



KCRW PLEDGE FOR EQUITY COMMUNITY REPORT
August 2021

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Introduction: A Letter to Our Community

Last summer, KCRW continued our commitment to better reflect the diversity of the community we serve, both within our organization and in the stories and content we put out into the world. Since then, we have been working from top to bottom and inside out, to fulfill the [KCRW Pledge for Equity](#).

Over the past year, we have thoroughly reexamined every facet of our operations to ensure we are embracing and showcasing diversity of voices and diversity of thought. We have formed dedicated task forces and engaged leading experts to guide us in these efforts. We have made critical new hires, invested in new tools and welcomed new faces to our Board. We are also taking a detailed look at the voices we feature and the news that we cover.

This is the first of what we intend to be an annual report to the community. It provides a snapshot of where we are today and outlines the path forward. As you will see, we are making meaningful progress toward each of our Pledge for Equity goals. And while there will always be more work to do, we are already seeing the positive impact of these ongoing efforts to build a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization.

KCRW is a special place with deep connections to the communities we serve. We are sharing this update with you because we believe this work is essential to fulfilling KCRW's mission as a public radio station, and we know it is important to be honest and transparent about what we have accomplished so far as well as the work that lies ahead.

Transforming an organization not only takes time, it takes deliberate commitment. This is my commitment and KCRW's.

We are grateful for your continued support.


Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Ferro". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jennifer Ferro
President, KCRW

Our Community

According to the U.S. Census, the Greater Los Angeles area, where KCRW listeners primarily reside, is home to approximately 18.71 million people across five counties. Below is how Greater Los Angeles residents identify by race and ethnicity:



Latino	48.6%
White Non-Hispanic	25.9%
Asian	14.5%
Black	7.7%
Other or 2 or more races	3.3%

Of the 18.71 million people in the Greater Los Angeles area, approximately 4.6% of them identify as LGBTQIA, according to a study done by Gallup and the Williams Institute at UCLA School of Law.

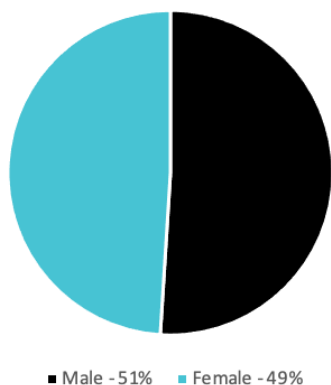
Our goal is for our workforce and audience to reflect the demographics of the Los Angeles area.

KCRW Workforce

In March 2021, we conducted a voluntary, anonymous survey of KCRW staff to collect demographic information. Eighty percent of all full-time and part-time employees participated. While contractors were not part of this survey, they are represented in our analysis of on-air voices.

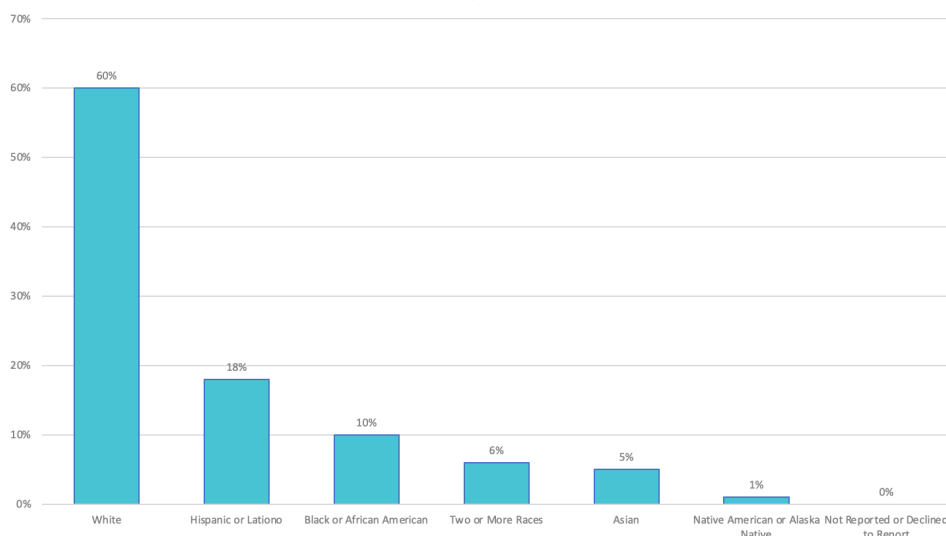
Sex & Gender Identity

As of March 2021



Race & Ethnicity

Race & Ethnicity as of March 2021



KCRW On-Air Voices

We examined all those hosting regular shows on KCRW 89.9 FM, including local and national hosts, from 5 a.m.-11 p.m. daily. This includes individuals on staff at KCRW, and hosts from programs distributed by NPR, American Public Media and PRX.

Of the [42] people:

- 33% are people of color (14)
- 35% are women (15)
- 14% are women of color (6)

KCRW Leadership

Senior Leadership Team

A ten-person senior leadership team at KCRW oversees all station operations, making major decisions around programming, budget, hiring, news coverage, development and marketing. Currently, two positions on the KCRW senior team are vacant.

In March 2021, Anyel Fields joined KCRW as Director of Culture Content, leading KCRW's award-winning programming team that focuses on food, entertainment, books and more.

Below is a snapshot of KCRW senior leadership team demographics as of June 2021:

Sex and Gender Identity:

Female	75%
Male	25%

Race and Ethnicity:

White	50%
AAPI	37%
Black	13%

Foundation Board of Directors

The 27 members of the KCRW Foundation Board of Directors represent local business and community leaders who have committed to place KCRW at the top of their philanthropic agenda and help the station fulfill its mission.

In June 2021, the KCRW Foundation Board created a new Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Access (DEIA) Committee to set goals for diversifying the KCRW Board, as well as to review the organization's existing DEI policies. As it aims to better reflect the diverse communities that KCRW serves, the four newest KCRW Board members all identify as people of color.

Below is a snapshot of KCRW Foundation Board demographics as of June 2021:

Sex and Gender Identity:

Female	38%
Male	62%

Race and Ethnicity:

White	78%
AAPI	11%
Black	7%
Latino	4%

These percentages are to help us track where we are presently. Our goal is to look like Los Angeles and reflect the diversity of our region. Part of the long term systems change process we are in with our DEI partners, Conscious Builders, will help us create goals to achieve this.

Hiring and Training

Our hiring efforts have been examined and redesigned. We now include engaging with community groups to source diverse candidates. We also converted to using a platform that tracks how job applicants are referred to KCRW so we can discern, to the best of our ability, that the candidate pool for all jobs reflects the diversity of our communities. We do not go forward with the hiring process until we agree we have made the best effort to recruit a diverse pool of candidates.

We are working with our diversity consultants to ensure our job announcements are inclusive.

We have made a commitment to sharing all job opportunities internally before posting them externally. And we have identified new ways to promote conscious inclusion in the hiring processes and better ensure an equitable candidate experience.

Importantly, we have shared job postings with representative groups to help KCRW diversify the pool of applicants, including:

- National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures
- PRADO
- Latino Journalists of California
- Latino Multimedia Communicators Facebook Page
- Young Black Journalists Facebook Page
- Journalists of Color in Public Media Slack Page
- Diverse Social Media Editors & Digital Journalists Facebook Page
- National Association of Hispanic Journalists
- National Association of Black Journalists
- Professional Diversity Network
- CA Diversity



N|A|L|A|C



NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF
BLACK JOURNALISTS
WWW.NABJ.ORG



Professional
Diversity Network

Retention: An important part of changing KCRW's workforce is focusing on employee retention. We have created a new onboarding process, which includes a mentor program, to help new employees understand the organization, feel that they belong, and know how to raise their voice at KCRW.

Management Training: We know an employee's experience at KCRW is reflected through the support they receive. We have committed to training our managers in feedback and communication, creating psychological safety and goal setting. This work is ongoing.

KCRW's Foundation Board of Directors has established a DEIA Committee. The DEIA Committee's charter seeks to fund DEI efforts for KCRW staff and evaluate DEI efforts in the staff and Board.

The KCRW Foundation Board has also made representation a priority in recruiting new Board members.

Pledge for Equity Progress Report

When we announced the KCRW Pledge for Equity in June of 2020, we shared two primary overarching goals: 1) Build a diverse workforce and audience that reflects the racial, ethnic, LGBTQIA and gender make-up of the Greater Los Angeles area; and 2) Foster a diverse and inclusive culture within KCRW.

In close coordination with our board, our employees and expert consultants, we have developed and steadily executed against a detailed action plan to achieve these goals. This progress report is aimed at keeping KCRW accountable and helping the community understand the work that is ongoing in some key areas of that action plan.

Cultivating a more equitable and inclusive workplace is not a task that will ever be complete. Rather, KCRW commits to continually examining and reconsidering our policies and processes, and evolving to better serve the communities we serve and our staff as we identify new areas for growth and improvement.

Part of the undoing structural racism and fostering an anti-racist environment work we are aspiring to embody is responding to and being flexible with feedback about the norms we take for granted. These principles guide us:

- Self-reflexivity
- Responsiveness
- Flexibility
- Constant course correction

Task Forces

KCRW has formed two task forces to help spearhead our diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives: the Language & Framing Task Force which focuses on how we create our content, and the Workplace Diversity Task Force, which will help set the agenda for promoting diversity and inclusion. Both are comprised of 10-12 people from across the organization, and they meet regularly and report to the entire organization during staff meetings. Their work is ongoing, and the task forces are expected to remain active indefinitely.

Workplace Diversity Task Force

The Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Task Force helped set a model for inclusiveness and action for the year by creating a set of “community agreements.” Community Agreements are a set of communication practices designed to help us navigate and begin to dismantle the harmful historical culture that can show up in our organization and society at large.

Our community agreements fall into three categories:

- Keep Perspective
- Actively Engage
- Build Relationships

The result is a list of demonstrable ways to promote more supportive interactions between KCRW staff members with examples of behaviors to ground them.

Alongside our DEI consultants, the Task Force created and distributed an anonymous Microaggressions Tracker and committed to reviewing these complaints on a quarterly basis with all staff. The microaggressions tracker anonymously collects instances of subtle and biased comments or behaviors. We also constructed a plan for “Pulse Surveys” to serve as a general temperature check on station employee morale. The Pulse Survey will help us understand and prioritize staff areas of concern and develop annual work plans to address them.

In addition, the station has updated our protocols for onboarding new employees in order to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for new team members.

The Task Force will also conduct a review of upcoming departmental DEI plans, and is developing a plan for all-staff educational workshops that will take place in the summer and fall of 2021.

Language & Framing Task Force

The Language & Framing Task Force has tackled an overall review of the content that KCRW puts forth, paying special attention to whether KCRW’s stories accurately and equally reflect the population of the Greater Los Angeles area.

Importantly, we found past stories have disproportionately represented certain communities, while leaving others underserved. We believe this illustrates why this work is so important as we did not expect to find this disproportionate representation. Our Task Force aims to combat this pattern, as well as make sure that KCRW is adopting current and correct language, especially with regard to underrepresented communities.

Several initiatives brought forth by this Task Force include the implementation of a Source Tracker across talk shows to measure who we give the microphone to and whether we are inviting expertise from the full diversity of the Los Angeles area to our airwaves.

The Language & Framing Task Force will continue to provide regular updates to the station’s Style Guide, including the maintenance of a discussion forum to guide KCRW producers and reporters on how to frame stories for and about particular communities.

DEI Education

In the second half of 2020, the KCRW team hosted five Diversity, Equity & Inclusion education workshops for employees and managers. By Fall of 2021, we will complete another series of all-staff education seminars focused on unconscious bias and microaggressions. Recognizing the importance of continuing education, KCRW has incorporated yearly DEI workshops for all staff into its annual budget moving forward.

To help guide us in these important efforts, KCRW has engaged leading experts.

Dr. Shaun Harper from USC's [Race and Equity Center](#), a noted expert on DEI transformations, held three all-staff sessions and five focus group listening sessions centered around creating an equitable and racism-free workplace. We have also begun a year-long engagement with Global Diversity and Inclusion Specialist Gamal J. Palmer, who is the Founder and Principal of [Conscious Builders](#) - to provide one-on-one DEI counseling and facilitate quarterly workshops that will help KCRW adopt a "systems change process" to build a more inclusive culture.

Conscious Builders also provides monthly office hours, open to any staff member and held privately in order to directly assist and confront any racial issues at work.

Through these ongoing education efforts, KCRW staff and managers are leading the way to creating permanent and lasting positive changes in our workplace.

Pay Equity

In September 2020, KCRW hired an independent expert to conduct a pay equity study, a statistical analysis to evaluate equity in compensation at the station across lines of race and sex, controlling for seniority, education level, number of direct reports and job groupings.

Race was analyzed both by white/non-white, as well as by race classes: African American, American Indian, Asian or Pacific Islander, Hispanic or two or more races.

Ultimately, the study revealed no statistically significant disparities for race or sex. And while the results were statistically neutral, KCRW subsequently reviewed the regression outliers and elected to make compensation adjustments to two individuals based on the findings.

KCRW commits to performing equity audits every two years moving forward.

Building a Pipeline for New Voices

KCRW is committed to recruiting a diverse range of candidates for all open positions. And we recognize that often depends on us creating opportunities for people to gain exposure to our industry and experience at the station.

Report LA Fellowship

Our Report LA Fellowship program is focused on recruiting underrepresented voices to public radio. The Fellowship pays full-time salaries and provides extensive training in public radio producing and reporting. The first cohort of Fellows worked with KCRW for two years and will be complete in September, 2021. We are proud to have placed one of those Fellows in a full-time position in our news department.

Building on the success of the program, KCRW will begin recruiting a second cohort of Fellows in June 2021.

How LAUSD's classic coffee cake evolved and led to love

By Danielle Chiriguayo • Feb. 19, 2020 LOS ANGELES



The LAUSD coffee cake is served in schools across LA County.

Photo credit: Danielle Chiriguayo.

Stories of Impact: A Report LA Fellow Turns Nostalgia Into a Huge Story

When KCRW fellow Danielle Chiriguayo found herself nostalgic for the iconic coffee cake sold at the lunch counter during her days as a student in the Los Angeles Unified School District, she decided to take a deep-dive into what made that coffee cake so special and tracked down the recipe for a story entitled [*"How LAUSD's classic coffee cake evolved and led to love."*](#)

It turned out Danielle was not alone in her nostalgia. Hundreds of others responded that they also shared fond memories of the delicious treat from their youth. The story quickly became one of KCRW's most popular pieces. Danielle Chiriguayo now works full time as a Digital News Producer and is heard on air talking about her stories.

KCRW Internships

KCRW's internship program provides opportunities to journalism students, SMC students and young professionals from diverse backgrounds who are looking for first-hand exposure to the industry. Participants learn what goes into making KCRW news programs, from writing to editing and voicing their work. KCRW hosted two interns remotely at the start of 2021, and will be continuing this internship program in the years ahead.

USC Luminary Fellow

In partnership with USC's Annenberg School for Communications and Journalism, KCRW hosted an undergraduate Fellow specifically to focus on learning how to produce podcasts. KCRW welcomes a new Fellow in June 2021.

Source Tracking

For nearly a year, KCRW producers have been tracking who we give the microphone to in both our music and talk programming. This source tracking allows us to see who appears on KCRW and then make adjustments when booking guests so we are hearing equally from the voices of Los Angeles. In addition, we mapped the locations of where our reported news coverage originated to see which regions/areas we were missing.

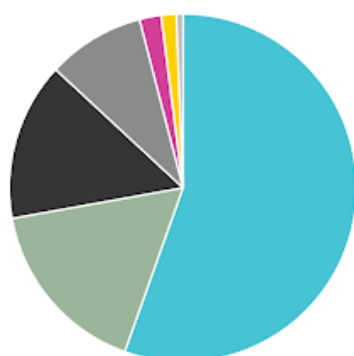
Diversity Tracker

In early 2021, KCRW launched a Diversity Tracker to map voices and topics featured on several key programs: Press Play, Greater LA, Morning Edition, All Things Considered, and Left Right & Center.

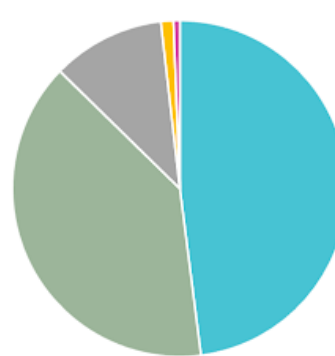
Our news teams for these programs were provided with a tutorial for how to utilize the tracker so it can help inform and shape their coverage. This tool is already helping the KCRW team to identify gaps as we seek to highlight more diverse voices and bring more listeners into the fold.

KCRW staff continue to refine the Diversity Tracker, as needed, to align with the station's long-term diversity goals. It will be rolled out to additional programs over the course of the coming year.

Race / Ethnicity



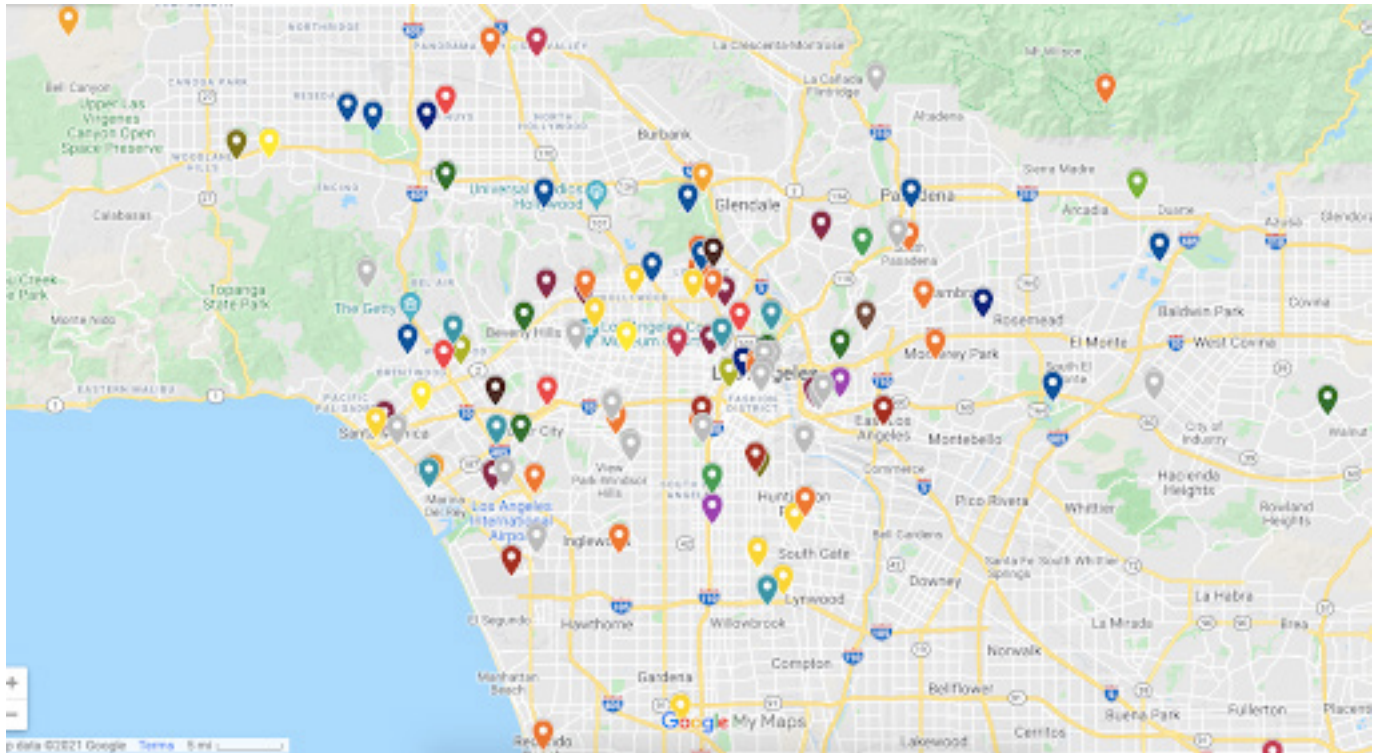
Gender



White - 55% Black - 17% Latinx - 15% Asian - 9% Two or More Ethnicities - 2% No Response - 1% Middle Eastern - 1% Cisgender Male - 48% Cisgender Female - 39% Not Provided - 11% Non-Binary - 1% Trans Gender - 1%

Geographic Story Map

One of the year's most beneficial initiatives was the rollout of a [geographic story map](#) for one of our marquee programs, "Greater LA", which allowed KCRW to more acutely visualize which communities were being left out of our coverage. This tool now enables our team to track which geographical areas are getting a disproportionate share of our news coverage, and who may not see themselves as much in our reporting.



Regular use of the geographic story mapping tool has made our entire team more accountable. We are now taking a more proactive approach to seeking out voices and stories in communities that have been historically underrepresented.

Hawaiian Gardens: Why LA County's smallest city is one of the least vaccinated against COVID-19

By Caleigh Wells • Mar. 15, 2021 CORONAVIRUS



A health worker prepares a COVID vaccine shot at Dodger Stadium, a massive vaccination site in LA County, March 13, 2021. It's 25 miles from Hawaiian Gardens, but frequently it's the closest site with available appointments.

Photo by Brian Hardzinski.

Stories of Impact: Drawing Attention to Communities in Need

When a geographic story map revealed that certain Los Angeles County communities were not being represented in KCRW's coverage, our news team began seeking out stories in those neighborhoods. After KCRW reporting shined a spotlight on the lack of a vaccine clinic in Hawaiian Gardens, Los Angeles County's smallest city, local Supervisor Janice Hahn placed a vaccine clinic in Hawaiian Gardens, and KCRW was able to be there when it opened.

A note from the Supervisor's office: "We had been working on setting up a pop up vaccine clinic in our district and your reporting really influenced our decision to put this clinic in Hawaiian Gardens." Office of Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn

Style Guide

KCRW's Style Guide has been evaluated and modified by the station's Language and Framing Task Force. The style guide is considered a living document and as such, is constantly updated to reflect changes with the times, and as NPR and AP change their own guidance. News staff are able to consult the style guide as editing issues arise.

The newsroom began a significant update to the [The KCRW Style Guide](#) in May and June 2020, soliciting input from communications, production, and reporting teams. The guide has some style issues unique to KCRW but uses substantial and widely accepted standards as a foundation, including those from [AP](#), [NPR](#), and other journalism organizations.

Most of the early additions and changes in the June 2020 time were focused on race/ethnicity, police violence and protests. Added entries included "Unarmed" and "When to include audio of violence" and avoiding the use of the term "minorities" when referring to people of color since it may be perceived as demeaning and is ignorant of the demographics of Los Angeles.

One general theme of updates made to the style guide in the last year could be described as reaffirmation of "people-first" language instead of "identity-first" language. This includes preference for "people experiencing homelessness" rather than "homeless people" and extends to descriptions of mental illness and disabilities. As a general rule, our default preference is people-first language so as not to limit a person's sole existence to a condition or experience.

In March 2021, editors and the Language & Framing Task Force discussed an update to the "profanity" entry and made some additions to which words would be bleeped on broadcast or digital.

In May 2021, we made additions to the "LGBTQIA" and "Gender identity" entries to reflect more comprehensive guidance from NPR in light of recent anti-trans legislation around the country, which led to robust national coverage. Updates such as those are communicated to the Language & Framing Task Force as well as KCRW producers.

Audience Engagement & Outreach

It is always our goal and mission to bring more listeners, readers and subscribers into the fold. We know that this starts first and foremost with the type of content we put forth. When people see and hear themselves in our programming, or see coverage of stories that interest and resonate with them, we are able to broaden the net of individuals seeking out KCRW for their news and cultural programming.

Engaging with Santa Monica College's Diverse Community

KCRW is committed to engaging the Santa Monica College community, where KCRW has its station, by holding roundtable discussions alongside the Dean and leadership of Santa Monica College's Center of Media & Design to create opportunities for students to learn about KCRW and study our work and efforts as a part of student curriculum once post-pandemic attendance returns.

Additionally, KCRW will be holding open houses, once COVID-19 protocols allow, for students to come and explore the job opportunities available to them through KCRW and learn the ins and outs and how to prepare for a career in the industry.

Podcast Bootcamp

KCRW will launch a pilot of a Podcast Bootcamp, a new endeavor designed to engage young people of color around telling their stories and using the technology of podcasts to do so. The program will equip young voices with the technological tools and the industry know-how to bring stories to life via audio recording.

Our hope is that this becomes a pipeline for new voices and stories to be a part of the KCRW community. The pilot will launch in Fall 2021.

Diversifying Our Audience

Our goal is for our audience to reflect the demographics of Los Angeles.

To set a baseline understanding of who our listeners are — and where we have room to grow and improve our reach — KCRW has begun the process of collecting data about our audience across all of our broadcasts, including radio, streaming, social media and podcasts. This data is being collected on a quarterly basis, and it will inform all aspects of our operations and planning.

In addition, audience research has been built into our FY22 budget, including surveys and other methods to better understand the habits of the audience we are lacking.

As we aspire to grow our target audience, we appreciate the stories that have resonated with our audiences and have had positive reverberating effects in the community.

New Opportunities

A number of suggestions emerged from our work with Shaun Harper from USC's Race and Equity Center. One was to work with a number of community organizations who serve the communities of color in Los Angeles. For our Spring 2021 fundraiser, KCRW partnered with three nonprofits that focus on housing, education, and public health in Los Angeles' diverse communities. This allowed us to raise awareness of the work done in many neighborhoods of Los Angeles and raise awareness of their efforts.

Bringing young diverse voices to the table for active engagement on KCRW's content and platforms is an important part of achieving our audience diversity goals. In 2020, KCRW held two audience engagement and listening sessions with the Snap Foundation's Youth Advisory Committee to hear how they respond to public radio and the ability to access KCRW's content.

KCRW needs supporters like you. Help us unlock our future — while supporting unhoused Angelenos

Written by Jennifer Ferro • May. 04, 2021



With vaccinations and re-openings, life right now is all about the future. Now we decide what to leave behind and where to refocus. **Here at KCRW, we have been thinking about how we can help build a better tomorrow.** KCRW's Drive to the Future is our spring fundraiser benefiting KCRW and community organizations in the LA area.

Stories of Impact: KCRW's Spotlight Helps a Community Organization Expand Its Reach

During KCRW's [Drive to the Future](#) spring fundraiser, we partnered with three local community organizations to spotlight and support their important work. KCRW intentionally selected organizations that focus on public health, education, and housing — three areas where Los Angeles experienced crises over the past year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The results were remarkable, and speak to the power and passion of the KCRW audience. As one nonprofit leader shared: *"We saw a 27% increase in our web traffic during the week that KCRW highlighted our work. And I got a lot of calls about it. KCRW is such a trusted news source for those who listen to it. It's a great validator for our work to have KCRW lifting us up as a high-quality nonprofit working on LA's housing and homelessness challenges."*

Looking Ahead

It is KCRW's steadfast commitment to continually check-in with our efforts as they relate to the Pledge for Equity, reassess our approach as needed, and continue working towards cultivating a more equitable and diverse workplace at KCRW. Our workforce, our audience, and our Greater Los Angeles community all depend on it.

Much of the work mentioned in this document is ongoing. Many ideas of how to improve our workforce have been adopted, and many more are likely to become part of our plan as we discover additional ways to improve our workplace culture for all employees, all voices, and all identities.

Below we have listed our ongoing, and forward-looking efforts. This list is not exhaustive, and does not intend to reflect every single initiative KCRW is currently undergoing.

KCRW is actively:

- Collecting and reviewing demographic data from our staff, leadership teams, and audience to help better serve the community, and have our workforce better reflect the Greater Los Angeles region that we proudly serve.
- Recruiting for our Senior Leadership Team, and sourcing diverse candidates for consideration.
- Working with the KCRW Foundation Board's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Access (DEIA) Committee to review the organization's DEIA policies, with particular attention to the Board of Directors itself.
- Reassessing our hiring practices to source a more diverse talent pool, while working with partner organizations to uplift diverse candidates.
- Refocusing on employee retention by making KCRW a great place to work, listening to employee feedback, and prioritizing internal candidates for KCRW roles first.
- Increasing our emphasis on management training, so employees feel heard and supported.
- Identifying opportunities to facilitate career advancement for employees.
- Holding regular meetings for our Workplace Diversity Task Force, conducting "Pulse Surveys" and planning for all-staff educational workshops that will take place in the summer and fall of 2021.
- Holding regular meetings for our Language & Framing Task Force, ensuring that KCRW is utilizing current and appropriate language, especially with regard to historically excluded communities, and updating our style guides to reflect contemporary approaches.
- Continuously reexamining our style guide and, pending the recommendations from our Language & Framing task force, updating the guide accordingly.
- Partnering with external DEI consultants to jumpstart our DEI review, while organizing an additional series of all-staff education seminars focused on unconscious bias and microaggressions, and planning for annual DEI all-staff workshops.

- Performing an organization-wide pay audit every two years.
- Opening up fellowship opportunities specifically designed to incorporate and retain underrepresented voices in KCRW's newsroom.
- Continuing to host interns for education-intensive internships that show aspiring young professionals what it is like to work for a news organization.
- Tracking our sources to determine where reported news coverage originates to see which regions/areas we aren't serving as well as we could.
- Refining our newly launched "Diversity Tracker" that maps voices and topics on key KCRW shows, to ensure that our coverage matches our long-term diversity goals.
- Planning for roundtable discussions and open houses to create opportunities for students at Santa Monica College to learn about KCRW and study our work and efforts as a part of the student curriculum once post-pandemic attendance returns.
- Launching the pilot of our new Podcast Bootcamp to familiarize young people of color with sharing their stories on the podcast medium.
- Championing audience research efforts, including surveys, to better understand the habits of the audience that do not consume KCRW content.
- Incorporating young voices into our audience engagement and listening sessions to hear how they respond to public radio and the ability to access KCRW's content.
- Launching a performance management process and protocols, in concert with Conscious Builders, ensuring there is a clear, consistent methodology for delivering bilateral feedback, rewarding strong performers, and supporting professional development for staff.

We will continue to add and adjust our ongoing efforts to reflect the needs of our organization, our workforce, and our community.

KCRW Staff

For questions about the KCRW Pledge for Equity or this report, please contact Head of People, Sistina Smith, sistina.smith@kcrw.org.



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