



Corporation  
for Public  
Broadcasting

## Innovation in Public Media

Through leadership and investments, CPB supports innovation to strengthen the quality of public media's content and services, to deepen audience engagement and to address the rapidly changing ways in which people are using media.

Public media has a history of innovating to meet audience demands for high-quality content by blending traditional media and the latest technology and trends. As an industry leader on the forefront in accessibility, content creation and distribution across multiple platforms, public media delivers on its mission to educate our nation's children, foster a civil society through high-quality news and information services, and engage with diverse audiences.

### Content Creation & Collaboration

Providing compelling, locally produced content across platforms is essential to public media stations' future viability. CPB supports content creation and distribution using new technologies and opportunities for increased efficiencies.

#### Journalism Collaborations

CPB supports a network of local and regional news organizations that, in partnership with national producers, strengthen public media's role as a trusted source of news and information. CPB has invested more than \$32 million to help launch 34 journalism collaborations connecting 139 public media stations in 42 states.

With funding from CPB, WAMU, Washington D.C.'s NPR station, launched *IA Across America* to bring more local viewpoints to *IA*'s national audiences. Six public media stations across the country are contributing coverage on underreported local issues and points of view to the weekday program, through on-air discussions, interviews, field reporting and live events.

NPR News and *PBS NewsHour* cover political conventions, reaching audiences across radio, television and digital platforms and leveraging local station reporting in national coverage.

#### Storytelling

With CPB support, the Association for Independents in Radio (AIR) launched [Localore](#), which pairs stations with independent producers to explore storytelling models, one of which became the people-powered journalism platform Hearken.

CPB has also funded New York Public Radio's [Werk It](#) Women's Podcasting Festival and PRX's [Project Catapult](#), which help open podcasting to more diverse voices.

#### Public Media Firsts

1977—[NPR](#) pioneered accessible radio technology, creating live-captioned and braille radio programming.

1978—CPB introduced the first U.S. Satellite Program Distribution System, which enabled national distributors, state and regional networks, stations and producers to distribute programming to public media licensees in all 50 states and the territories.

1979—With CPB support, [PBS](#) was the first network to offer closed-captioned and descriptive video service for TV.

1994—CPB funded the first Native American satellite radio network.

2002—Seven public TV stations were among the first DTV broadcasters.

2009—[PBS KIDS](#), the No. 1 streaming website for children, was the first to offer full episodes available for free.

2009—NPR, PRX, PRI and American Public Media developed the first [app to stream public radio](#) on the iPhone.

2012—NPR was the first major news organization to release [mobile apps with in-car capability](#).

2014—The award-winning podcast "Serial," produced by the creators of "This American Life," was the fastest podcast ever to reach 5 million downloads in iTunes.

2017—PBS KIDS launched the first and only national [24/7 children's channel available for free](#), without a subscription.

## Content Sharing

CPB's support of local and national collaborations extend the reach of public radio's diverse content. [VuHaus](#), a collaboration of public media stations, provides a free digital music video service that introduces emerging and established artists to new audiences through a website and mobile app. VuHaus music directors curate performance videos and interviews and stream live concerts and events from leading public radio stations in markets across the United States. Public media stations can access a variety of programming for use on-air and online through **Channel X**, a cloud-based platform for discovery and exchange of independent local and regional content.

## Leadership Development

### Digital Culture Accelerator

With CPB support, station leaders are exploring new digital tools and opportunities to expand traditional broadcast operations through digital technologies, platforms and cross-departmental collaboration. Lessons learned from the first three stations that piloted the Digital Culture Accelerator were compiled in a Digital Playbook and made available to stations across the country. The initiative is expanding to 17 more stations in late 2018.

### Digital Immersion Program

In 2017, CPB funded the first Digital Immersion Program, a PBS training and mentorship program for digital staff from public television stations across the country. The program has helped personnel at 75 stations with essential skills like data-based decision making, multi-platform strategies, and digital content creation and distribution.

## Accessibility Technologies

### Emergency Services

Public media stations' public safety roles vary widely across the system, ranging from facilitating first responder communication to alerting services to ongoing efforts to educate and inform the public about disasters such as hurricanes, floods and wildfires. PBS WARN allows cellular carriers to receive emergency alerts. The Florida Public Radio Emergency Network (FPREN), a collaboration of 13 public radio stations, provides statewide multimedia updates during hurricanes or other emergencies to stations across the state, their websites, social media channels and on mobile devices via the Florida Storms app. CoastAlaska, a network of public radio stations in southeastern Alaska, created portable radio station kits and in 2017 sent two of them to Puerto Rico so public radio stations could resume broadcasting after Hurricane Maria. And many public radio stations use the MetaPub data delivery system, increasing their ability to issue weather alerts on mobile and other digital devices.

## Educational Media

With support from CPB and other partners, public media stations provide a range of innovative educational and learning services for use in and outside the classroom, based on local needs. Families trust public media to provide content that is safe, fun, free and educational for their children.

The [Ready To Learn](#) (RTL) initiative, a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Education, CPB and PBS, provides essential funds for educational media, including groundbreaking experiences that connect broadcast and digital platforms, analytics-driven and open-source educational tools, and rigorous research. Findings from a recent RTL [national survey](#) will shape future media strategies for parents interested in helping teach their children science concepts.

CPB's longstanding support for innovative children's media projects has positioned public media as a trusted online destination. Projects include the PBS KIDS' immersive world for children, [Kart Kingdom](#), and cutting-edge experiments in integrating digital games into the PBS KIDS 24/7 Channel. Interactive learning resources such as [PBS LearningMedia](#) are available for free for teachers and parents.

CPB also supports locally driven innovation projects like the **New Generation Initiative** developed by Rocky Mountain PBS and six other stations, which uses text messaging to provide educational supports to parents and children in their communities. In June 2018, CPB announced [education innovation grants](#) to 50 public media stations to explore innovative ways to use media to meet pressing educational needs in their communities.