

Community Radio Support in Other Jurisdictions

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In May 2006 the National Campus and Community Radio Association (NCRA/ANREC), with assistance from the European office of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC), completed a study of community radio support mechanisms in several industrialized countries. This work was not exhaustive, as some countries identified as having community radio funding programs (including Denmark and Belgium) were not included because of lack of primary sources during the research period. The study was restricted to state-mandated support for community radio at the federal level.

The NCRA/ANREC has identified seven industrialized countries – Ireland, the United States, Australia, France, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom – with national government-mandated community radio support programs. Support typically takes one of three forms: a direct station operational subsidy; targeted support for specific station operations (typically programming production and distribution, staff training and capacity building, and transmission and production equipment); or a combination of the two.

What follows is a summary of community radio support programs in the seven identified countries.

Australia

Granting Agency	Community Broadcasting Foundation, supported by Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, Australia
Programs	Sector operation and development; local ethnic and indigenous program production; national program production, distribution and exchange; station infrastructure and operational support; training; national infrastructure development projects; sector coordination and research
Beneficiaries	228 (2004/05)
Support	AUS\$9.62 million (\$8.28 million) (2004/05)

Australia has a large and diverse community broadcasting sector, with 460 independent community owned and operated broadcasting services including radio and television stations and remote indigenous services. Recent research indicates 45% of Australians listen to community radio each month. An independent federal funding mechanism, the Community Broadcasting Foundation, is in place to support community broadcasting. The CBF has over 20 targeted granting programs, each supporting a different aspect of community broadcasting, including support for university, ethnic, indigenous, and Radio for the Print Handicapped (RPH) services. Source: <http://www.cbf.com.au/> and <http://www.cbonline.org.au/>.

France

Granting Agency	Fonds de soutien à l'expression radiophonique (FSER), Direction du développement des médias, funded by levy on commercial advertising
Programs	New station subsidy; operations; equipment
Grants	676 (2004)
Support	€24.6 million (\$35.3 million) (2004)

There are roughly 600 "associative" or community radios in France. Funding for community radio is ensured by the federal Fonds de soutien à l'expression radiophonique (FSER), which is funded by a tax on the advertising revenue of commercial broadcast media. Each year, the radios submit accounts to be examined by FSER, who then decide how much money to allocate to each station. Support is available through three programs: new station subsidy; operational subsidy (operations, training of personnel, education and culture, program production and sharing, and social development); and acquisition and replacement of equipment. In 2004/05 FSER distributed 676 grants averaging €34,965 (\$50,260) each. Source: http://www.ddm.gouv.fr/rubrique.php3?id_rubrique=40

Ireland

Granting Agency	Community Radio Support Scheme, Community Radio Forum of Ireland, supported by Broadcasting Commission of Ireland
Programs	Evaluation; capacity building
Beneficiaries	19
Support	€58,000 (\$83,488) (2006)

There are 19 community radio stations in Ireland, represented by the Community Radio Forum of Ireland (CRAOL), which was established in 1996. CRAOL is responsible for managing a Community Radio Support Scheme, which is funded by the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland and provides the budget for all of CRAOLs activities. The Community Radio Support Scheme was established in 1998 and provides funding to undertake evaluations, with the ultimate aim of building capacity within the individual stations and within the community radio sector. The 2006 budget for the Scheme is €58,000, and grants are available up to €5,000. BCI also funds program production through the New Adventures in Broadcasting program: €120,000 to develop new, innovative and sustainable programming within the independent sector. Source: <http://www.bci.ie/initiatives/crss.html>

Netherlands

Granting Agency	Commissariaat voor de Media, through €1/household levy
Programs	Operational subsidy
Beneficiaries	~335
Support	€7.7 million (\$11.08 million) (2007)

The Netherlands has approximately 335 "lokale omroepen," or local public-service radio and television broadcasters. On average, local stations have a yearly budget of roughly \$60,000. These broadcasters are represented by the Organisatie van Lokale Omroepen in Nederland (Olon), which is partly financed on a structural basis out of the government's national media budget. In 1997, local governments were allowed

by law to introduce a local form of radio license fee, which each household has to pay yearly for having a radio or television set in their homes. In 2007, this fee structure will be replaced by a direct national levy; all local community broadcasters in the country will be eligible to receive €1 per household via the Dutch Media Commission, with total funding of €7.7 million (\$11.08 million). Source: <http://www.olonprogrammabank.nl/publiek/200407953.html>

New Zealand

Granting Agency	NZ on Air supported by Minister of Broadcasting
Programs	Operational subsidy
Beneficiaries	11
Support	NZ\$2.02 million (\$1.41 million) (2005)

The government of New Zealand funds 11 community radio stations through NZ On Air, a national independent funding agency for public and local content on radio and television. The term for community radio in New Zealand is “access radio,” defined as “radio for the people by the people [giving] community groups the chance to make and broadcast their own programmes.”

Support for access radio is mandated under a 1989 Minister of Broadcasting directive to NZ On Air that states that “it is part of the general policy of Government in relation to broadcasting that access radio services should be available for a broad range of non-profit community groups.” Under the 1989 Broadcasting Act, NZ On Air has a responsibility to “ensure that a range of broadcasts is available to provide for the interests of women, youth, children, persons with disabilities and minorities in the community, including ethnic minorities.” Funding is in the form of operational subsidies, capped at NZ\$222,000 per station. Source: http://www.nzonair.govt.nz/radio_detail.php?pid=408&sid=400

United Kingdom

Granting Agency	Community Radio Fund, Office of Communications, funded by Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Programs	Core costs of station management, salary subsidies
Beneficiaries	17
Support	£485,222 (\$1.02 million) (2005)

In November 2005, the United Kingdom's Office of Communications (Ofcom) established a Community Radio Fund for British community broadcasters, as mandated under the Communications Act 2003 and following a public consultation. The fund is administered by a three-person panel, two appointed by Ofcom and one from the Community Media Association. Funding targets station development and capacity building, almost all in the form of salary subsidies. In 2005/06, grants totalling £485,222 (\$1.02 million) were distributed to 17 radio stations, including a joint project to support community radio stations at the regional level. Source: http://www.ofcom.org.uk/radio/ifi/rbl/commun_radio/Communityfund/

United States of America

Granting Agency	Radio Community Service Grants, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, funded through Congressional appropriation
Programs	Operational subsidies; program production
Beneficiaries	~800
Support	USD\$69.1 million (\$76.5 million) (Local station subsidy and local programming only, 2003/04)

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) funds non-commercial broadcasting in the United States, including both public and community radio.

Unlike Canada, there are few clear regulatory distinctions between types of non-commercial radio. While WGNU Denver describes itself as “independent community radio” produced primarily by volunteers and does not broadcast National Public Radio (NPR) programming, it receives 15% of its USD\$520,000 budget from CPB. WGBH Boston, which describes itself as “public radio” and whose core schedule is made up of NPR and Public Radio International (PRI) programming, received a similar proportion of CPB support. Many community and college stations receive no CPB support whatsoever.

Most CPB support for radio flows to “public” NPR stations through Radio Community Service Grants totalling USD\$59.0 million (\$65.6 million), funding approximately 390 radio stations. Support for local radio program production from CPB totals USD\$10.1 million (\$11.2 million) annually, with another USD\$20.2 million (\$22.3 million) for radio program production at the national level. Additional information:

<http://www.cpb.org/stations/>