partnership beyond the end of the current reporting period, helping even more people get access to affordable high speed internet service. As of June 30, 2022, 225,000 households in Wisconsin were enrolled in the Affordable Connectivity Program. Wisconsin has remained above the national average in enrollment in the affordable broadband program and has continued to lead enrollment among surrounding states.

WHA and its affiliates have partnerships with a number of non-profit arts and community organizations, including: African Heritage Inc., Appleton Boychoir, Barlow Planetarium, Diverse & Resilient, Fox Cities Magazine, Fox Cities Multi-Cultural Center, Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, Fox Valley Symphony, Grand Opera House, Green Bay Antiquarian Society, Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, Green Bay Botanical Gardens, History Museum at the Castle, Homeless Connections, John Michael Kohler Art Center, Northern Sky Theater, Oneida Tribe, Oshkosh Public Museum, Paine Art Center, Peninsula Music Festival, St. Norbert College, Shawano Folk Festival, Third Avenue Playhouse, Trout Museum, UntitledTown Book and Author Festival, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, UW Oshkosh Theatre Dept., We All Rise African American Resource Center, Weidner Center, YWCA; University of Wisconsin, YWCA of Dane County, Wisconsin School Music Association, Overture Center for the Arts, Madison

Opera, Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, Bach Around the Clock, Wisconsin Book Festival, Wisconsin Science Festival, Madison Public Library Foundation, Wisconsin Veterans Museum, Ice Age Trail Alliance, Janesville Performing Arts Center, Literacy Network of Dane County, Madison Black Chamber of Commerce, Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, Rainbow Project, Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program, Cambridge Arts Council, Arts for All Wisconsin, Community Action Coalition of South Central Wisconsin, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources; Eau Claire Chamber of Commerce, Eau Claire Chamber Orchestra, Eau Claire Male Chorus, Eau Claire Children's Theatre, Pablo Center at the Confluence, Fresh Art Tour, Literacy Chippewa Valley, Mabel Tainter Memorial Theatre, The Master Singers, Menomonie Singers, Beaver Creek Reserve, Chippewa Valley American Guild of Organists, Chippewa Valley Jazz Orchestra, Chippewa Valley Symphony Orchestra, Chippewa Valley Theatre Guild, Eau Claire Area Economic Development Corporation, Eau Claire Jazz Fest, Midwest Championship Sheepdog Trials, UW-Eau Claire Forum and Artist Series; Lake Superior Big Top Chautauqua, Lake Superior Dragonboat Festival and Bayfield Applefest; Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum, Marathon County Public Library, Midwest Renewable Energy Association Monteverdi Chorale, North Central WI Master Gardeners, Wausau Conservatory of Music, Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy & Service, Center for Visual Arts, Central WI Symphony Orchestra, The Neighbors Place, Farmshed, Gathering Waters, Logjam Festival, North Central CAP, Pastime Club, Stevens Point Convention & Visitors Bureau, Wausau Festival of Arts, Wausau Lyric Choir, Wausau Pro Musica, Wausau Symphony & Band, Winchester Academy of Waupaca, Wisconsin Rapids Convention & Visitors Bureau, and the Wisconsin Well Woman Program.

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.

WHA and its affiliates provide the largest network of news bureaus of any media in the state, providing in-depth explorations of Wisconsin's public affairs issues and ideas. Every day WPR broadcasts and online resources help people across the state connect with elected officials and public servants at all levels of local, state and national government. WPR's audience engagement project WHYsconsin invites anyone to submit questions or experiences on any Wisconsin topic through an online portal. During FY2022, the WHYsconsin project fielded 701 questions. WPR reporters filed 37 stories as the result of these questions, and audience comments and opinions helped shape many other stories.

WHA and its affiliated stations also work to promote awareness of issues through its annual fundraising efforts. During the year-end 2021 fundraising drive, contributors were given the option of foregoing a traditional membership thank you gift and instead support Wisconsin-based food pantries. WPR Partnered with Alliant Energy, who matched a total of 8,325 meals. Altogether, WPR members and Alliant Energy contributed 16,650 meals to Second Harvest in 2021. Since 2010, WPR has provided more than 415,000 meals via food bank thank-you gifts.

As noted above, the Wisconsin Remembers exhibit, which features a photo for each of the 1,163 Wisconsinites listed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington D.C., has been requested by community groups and displayed in dozens of locations throughout the state. In FY2022, the exhibit toured the state and was seen at The Highground Memorial in Neillsville, Oxford VFW Post 6003 in Oxford, Dunn County Historical Society in Menomonie, American Legion Post 534 in McFarland, at UW-La Crosse, Wisconsin Dells High School, Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services in Ellsworth, the Fennimore VFW, and at Brat Fest in Madison. WPR also promoted the virtual Wisconsin Remembers experience.

As noted above, WPR hosts regularly make special appearances at events around the state that encourage literacy, music education, cultural diversity and more. Staff regularly engage with community members to ensure programs are addressing issues that affect real people in Wisconsin. WPR helps local nonprofits promote community events that celebrate nature, agriculture, science, performing arts, families and just plain fun. These promotional partners often report back that WPR's broadcast announcements had a significant impact on their event attendance and success of their programs.

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.

WPR, including WHA and its affiliates, is committed to serving all Wisconsinites and to reflecting the diverse experiences and perspectives of our state in its programs and staffing. During the reporting period, new hires brought new voices and experiences to the station's broadcast programs and work behind the scenes.

WPR continues its work to improve diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) throughout the organization. WPR promotes a culture where employees take responsibility for their own growth and learning in support of DEI, managers are responsible for supporting and encouraging work in DEI, and leadership is responsible for championing DEI initiatives. WPR's

DEI vision and goals has focused on four main areas: culture and retention, accessibility, content, and recruitment.

One example of this approach was included in last year's report and continued this fiscal year: WPR's work to reflect Wisconsin's diversity on air. WPR's journalists and producers rely heavily on sources like guest experts, authors, scientists, elected officials and business owners to provide context, perspective and experience. In a typical year, more than 3,500 individuals may appear on WPR airwaves.

In August of 2020, WPR released its first report on the demographics of its on-air sources. Like others in public media, the station was concerned that its sources were white and male at levels that far outweighed their representation in the population as a whole. And, also like others, the initial data WPR collected showed that was at least partially true.

As a second year of data collection began, WPR made plans to improve representation of historically excluded groups in the organization's sourcing. The station appointed a source librarian to work with reporters and producers to find new voices for stories and expand the list of potential guest experts from underrepresented groups. WPR also revised the survey sent to sources to ask about their age range in addition to the previous questions about race and/or ethnicity, gender and geographic location.

In February 2022, the station's news and talk teams publicly released the results of its second annual study of the demographic diversity of sources. The data, which included FY2021 and the current SAS reporting period, FY2022, showed that WPR improved representation in the race and/or ethnicity category. In 2020, 85.49 percent of sources were white. In 2021, that share dropped to 80.92 percent. As the share of white sources on WPR shrunk, every other category of race and/or ethnicity reported in the survey grew.

While WPR believes there is more to be done, the organization was pleased to report progress in the effort to have more diverse voices on its airways. The report was shared on wpr.org, as part of station communications to supporters and through a media release.

WHA's three statewide daily call-in talk shows regularly address topics that focus on historically marginalized communities. The shows make efforts to both highlight achievements and celebrations in communities as well as shed light on issues affecting the communities. A few examples of topics examined in FY2022 were: the importance of Black spirituals, the experience of queer immigrants, and the elimination of barriers for Hispanic people seeking mental health services.

In FY2023, WPR will launch a new in-depth podcast called "WPR Reports: Uprooted." It looks at the lives of Cuban refugees who settled in Wisconsin after the Mariel Boatlift in 1980. The

project is co-produced and co-hosted by UW-La Crosse professor Omar Granados. In addition to the podcast, a special web section will include articles available in both English and Spanish. This will be the first time WPR has produced Spanish-language web content.

In addition to exploring issues of diversity through its news coverage, WPR's cultural content regularly features people and places that reflect Wisconsin's diverse population. "Wisconsin Life," a collaboration with PBS Wisconsin, has featured stories by and about immigration, religion, community and important figures and events of Wisconsin's past and present. Through community partnerships, the station regularly features and promotes events and educational activities that embrace diversity and inclusion.

Each January, the station broadcasts the official state ceremony honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., produced and hosted by WPR's Dr. Jonathan Øverby. WHA and its affiliates also live broadcast the annual State of the Tribes Address from the State Capitol. It is live streamed on wpr.org. During the reporting period, a committee of WPR, PBS Wisconsin and Educational Communications Board employees was formed to learn about and to craft a land acknowledgment statement, in collaboration with consultants. The work is part of a stationwide commitment to collaborating with, and learning from, First Nations in our service area.

In addition to its compliance with all state and federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission requirements, WPR works closely with its human resource offices at the University of Wisconsin to manage recruitment and hiring practices in an equitable and inclusive manner. On the recruitment side, the station promotes job openings through mainstream employment listings and paid, targeted promotion through social media and professional networks such as the National Black Journalists Association.

In hiring, WPR requires all members of the hiring committee to abide by EEOC standards, UW-Madison and State of Wisconsin standards and to understand the role that unconscious and implicit bias can play in the review of applicants and interviewees.

The station has also made adjustments to many position descriptions over the years to ensure that essential job functions reflect the reality of the work and do not unnecessarily include requirements that might privilege one group of people over another.

As noted previously in this report, WPR offers three different journalism fellowships primarily focused on early-career journalists. While one of those fellowships, the Second Century Fellowship, is exclusively available to people of color and others underrepresented in the field, each of the fellowships has attracted a more racially diverse applicant pool.

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?

WPR shares and preserves the stories of Wisconsin's people. Its programs celebrate Wisconsin's way of life. WPR reaches out beyond broadcasts to serve Wisconsin online and in the community. Without CPB funding, all of these things would be affected. WPR's news team and talk show producers work together to provide deeper coverage and conversation of big issues like elections, the economy, immigration, health and more. Because of strong funding support, WPR continues to attract and keep the best available broadcast hosts, producers and journalists. Without CPB funding, all of these things would be affected.

Federal support, in addition to state, business and individual support, is critical to WPR's balanced, sustainable and responsible approach to funding its essential services. During the pandemic, WPR saw a significant decline in support from business sponsors. The reliable support of CPB funding allows WPR to maintain services during critical news events, such as the COVID-19 public health emergency.

The scope of national programs broadcast on WHA and its affiliates would be greatly diminished without CPB's support. CPB funding allows us to produce local programming and announcements to serve the communities of affiliate stations WRST-Oshkosh, WHID-Green Bay, WRFW-River Falls, KUWS-Superior and WUWS-Ashland.

The scope of national programs broadcast on WHA and its affiliates would be greatly diminished without CPB's support. Programs like NPR's "On Point" and "1A" help keep listeners connected to the world and help put local and statewide content in a national or even international context.

CPB funding helps ensure that WPR's cultural programming is available for tens of thousands of listeners every week. And, of course, CPB funding contributes to WPR's ability to reach audiences beyond broadcast with online streaming, news and cultural content, mobile apps, community events and more.