

 **CLASSICAL MUSIC RISING**

Report to Partners

July 2017



STATION RESOURCE GROUP

Classical Music Rising

Classical Music Rising is strengthening classical music radio in a time of dramatic change, benefitting audiences on-air, online and in-person, and connecting classical music communities across the nation.

July 2017

Our broad goal is a strategic vision for classical music radio anchored in public service, reaching more diverse audiences, and bridging the enduring strength of broadcast radio, the growing power of digital media, and the direct connections of in-person activities.

Strategic vision

We are creating foundational knowledge and insights about classical radio’s audiences, staffing, technology, and community perceptions.

Knowledge and insight

We are fostering partnerships and collaborations among stations across the country, more robust interactions within communities, and alliances within and outside public media.

Partnerships and collaborations

Working together, stations are creating action plans for public media organizations to ensure that classical music’s beauty, emotion, and power will reach an even wider and more diverse circle.

Plans for action

Steering Committee

Brenda Barnes, *Chair*
 President
 USC Radio, Los Angeles

Matt Abramowitz
 Program Director
 WQXR, New York

Nick Kereakos
 Senior Vice President, Chief
 Technology Officer and General
 Manager of Regional Services
 American Public Media

Jennifer Ridewood
 General Manager
 KING, Seattle

Personnel

Wende Persons
 Managing Director
 Classical Music Rising

Terry Clifford
 Tom. Thomas
 co-CEOs, SRG

Funders

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THE
 ANDREW W.



**Building
connection,
participation,
and
awareness**

We are creating a sense of shared purpose, collegiality, and partnership among classical stations.

We are sharing findings and recommendations with other public media organizations and at meetings and conferences that assemble public media professionals.

We are promoting the growing strength of classical music radio within public media and the larger classical community.

Classical Music Rising launched in 2016 against a backdrop of classical stations working largely in isolation from one another, the larger public media community, and much of the classical music ecosystem. Stations were saddled with a legacy narrative of declining fortunes.

We are working to build a sense of collective identity, pride, and ownership of this initiative. Twenty-three station organizations have joined four founding stations as CMR Partners. Much of our work is springing from the strategic thinking of small teams: CMR's Steering Committee, Working Groups, Sounding Boards, and consultants who are tackling our major topics.

Partner stations, along with many others in public media and the larger classical field, are now receiving regular communications through CMR's "All Things Classical" newsletter, which highlights work within our project and the accomplishments of our partners and others.

CMR has an open website where we publish project reports and recommendations, research from other sources, an archive of project newsletters, and an interactive station locator. www.classicalmusicrising.org

We are reaching out to the press and key individuals within public media and the classical music community, highlighting the role, achievements, and plans of classical stations. This outreach is resulting in stories about classical music radio in industry publications, invitations to present at meetings and conferences, and connections with potential collaborators.

Our first national gathering of partners in August 2016 brought together 30 classical station leaders. We expect to welcome some 40 executives to our second partner gathering in August 2017.

Understand classical music radio's audiences

Gather and synthesize research about classical music's broadcast audience and make critical findings accessible to all classical stations.

Examine emerging data, metrics and analytics surrounding use of classical music on digital platforms.

Audience Research support

George Bailey
Walrus Research

Scott Williams
Director of Audience Research,
KBAQ | KJZZ, Phoenix

Lori Kaplan
Senior Director, Audience
Insight & Research, NPR

Dave Sullivan
Manager of PPM Client
Services, Radio Research
Consortium

CMR commissioned a multi-year analysis of listening to public radio's all-classical stations. The report by Walrus Research highlighted major trends, our most successful stations, listener demographics, and key dynamics of audience behavior. We presented findings at our August 2016 meeting and shared them on the CMR website. We have commissioned a follow-up report for August 2017.

We have complemented our own analysis with audience findings from sources such as Jacobs Media's *Tech Survey*, Edison Research's *Infinite Dial* reports, and others sources that take our perspective beyond broadcasting into the digital context for our work.

A digital audience metrics presentation at the 2016 CMR meeting showcased ways in which KING, Minnesota Public Radio, and WQXR are tracking their online and on-demand work. We will "double down" with an in-depth session at the 2017 meeting.

NPR prepared a custom report for CMR that tracked changes in patterns of classical music radio listening on an hour-by-hour basis, comparing 2016 to 2012.

A month-by-month benchmarking report launched this year is presenting topline audience numbers for CMR's partners, accompanied by quarterly conference calls to discuss important trends. This is the first time classical music stations have come together as a group to examine this kind of data. The next group session will be a webinar in late July to analyze PPM data and trends for the first half of the calendar year.

In the coming months we will:

- Collect and publish qualitative information about the classical audience – values, interests, and lifestyle.
- Leverage the work of SRG's Audience Intelligence project to help assess the digital analytics capacities and tools used at classical stations.

Make the case for classical music radio

Develop a “Case for Classical Radio” by exploring how cultural and civic leaders and current and potential funders think about the future of classical music in our communities and how they perceive and value our stations.

Making the Case Working Group

Jennifer Ridewood, *Chair*
KING, Seattle

George Preston
KCME, Colorado Springs

Bill Lueth
KDFC, San Francisco

Joe Barr, Paul Conley
KXPR, Sacramento

Brian Newhouse
Minnesota Public Radio

Anita Bugg, Nina Cardona
WFCL, Nashville

Deborah Acklin
WQED, Pittsburgh

Rapporteur
Deborah Lein

Classical Music Rising partners aspire to greater significance in their communities – on their own or as part of larger, multiple service public media organizations. The anchor of that significance is a widely used, highly valued radio service. But there are also opportunities to leverage that reach and value into more visible and valuable cultural and civic roles, both within the local arts ecosystem and beyond it.

CMR has been pursuing a better understanding and stronger articulation of classical stations’ current and prospective value as a pivotal element of our initiative. This work helps frame a strategic vision of the service we can provide to our communities, highlights opportunities for partnerships with other organizations, and provides a foundation from which to seek philanthropic support locally and nationally.

CMR’s Making the Case Working Group created a model for this work, based on station leaders directly engaging with community leaders to explore how classical stations can increase their impact and value. Their report, *The Classical Station as Community Connector*, offers “a strong sense that sustaining our mission and our organizations requires more than our broadcast service alone, and that there are opportunities for classical stations to be a force for good in our communities.”

Our next step is to “go large” with the concepts developed by the Working Group, enlisting other stations in similar outreach to leaders in their communities, leading to both local perspectives and a roll-up of common themes from across the country. We will gather and share our collective knowledge of ways to engage with our communities and achieve larger, more significant roles.

We are retaining consultant Deborah Lein, who prepared our report on the first phase of this work, to foster and coordinate the wider effort, report on local experiences, and synthesize an overview case. She is the former COO of Greater Public, public media’s development and marketing support organization.

Strengthen classical music radio's workforce

Document the character, dynamics, and needs of our current workforce.

Bring new voices, new perspectives, and a diverse new generation into our organizations.

Workforce Working Group

Judy McAlpine, *Lead*
McAlpine Creative Consulting

Frank Dominguez
General Manager & Content
Director, WDAV Charlotte

José A. Fajardo
President & General Manager
Hawaii Public Radio

Daniel Gilliam
Director of Radio
Louisville Public Media

Ruth Phinney
Program Director
WXXI FM Rochester

Maggie Stapleton:
Assistant Station Manager
KING FM Seattle

To capture baseline data regarding the size, composition, and training needs of classical public radio personnel, CMR completed a first-ever, in-depth survey of the classical music radio workforce. The study included all-classical stations, mixed-format stations that present news and music, and national organizations.

The results were sobering, highlighting impending generational change, the need for training in new skills, and obstacles to achieving the diversity in staffing that many stations seek.

The Working Group that led this effort also set out concrete steps we might take together to make progress that would be very difficult for any one station acting alone. The most significant recommendations require finding new investments:

- Training modules for on-air presentation skills and digital skills for hosts and producers.
- A fellowship/internship program to develop new talent at stations with the goal of increasing diversity of staff and adding to diversity of ideas.
- A partnership with AIR (Association of Independents in Radio) on a project designed to increase diversity and skills related to classical music content, particularly digital content.

We are pursuing other steps with current resources:

- Classical music radio job opportunities are a feature of the “All Things Classical” newsletter and are published on the CMR website.
- CMR is taking an active role in the design and presentation of classical-music-focused workshops at the annual conferences of Public Radio Program Directors and Greater Public, the support organization for public media fundraising and marketing.

There may be additional ways to support those stations most actively recruiting and hiring in coming months.

**Achieve greater
use of our
services with
effective
branding,
promotion, and
marketing**

Evaluate our current efforts, assess our assets, and offer recommendations for future work.

Develop promotion and marketing knowledge and tools that stations can put to work.

Classical Spark

Craig Curtis, *Coordinator*

Project design support
Deborah Blakeley
Blakeley & Company

CMR's first report was a national overview of classical radio's outdoor, print, online, and on-air station marketing, featuring KBAQ, WUOL, and Vermont Public Radio. A second report, presented at the 2016 PRPD conference, showcased WDAV, KBAQ, KUSC and KDFC, WUOL, and All Classical Portland. Both reports were prepared by CMR Managing Director Wende Persons, include creative material and before and after audience data, and are available on the CMR website.

Station listening sessions led us to focus on branding and on-air promotion "inside-the-walls" before turning to significantly more expensive promotion tactics such as billboards. A handful of stations already get high marks in this area and other CMR partners will benefit from a whole-group effort to lift all boats.

CMR worked over the winter with marketing and promotion advisors to design a joint on-air campaign loosely based on NPR's successful "Spark" effort. We subsequently retained promotion and positioning expert Craig Curtis to coordinate the project, which we have named Classical Spark.

Classical Spark will simultaneously sharpen station branding and highlight benefits for listeners. Our goal is to increase midday listening, our format's most important daypart. The key to success will be the significant promotional commitment being made by partner stations, which should spark (so to speak) measurable increases in listening locally and nationally. Increased listening and more loyal audiences are, in turn, the paths to increased listener contributions.

CMR is supporting stations with the newly created guide *Classical Spark: Best Practice Guide to Effective On-Air Positioning and Promotion* and with a promotional "tool box" of material, including liners, positioners and scripts for live use, along with produced promos and supporting digital content for web and social media.

Shape a compelling classical music digital service

Success in the rapidly evolving digital environment requires moving to new approaches, business arrangements, and alliances.

We are documenting current station projects and aspirations and moving forward on rights issues and metrics to better understand our digital audiences.

Still to come is a planning team that will look to higher level initiatives.

Metrics That Matter

Mark Fuerst
Public Media Futures

CMR's digital work began with a survey and report on partners' current digital activities, identifying a short list of key activities for each station, why the station decided to pursue them, and how they believe these activities have performed.

The "All Things Classical" newsletter is an ongoing vehicle to guide stations to reports and studies that document the growing use of digital media and the implications for both radio and the music industry.

Our next steps are focused on two key elements of successful digital strategies for classical stations – navigating the rights issues associated with providing music in on-demand, interactive services and mastering the complex array of metrics and analytics to better understand how audiences use our digital offerings.

On the rights front, we published two legal guides to music rights for public media on the CMR website and arranged a music rights briefing for classical stations with Ashley Messenger, NPR's lead rights attorney.

We are currently surveying CMR partners' current work and aspirations for using music in on-demand content as a way to frame classical station priorities for pursuing new rights arrangements with labels and publishers.

With respect to metrics and analytics, we will connect efforts currently centered on public radio's news services to the classical space, beginning with briefings leading up to and following CMR's August gathering.

In the months ahead, we will organize a planning team of station executives, working with a national level consultant, to advance strategies and plans for digital and on-demand services, with particular attention to higher-level initiatives and business opportunities that stations can pursue together.

Increase
financial
support to
sustain our
work

We are exploring ways to increase stations' capacities in areas that are now at the outer edges of their fundraising.

Public media's central business model is that public support follows public service – that listener contributions, corporate sponsorships, government funds, and philanthropy all are driven by the value and impact of our programming and other value that we bring to our communities.

CMR's approach is that work to increase financial support for classical music radio will similarly follow our work in other areas – informed and guided by a better understanding of audience use, a stronger case for our current value and larger role, and a clearer path in the digital space.

With respect to federal support, we have worked to raise the profile of classical music radio in the collective case for continued funding of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, including an SRG presentation to the CPB board of directors and developing support material for the Protect My Public Media grass roots campaign.

We are in the very early stages of assessing the feasibility of and interest in national underwriting sales for classical music radio, aiming toward presenting options at CMR's August meeting.

We will bring into CMR the findings from an SRG demonstration project on mobile giving in which three CMR partners participated. Known best practices and continuing testing can improve giving results on this important and expanding platform.

Our next steps will turn toward major gifts from individuals and foundations, exploring ways in which we can support stations in developing such gifts and looking for joint projects which achieve a scale that may be more attractive for significant philanthropic investments.

**Classical
Music
Rising
Partners**

By market rank

Classical Music
Rising partners
operate
82 classical stations.

Many of these
organizations also
operate public radio
stations providing
news and
information.

Eight also operate
public television
stations.

- WQXR | New York Public Radio
New York
- KUSC
Los Angeles
- WFMT
Chicago
- KDFC
San Francisco
- WETA
Washington
- WRTI
Philadelphia
- WCRB
Boston
- KING
Seattle
- KBAQ
Phoenix
- Minnesota Public Radio
St Paul
- KVOD | Colorado Public Radio
Denver
- WDAV
Charlotte
- WQED
Pittsburgh
- KXPR | Capital Public Radio
Sacramento
- WGUC | Cincinnati Public Radio
Cincinnati
- WCLV | ideastream
Cleveland
- KMFA
Austin
- WOSU Classical 101
Columbus
- WFCL | Nashville Public Radio
Nashville
- WUOL | Louisville Public Media
Louisville
- WXXI
Rochester
- KHPR | Hawaii Public Radio
Honolulu
- WDPR | Discover Classical
Dayton
- KCME
Colorado Springs
- KBSU
Boise
- WOXR | Vermont Public Radio
Burlington
- WILL
Urbana