

NPR: A STRATEGIC PLAN



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I. NPR'S STRATEGIC ASPIRATION

We will be the model for high quality journalism in the 21st century, strengthening the cultural, civic and social fabric of our democracy.

We will build on our heritage as reporters and storytellers, on our intimate relationship with audiences, and on our capacity for innovation in order to create a space where audiences congregate, connect and contribute to a shared understanding of the wider world.

We strive to feed the mind and satisfy the soul.

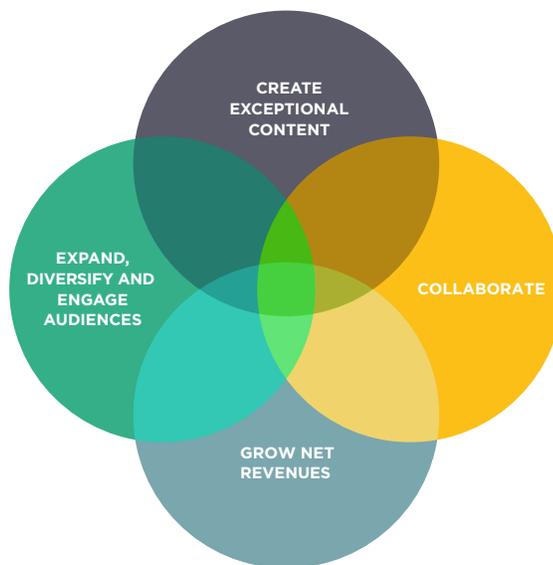
II. NPR'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

To realize our strategic aspiration, we have established four strategic priorities. They are of equal weight and priority.

- **Create exceptional content.** We must enhance core news programs and distinctive topic coverage. NPR's investment in journalism over the past 40 years has fueled the growth in its audience and led it to become a preeminent source of news and cultural programming. NPR intends to build on this strong heritage – offering context, sparking conversation, and satisfying listeners' curiosity.
- **Expand, diversify and engage our audiences.** Audience service is at the heart of public radio's purpose and its business. To be relevant and fulfill its mission, public radio must create news and entertainment content that serves the needs of the broad American public and innovate on new platforms. To be sustainable, public radio must generate revenues directly and indirectly (e.g., sponsorship, grants) from that audience. For NPR to remain vital and vibrant in the future, it must therefore maintain its core audience, expand its reach, diversify its audience and engage its users.
- **Collaborate.** We must play a lead role in strengthening the non-commercial public radio network through collaboration, strategic partnerships, service, and sound management. As a public media system, all parties will be strengthened by leveraging their collective assets and acting as a true interconnected network. In the face of external competition and funding constraints, the system must take full advantage of its combined reporting and programming capacity, digital investments, brand, infrastructure, and development expertise. A strong network cannot exist without a strong station community. NPR is committed to working in partnership to ensure that Member stations continue to provide relevant service to their communities and generate local support.
- **Grow net revenues.** We must increase revenues and effectively manage costs in order to ensure a sustainable financial business model for NPR and public radio. For the system to remain vital and viable, it must identify ways to increase net revenues, both at NPR and at all local stations. Future revenue growth is likely to come through a combination of deeper engagement with individuals, stronger collaboration with partners and stations, improved corporate sponsorship, and the creative use of the full portfolio of NPR assets. Entrepreneurial approaches in these areas, combined with strong cost management practices, must be embraced.

II. NPR'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Together, these four strategic priorities will position the organization to fulfill our mission in the coming years. All four are important, and they are interlocking.



III. THE PATH FORWARD

The following is a look at what the strategic aspiration and priorities can achieve for NPR and public radio.

CREATE EXCEPTIONAL CONTENT

ASPIRATIONAL OUTCOME:

We will illuminate the local, national, and global experience in an unparalleled way with journalistic rigor, distinctive voices, and creative story-telling.

- We will continually improve the perception of trust and quality for those familiar with NPR and maintain our top rankings in these areas.
- We will enhance our standing as a best-in-class content provider with industry standard bearers.

GOALS FOR NEXT THREE TO FIVE YEARS:

- Compelling, relevant, diverse, and distinctive content in our drive-time and weekend news programs that embodies NPR's brand values.
- Increased news reporting across all day-parts and platforms, including through newscasts, to address consumer expectations and drive audience growth and engagement.
- Undisputed leadership in selected areas of specialization: international reporting; the global economy; politics; science and health; education; music; books; and stories at the intersection of race, ethnicity, and culture.
- A 21st century content organization, designed to produce multi-platform journalism consistent with NPR's brand values.
- A collaborative newsgathering model that transforms NPR and Member Station newsrooms into a true network that can move faster, dig deeper, and reflect the fabric of America.

III. THE PATH FORWARD

EXPAND, DIVERSIFY, AND ENGAGE AUDIENCES

ASPIRATIONAL OUTCOME:

We will reflect 21st century America across platforms through our staffing, content and the audiences we reach.

- We will expand awareness of public radio.
- We will increase total listening across platforms.
- We will increase audience engagement with public radio.
- We will increase the diversity of the audience by age, ethnicity and geography.
- We will increase the diversity of NPR talent.
- We will increase the diversity of sources by age, ethnicity, geography, and gender.

GOALS FOR THE NEXT THREE TO FIVE YEARS:

- Increased diversity in NPR's coverage and audience as the result of the following:
 - Create or showcase talent and content that appeals to people of varied ages, ideologies, ethnic backgrounds (with an emphasis on Latino audiences as one of the fastest growing demographic segments), and geographic affiliations, using relevant platforms and venues (e.g., Code Switch, Planet Money, NPR Music, WWDTM, Fresh Air, TED Radio Hour, and NPR-branded events).
 - Increase the diversity of voices and stories in the core programs (particularly Morning Edition, All Things Considered, and the weekend news shows).
- Well-designed digital offerings and platforms that build users' connection to and engagement with NPR and local stations so that audience service and revenues grow substantially even as listening behaviors change.
- A comprehensive understanding of user behavior and preferences across public media that drives improved user engagement from strong data management and analytics and increased financial support.

COLLABORATE

ASPIRATIONAL OUTCOME:

We will leverage the scope and scale of the public radio network to grow audiences and revenues.

- We will build connections between station and national staffs to take advantage of local reach and national brand.
- We will take advantage of economies of scale to create shared infrastructure, increasing efficiency and effectiveness.

GOALS FOR THE NEXT THREE TO FIVE YEARS:

- A transformed NPR-station relationship, where NPR and Member stations move from a transactional business relationship to one of shared strategy, investment, and benefit.

III. THE PATH FORWARD

- Digital, broadcast, and fundraising strategies that reflect the strengths of the network, including co-branding, collaborative newsgathering, collaborative content development and positioning in key genres like music, shared digital infrastructure, common data management systems, and collaborative fundraising.
- Increased carriage of NPR programs on local stations.
- A well-articulated, collectively-embraced vision of the company's aspirations and goals, supported by internal processes that ensure all business units are working in alignment.
- A strong culture of employee engagement and accountability where employees feel connected, respected, and proud to be part of NPR.

GROW NET REVENUES

ASPIRATIONAL OUTCOME:

We will innovate and strengthen the public radio business model, with an emphasis on increasing philanthropy across the system.

- We will increase philanthropy through a variety of sources to stations and to NPR.
- We will increase revenues from innovative business models.

GOALS FOR THE NEXT THREE TO FIVE YEARS:

- Increased public radio users across platforms and greater conversion of users into local station donors, enabled by providing exceptional user experiences and effectively leveraging user data.
- Increased system revenues from collaborative fundraising efforts.
- Develop and launch a system-wide local and national capital campaign for public radio.
- Increased external partnerships (e.g., joint productions with other media entities, large-scale brand-aligned partnerships), allowing NPR to leverage external financial support, audience reach, or platforms rather than relying on traditional sponsorship.
- Increased collective investment from NPR and stations in areas of critical importance to future growth (e.g., technology platforms for future distribution, new content initiatives).
- Improved execution in the areas of sponsorship across platforms and development.
- An enhanced NPR endowment.
- Increased revenue from new ventures, such as an NPR events business, that maximizes the value of NPR's unique assets (e.g., brand, archive, technical innovations, storytelling expertise, talent).
- Effective NPR corporate support functions with streamlined processes, strong data collection and reporting, effective systems, and a bias toward action.

IV. CONCLUSION

Through this work, we can bring context to a complex world; we can inspire and reward curiosity; we can create and enable conversations between and across users, journalists, and stations; and we can strengthen the connection that individuals and communities have with public radio.

When we do this, we fulfill our mission as a premier public media provider, feeding the mind, satisfying the soul, and setting the standard for independent journalism in the twenty-first century.

The leadership of NPR is committed to making this happen.