



Minnesota Public Radio Proposed Investments

Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund FY26-27

Bill: SF 1537
Author: Senator Ann Johnson Stewart
Request: \$4.7 million for FY26-27



Music Education: Increasing Access & Programming

Class Notes: A long-running program bringing professional Minnesota-based musical artists to over 50,000 students annually in 170+ schools statewide. The program provides free concerts, artist exposure, instruction, and standards-based curricula. Expanding geographical reach, Class Notes Community Concerts extend free live performances to broader Minnesota communities.

Project DJ: Engages young classical music enthusiasts (ages 14-24) through on-air hosting with Classical MPR's Steve Staruch. Featuring diverse young DJs, the program connects new audiences to classical music via broadcast and digital platforms.

Youth Media Makers: A partnership with St. Thomas University/ThirtySixty Journalism and other Minnesota media organizations (e.g., AMPERS, KRSM). The program equips young journalists with hands-on experience, with content shared across participating outlets.

Engaging & Convening Through Events and Activities

MPR Live Events: Amplify Minnesota's music community with live performances across the state, including Duluth, Rochester, Mankato, and Winona. Collaborations with local artists, promoters, and professional choral performers highlight diverse music styles.

Bring the Sing: A group singing event for all ages and backgrounds, enhancing community engagement with live choral music.

Rock the Cradle: A family-friendly event by The Current, featuring music and activities at Mia and the Children's Theatre Company.

Showcasing Local Talent: Approximately 50 performances by Minnesota musicians annually in the Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota, creating accessible opportunities to celebrate the state's vibrant music scene.

Community Learning Exchange: Events like Community Roundtables and Story Circles foster dialogue and understanding on key issues facing Minnesotans, with an emphasis on traditionally underserved groups.

Highlighting Minnesota Artists

Regional Classical Broadcasts: Live recordings from Brainerd, Duluth, Northfield, and other Minnesota cities, featuring events like the St. Olaf Christmas Festival and the Winona Beethoven Festival.

Art Hounds: Weekly segments and podcasts spotlight arts events statewide, including Greater Minnesota. Content is shared in newsletters and rebroadcasts, increasing visibility for regional activities.

The Current & Local Music: Platforms like The Current, Carbon Sound, and Radio Heartland champion Minnesota musicians through broadcasts, apps, and curated content. Programs such as The Local Show and "Giglist" highlight emerging and established artists while connecting audiences to live performances.

Carbon Sound: A dedicated urban alternative stream celebrating Black musical expression, with collaborative efforts alongside KMOJ for social and community engagement.

Digital Features: YourClassical MPR's stories celebrate local artists, ensuring at least one-third of highlighted content represents Greater Minnesota. Coverage includes popular events like the high school marching band championship.

Preserving MN History & Cultural Heritage

North Star Journey: Launched in 2022, this initiative explores Minnesota's diverse communities and histories. Recent projects include coverage of the American Indian Movement's roots in Minneapolis, utilizing MPR's archives and partnerships with institutions like the Minnesota Historical Society.

MPR Archive: A rich repository of Minnesota's cultural and historical audio since 1967. The archive's public portal offers extensive collections, optimized search tools, and growing social media engagement. The archive captures both historic and newly produced content from MPR's stations and digital platforms.

MPR Legacy-funded Activity in Minnesota FY24

