

2014 Diversity Statement – KUSP, Santa Cruz, CA

KUSP publishes this statement annually in September to comply with requirements of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting Community Service Grant program.

KUSP reaches a global audience through its online services, but for the purposes of this diversity statement, we focus specifically on the geographic area defined by the coverage of our FM signals. This region of central California includes the Monterey Bay area and Big Sur coast, the Salinas Valley, the upper Santa Clara Valley, and surrounding foothill and mountain areas.

Like California as a whole, this region is characterized by demographers as “majority-minority” – that is, no traditionally-defined ethnicity (Latino, African-American, Asian-American, etc.) represents a majority of the population. In many communities within our coverage area, Spanish is the dominant language in the household as frequently (or more so) as English. One current KUSP program, focusing on Afro-Latin jazz, is presented as bilingual Spanish-English, but in general we have found it impractical to produce and broadcast Spanish-language content. The region is also served by other public radio stations that broadcast in Spanish and indigenous American languages. We have sought, and continue to seek, editorial partnerships with Spanish-language media that would diversify our editorial voice and perspective.

A project now in development would diversify the age, socio-economic background, and ethnic make-up of the voices heard on KUSP and concurrently support our commitment to education. We are currently pursuing grant funding to support an educational collaboration with public schools in the Pajaro Valley (southern Santa Cruz County). This region is majority Latino. The proposed collaboration would enhance existing journalism programs at the high school level in the Pajaro Valley Unified School District. A grant-funded training coordinator and KUSP news personnel would work with students and faculty to integrate audio production into the existing journalism curriculum. As a product of this training, students would produce audio news features that could potentially be distributed in multiple ways, including radio broadcast on KUSP and Internet distribution via kusp.org. The project as proposed would extend from November 2014 until August 2015.

The Nominating Committee of the ‘Pataphysical Broadcasting Foundation, Inc. (KUSP’s licensee) has made diversity a formal priority in recruitment for KUSP’s governing and advisory boards since 2012. In both 2013 and 2014 the Foundation added persons of color who had not previously served to its Board of Directors. In 2014 a person of color was newly appointed to the KUSP Community Advisory Board.

In 2014 KUSP also sponsored the attendance of the Nominating Committee chair at a training workshop on board recruitment presented by CompassPoint Nonprofit Services. Based in Oakland, California, CompassPoint serves nonprofits across northern and central California and is recognized nationally for their effectiveness in strengthening and building diversity in the organizations it assists.

In programming service terms, KUSP is very cognizant of the emerging generational shifts in use of various public media. Our audience research has noted the increasing median age of listeners to our FM radio service (which is now approximately 25 years older than the median age of the counties in our coverage area). In part for this reason, KUSP has invested a large share of its limited resources in developing Internet services, which are now accessible through kusp.org, iTunes Radio, podcasts, and the NPR One mobile app. In 2014 KUSP received an Edward R. Murrow Award from the Radio Television Digital News Association, recognizing kusp.org as the best broadcast-related web site in the California/Pacific region among stations in smaller and middle-sized markets (including both commercial and non-commercial stations).