

APPENDIX

VIA EMAIL to

June 11, 2026

The Honorable Aaron Binder, State Treasurer
Amanda Truppa, Director, Division of Administration
Monica Mellon, Fiscal Manager
Fiscal Manager
New Jersey Department of the Treasury
Division of Administration

Rick Williams, Executive Director
Nichol R. Gee, Deputy Executive Director
New Jersey Public Broadcasting Authority

Hearing Unit
State of New Jersey, Department of the Treasury
Division of Purchase and Property

**Re: RFP for New Jersey Public Broadcasting Authority Television Broadcast Stations Agreements,
issued February 5, 2026**

To the addressees:

I protest awarding the bid for NJ Public Broadcasting to Montclair State University (MSU) -- both as a career journalist who anticipates this plan's shortcomings, and as a Jersey resident who'd be adversely impacted by it.

I believe the award to MSU should be rescinded by the State Treasury and/or rejected by the State Legislature, based on MSU's ineligibility to be granted the broadcast licenses pursuant to the New Jersey Public Broadcasting System Transfer Act (the Transfer Act). In my opinion -- based on the criteria set forth in the RFP -- New Jersey Independent Public Media's proposal is substantively more favorable for the State than MSU's proposal.

Here's why:

- MSU is a component unit of the State, which would basically transform NJ PBS into a State-run network operated by state employees. NJIPM would provide journalistic independence to the endeavor, while MSU -- as an instrumentality of the State of New Jersey -- cannot.

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- MSU's proposal to continue NJ Spotlight News is reliant on collaboration with WNET – a contract that terminates on September 30, 2026.
- MSU's proposed staffing and overall newsroom business model of three reporters to cover the entire state – and a view of a Statehouse reporter as “an aspiration” – is insufficient to provide the thorough, citizen-engaged state-wide news required in the RFP.
- NJIPM has significantly more public media programming, management and distribution expertise, with demonstrable service and business models.
- NJIPM will provide more New Jersey-centric news and information programming.
- NJIPM's proposed business model, unlike MSU's, adheres to the RFP's criteria and complies with the Transfer Act.
- NJIPM is fully prepared to commence broadcasting on July 1, 2026, and – through an extension agreement with WNET through September 30th – will continue broadcasting through the transition.

Please bear in mind, this contract constitutes a five-to-15-year commitment. So, I think it's worth a little extra time to get it right. Because New Jersey residents need and deserve professional, balanced and robust public broadcasting that's relentlessly focused on the Garden State. I respectfully request a legislative hearing, so these issues can be thoroughly addressed.

Sincerely,
 Brenda Flanagan
 Former Senior Correspondent, *NJ Spotlight News*

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

Testimony of Dr. Keith Strudler

Dean, College of Communication and Media, Montclair State University

Prepared for New Jersey General Assembly — Oversight, Reform and Federal Relations Committee

Monday, June 16, 2026 at 2 p.m. ET

Chair Schnall, Vice-Chair Miller, and members of the committee – Assemblyman Guardian, Assemblyman Rodriguez, Assemblywoman Rowan, and Assemblyman Simonsen – thank you for having me. I am Keith Strudler, Dean of the College of Communication and Media at Montclair State University. I am joined today by my colleagues Althea Broomfield-Michel, Stefanie Murray, Adam Goldberg, and Al Prieto.

Two weeks ago, the State selected Montclair State University to operate New Jersey's four public television stations beginning July 1. We were honored to be chosen through a competitive process, and we believe that selection reflects the strength of our proposal, our attention to detail, and our commitment to serving the people of New Jersey.

First, let me briefly tell everyone about our plan. At its core, we will create a statewide public media network built around professional journalism, community engagement, and fiscal responsibility. We will launch by hiring a dedicated staff of 21 and grow significantly over the next five years. And let me be clear: this is a professional network run by hired media professionals – not a student network.

We will have a fiscally conservative, balanced budget. Our five-year plan assumes zero federal funding and can balance with no additional state appropriation. It is built for the future.

We will expand New Jersey-focused programming, producing more than 10 hours per week of original local content in our first year — a 73% increase over the current amount. That includes a daily live weeknight newscast, a daily news discussion program, election coverage, and expanded Statehouse reporting. We will also livestream legislative hearings, major government events, and public forums, because accessibility is what makes democracy real.

And we will have safeguards for independence and integrity, including a separate 501(c)(3) for fundraising, an external ethics and journalistic standards committee, a community advisory board, and editorial authority that rests with the newsroom.

Those are the plans. Now let me briefly address some common questions. One is whether Montclair has the capacity to do this. The answer is yes.

Running four licensed television stations requires facilities, infrastructure, engineering expertise, and institutional support. Fortunately, we already have those things. Including one of the nation's finest broadcast engineers, Adam Goldberg, who has already built the technical plans to be ready day one. We are not starting from scratch. We do not need to build a makeshift studio at the expense of the State, or rent someone's personal production truck. We have studios, control rooms, production facilities, event space, and the institutional support necessary to be ready on day one. Montclair is also committing approximately \$1.2 million annually in in-kind support, including critical HR, IT, finance, legal, and more. Our plan is not simply cheaper. It's actually better and more efficient.

We aren't building a newsroom of 25, or 15, or even 10 years ago. We aren't revisiting the past with an economic model that doesn't work or a production plan that doesn't reflect how people consume media today. We followed the assignment of the RFP. We are building the network model of the present and future. We are starting lean and sustainable rather than having to get lean, something the current operator simply couldn't do.

No one has a greater interest in a healthy news ecosystem than we do. Our College is made of faculty and staff who have dedicated their lives to the study and practice of journalism and media, people like Al Prieto who worked at the peak of its profession before joining Montclair. We are literally educating the next generation of journalists and media professionals. That only works if there is an industry for them to enter.

We also recognize that no single newsroom can cover every corner of New Jersey alone. That is why our proposal builds on the work of the Center for Cooperative Media, led by Stefanie Murray, which for more than a decade has connected news organizations across the state. Our goal is not to replace local journalism but to amplify it, creating a statewide network of trusted journalists, storytellers, and community voices. The same is true for the arts, culture, sports, and more. Our partnerships with creators across New Jersey will be a force multiplier and a national model for how public media can thrive.

Assemblymembers, you've likely heard that Montclair isn't doing it the way they used to do it.

You know why?

Because that way failed. Twice. That's why we're here today.

We're going to listen to communities, embrace the realities of today's media landscape, and build something better.

I also want to address editorial independence directly. Because it's as important to me as it is to all of you. And with all due respect, I think we're getting this question all wrong.

As both a longtime university administrator and media professor, someone who has spent decades as a content contributor to public media, someone who cut his teeth in large state school public media, I would argue that universities are the strongest agents for protecting independent journalism. Universities are built around inquiry, evidence, transparency, and the freedom to follow facts wherever they lead without fear.

But independence will not rely on good intentions alone. We are building it into the structure through independent newsroom leadership, a separate nonprofit fundraising organization, an external ethics committee, a community advisory board, and adherence to established public media and journalism standards. Our reporters will be protected by the same shield laws that protect any journalist in this state. We will use guiding documents for best practices, including the Public Media Code of Integrity and standards from the Society of Professional Journalists. Our College's daily mission is to teach ethical journalism practices to the future of this field, something faculty do with academic freedom and independence. To suggest we would then operate a network that violates these principles is hard to fathom.

Finally, let's talk about money.

Some have suggested that because Montclair receives state funding, the network cannot be independent. Yet every current and past proposal is dependent on state funding. Ours is actually the least dependent on state funding. And remember, regardless of who the operator is, the State does and will retain the license. And as we all know, the State has funded public television in New Jersey for decades. In fact, competing proposals requested millions more from the State than we did, including the one from which we've heard such outrage about independence.

Our proposal asks for less state funding and relies on university investment and membership growth to build long-term sustainability.

I would also note that universities have long been a cornerstone of public media in America. Nearly 50 universities operate public television stations, and hundreds more operate public radio stations, with integrity and independent reporting. In the north, south, east and west, in states of all political persuasions. If universities did not provide a backbone for public media, public media would crumble.

And to the critique that Montclair is incapable of both teaching students and also running a public television station. Universities do far more than teach classes. They find cures for diseases, oversee state agricultural systems, discover secrets of our galaxy, create a sports drink for a college football team that's now found in every convenience store in the world – I'm a Gator – and yes, run public television stations. Those that try to demean Montclair and other universities as only capable of a singular task perhaps don't realize the jewel that is the American university system. And on the issue of teaching, there is no better way to teach the next generation of journalists and media professionals than by allowing them to learn from, intern with, and shadow professionals working at a real public television network operating right on their campus. It's also why we've formed partnerships with Universities across the state,

north, central, and south, public and private, to build an awesome machine for hands-on learning, creative storytelling, and to actually engage the next generation of media professionals and consumers.

Let me close with this.

New Jersey deserves a public media network that reflects the full diversity and energy of this state. We take seriously what it means to operate a public network. We welcome oversight. We intend to earn the public's trust. And we intend to build a network that serves New Jersey not just today, but for decades to come.

Thank you. I look forward to your questions.

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June 13, 2026

Subject: Please Vote to Disapprove the NJ PBS Award to Montclair State University

I am writing as a veteran of public broadcasting in New Jersey and beyond to urge you to vote to disapprove the award of the NJ PBS license to Montclair State University before the June 22nd deadline.

I served as Senior Video Editor for the previous incarnations of our State's nightly news programming when NJTV was first launched until 2015, NJ Today/NJTV News, and then as a video editor at WLIW's (PBS) MetroFocus program. I know first hand what it takes to run a statewide public television operation. MSU's proposal does not.

Here is what that proposal actually contains:

Three reporters to cover the Governor, the Legislature, the Courts, and 564 municipalities. No dedicated Statehouse reporter — that has been called "an aspiration."

A reliance on 12 to 20 student interns in place of an experienced production staff. I was a student at William Paterson before becoming a professional Editor, I know what a student-run news program looks like. It worked there and then, when it was merely cable access for Wayne and the surrounding areas, and when NJN was transmitting across the State and covering the Statehouse and state-wide concerns.

A core partnership with WNET that WNET's own president has publicly confirmed will end September 30, 2026 — before the contract even gets off the ground. I have first-hand witnessed the dismay posted by my friends and colleagues at the layoffs from the doomed NJ Spotlight News!

Half an hour of the proposed weekly NJ programming dedicated to the University President's cooking show? I surely do not need to expand on this one.

Beyond the operational failures, there is a fundamental conflict of interest. MSU is a self-described "component unit of the State of New Jersey." Its trustees are appointed by the Governor. It receives \$229 million annually from the State. Under this arrangement, NJ PBS journalists would be State employees covering the very government that controls their employer's budget. The 2010 Transfer Act existed precisely to prevent this. This proposal reverses it.

The competing bidder, NJ Independent Public Media, offered a nightly newscast, a 24-hour digital platform, a Statehouse bureau, a South Jersey bureau, and genuine editorial independence. The public has never seen the scoring sheets explaining why MSU was chosen instead.

New Jersey residents deserve answers before a contract lasting up to 15 years is signed.
Please call for a hearing and vote to disapprove.

Respectfully,

Steve Maio

Former Senior Video Editor, NJ PBS

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June 13, 2026

The Honorable Nicolas Scutari, NJ Senate President
The Honorable Craig Coughline, NJ Assembly Speaker
Mr. Aaron Binder, NJ State Treasurer
Mr. Rick Williams, Executive Director, NJ Public Broadcasting Authority

Dear Leadership Members:

I am writing to ask that through your leadership, you and the NJ Legislature disapprove of the contract that permits Montclair State University to operate NJ PBS.

After reviewing MSU's proposal, I have deep concerns about the limited nature of broadcast time that is proposed. Besides the significant in-kind donation of the university's infrastructure assets, there is no indication of how much annual state funding will be dedicated to broadcast time or hiring the quality and quantity of professional journalists needed to adequately serve PBS.

While MSU's proposal suggests a strong educational component, it also provides for only THREE full time reporters to cover the Governor's Office, the State Legislature, NJ courts, 564 municipalities, and statewide breaking news, with no mention of how arts and culture will be covered and to what extent. While students may learn the skills needed professionally broadcast, they are not a substitute for seasoned broadcast journalists. Our cultural organizations have never had strong dedicated news coverage and deserve better.

There are several other inconsistencies that should have raised concerns when the proposal was first reviewed. Finally, in the current climate where independent journalism is needed more than ever, a state-run PBS suggests the exact opposite—a lack of independence from a state institution.

I encourage you to disapprove this contract and provide a deeper analysis of both proposals with an eye to which will benefit New Jersey the most. I firmly believe MSU's proposal shortchanges the news coverage New Jersey should benefit from on a daily basis.

Sincerely,



Ann Marie Miller
Former Director of Public Policy, ArtPride NJ

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Assembly Oversight, Reform and Federal Relations

Monday, June 15, 2026 - 02:00 PM

Committee Room 13, 4th Floor, State House Annex, Trenton, NJ.

Chair: Assemblyman Alexander Schnall

Vice Chair: Assemblyman Cody D. Miller

Gentlemen and others present:

My name is Bob Wick. I was employed by *New Jersey Network* for twenty-six and a half years. Five of those were as a transmitter maintenance technician. The remainder were in news...as microwave and satellite truck operator, cameraman, editor, and occasionally engineering.

Though we were State employees... Journalists **personally committed** to reporting with integrity... regardless of the consequences.

The *New Jersey Society of Professional Journalists' Code of Ethics* centers on four foundational pillars:

- **1) Seek Truth and Report It:** Ensure information is accurate and fair, verify sources, and provide context.
- **2) Minimize Harm:** Treat sources, subjects, and colleagues with respect, showing special sensitivity to juveniles and victims.
- **3) Act Independently:** Avoid conflicts of interest and deny favored treatment to advertisers or special interests.
- **4) Be Accountable and Transparent:** Acknowledge and correct mistakes promptly, and encourage dialogue with the public

If you were to poll all of the former NJN News reporters, you would discover that being State employees did **NOT** 'color' their reporting... even to the point of offending BOTH 'sides of the aisle'. Frankly, THAT is ONE of the actual reasons NJN was terminated!

Sadly, many obtain their 'news' solely from the internet - which is often 'unchecked journalism'. I said that fifteen years ago - when I testified before the Assembly and Senate - about the importance of continuing a New Jersey Broadcasting outlet. I appealed to its necessity - from the original September 1968 Hughes's report document - by supplying short and long-form exhibits and audio CD's. The head of the Senate (at that time) stated they were very informative... helpful... and I had nothing to worry about. Yet, NJN was terminated by one vote!

I am thrilled that NJ Public Television will not go dark on June 30, and is returning to 'in state' operation.

Not being privy to the RFP responses by the two 'contenders', assertions are assumed to have been honest, accurate... and sufficient 'vetting' has resulted with the Montclair State University selection. Utilization of former NJN infrastructure combined with other currently existing and available assets will certainly facilitate a robust continuation of NJPTV. State Government assistance would not be unique to the State of New Jersey. Perhaps yet-to-be-realized collaboration and cooperation between *Montclair State University* and *New Jersey Independant Public Media* may also prove beneficial.

Finally, the *Federal Communications Commission* is VERY particular as to WHO actually is in control of Federally licensed facilities... and concerned that the public interest is truly served.

Thankyou.

Bob Wick -

Bob Wick

June 13, 2026

The Honorable Aaron Binder, State Treasurer
Amanda Truppa, Director, Division of Administration
Monica Mellon, Fiscal Manager
New Jersey Department of the Treasury

Rick Williams, Executive Director
Nichol R. Gee, Deputy Executive Director
New Jersey Public Broadcasting Authority

Hearing Unit, State of New Jersey
Department of the Treasury Division of Purchase and Property
Assembly Oversight, Reform and Federal Relations Committee

**Re: RFP for New Jersey Public Broadcasting Authority Television
Broadcast Stations Agreements, issued February 5, 2026**

To the addressees:

In awarding the bid for NJ Public Broadcasting, New Jersey faces a critical choice. Either preserve independent broadcast journalism for the state of New Jersey or place freedom of the press under government control.

New Jersey Independent Public Media stands ready on Day One to take the reins of NJ PBS. It has demonstrated expertise in public media programming and distribution. Its proposed business model is in line with the RFP's requirements and complies with the Transfer Act. And it has the reporters to cover every aspect of the Garden State with more Jersey-centric news and information than Montclair State University.

On the other hand, MSU is state funded and state run. Its professors are state employees. It boasts of a partnership with WNET but that partnership expires September 30th. Its reliance on student interns to cover the multiple facets and political factions of this sprawling state is

aspirational at best, as is its hope that one day it may have a statehouse reporter.

As an anchor and reporter at NJ PBS, I've devoted much of my professional life to covering this essential state. Based on my personal experience at both MSU and NJ PBS, I believe that stewardship of the state's public airwaves should and must be awarded to New Jersey Independent Public Media.

In this critical moment, please rescind the previous award to MSU and instead give the critical work to NJIPM.

I respectfully request a legislative hearing, so these issues can be thoroughly addressed.

Sincerely,
Mary Alice Williams
Former Anchor, *NJ Spotlight News*

MONTCLAIR

STATE UNIVERSITY

NJ PBS under Montclair State University

A briefing package for New Jersey legislators — June 2026

Introduction: What Montclair proposes

On June 3, 2026, the State of New Jersey selected Montclair University to operate New Jersey's four public television stations — WNJS, WNJN, WNJT, and WNJB — beginning July 1, 2026. Montclair was chosen through a competitive procurement run by the Department of the Treasury from a field of four bidders. For the first time in 15 years, New Jersey's public television will be operated from inside the state.

Montclair's proposal, in brief:

- **More New Jersey programming.** An average of 10.4 hours per week of original New Jersey-centric programming in year one — a 73 percent increase over the roughly six hours provided today — anchored by a weeknight newscast, a new daily news discussion show, and live election and Statehouse coverage.
- **A professional newsroom with a renewing talent pipeline.** Twenty-one dedicated professional station positions in year one, growing to 34 by year five, recruited nationally and supported by the College of Communication and Media's faculty, engineers, and student interns.
- **A conservative, balanced budget.** A five-year plan that assumes zero federal funding and balances with no new state appropriation, backed by more than \$1.2 million a year in University in-kind support.
- **Expanded streaming and Trenton coverage.** Livestreamed legislative hearings, government meetings, and public forums on apps, the web, and YouTube.
- **Independence safeguards.** A separate Friends of NJ Public TV 501(c)(3) for fundraising, an external ethics and journalistic standards committee, a community advisory board, and editorial authority that rests with the newsroom. The State of New Jersey remains the license holder.

This package explains how the operation will be funded, organized, staffed, and equipped, and answers the questions legislators have asked most often. Every figure comes from Montclair's proposal to the New Jersey Public Broadcasting Authority and its supporting financial model.

The Montclair vision

At a time when local journalism capacity is shrinking and the federal government has withdrawn its funding for public broadcasting, Montclair is stepping into public media because the work aligns with its mission as a public university: trusted news, civic information, education, arts and culture, and programming that reflects all of New Jersey.

Montclair intends to build a robust statewide public media network that emphasizes audience engagement, trustworthy journalism, and showcasing the incredible work of media makers around the state through dozens of partnerships with news organizations, civic groups, arts groups, schools,

universities and more. The new NJ PBS will be built by residents of the state and reflect their lived experiences. Montclair will operate the linear channels with daily original New Jersey-centric programming and expand live coverage and video-based content on its website, apps, YouTube, social media platforms and more. Its news operation will reach into all corners of the state utilizing its own newsroom along with collaborations with local newsrooms in all 21 counties.

Montclair's qualifications rest on four pillars. First, proven facilities and expertise: the College of Communication and Media operates a 105,000-square-foot media production facility with three broadcast-quality television studios, three control rooms, and a working multimedia newsroom — staffed by professionals with decades at ABC News, CBS News, NBC News, MSNBC, New York Public Radio, WNET, and Gannett. Second, a statewide network: the Center for Cooperative Media, based at Montclair, works with more than 300 news organizations across all 21 counties, and the New Jersey Civic Information Consortium — the largest funder of civic information in the state — is housed on campus. Third, location and prior state investment: New Jersey has already invested millions in Montclair's communication facilities, and the campus sits adjacent to an NJPBA broadcast tower. Fourth, in-kind support: more than \$1.2 million a year in studios, engineering, IT, HR, finance, legal, and facilities services that the State does not pay for.

The university-operator model is well established nationally — Arizona PBS at Arizona State, WUFT at the University of Florida, and WOSU at Ohio State all show that universities can run high-quality public media with strong editorial independence and lower overhead, and nearly 50 public television stations nationwide are licensed to a college or university.

This also offers the advantage of allowing students to train alongside paid professionals under professional supervision — they do not replace them. Twelve to 20 student interns will support station operations in year one, growing to 30 to 50 per semester by year five, drawn from Montclair and partner universities statewide.

Budget narrative

Montclair's five-year budget is deliberately conservative. After the federal rescission of Corporation for Public Broadcasting funding, the University planned for cautious revenue and kept expenses tightly aligned with it. The budget assumes federal funding does not return. It began from a financial model built by Public Media Company, the leading consulting firm in the field, then cut that model's revenue projections substantially — year-one membership by 37 percent, major gifts by 46 percent, underwriting by 21 percent. Where that model assumed 80 staff and roughly \$30 million in cumulative state subsidy over five years, Montclair's plan starts with 21 staff, keeps year-one expenses under \$10 million, and balances without a large ongoing subsidy.

The table below shows the most conservative scenario that Montclair prepared. Please note that these are the budget projections from the RFP response, and include NJ PBA funding.

Five-year financial picture (most conservative scenario, FY2027–FY2031)

Fiscal year	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31
Total revenues and support	\$9.9M	\$10.7M	\$11.4M	\$12.4M	\$13.3M
Total expenses	\$9.9M	\$10.6M	\$11.3M	\$12.4M	\$13.0M
Operating balance	+\$6K	+\$129K	+\$117K	+\$3K	+\$294K

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Even with zero new appropriation, the plan produces a small cumulative surplus of roughly \$549,000 over five years; the higher-support scenarios produce roughly \$825,000 and \$1.6 million, margin that goes to reserves and retention rather than overhead.

Where year-one funding comes from (FY2027, most conservative scenario)

Source	Amount
Existing state support for NJPBA operating costs (assumed to continue under any operator)	\$2.5M
Tower rental revenue (existing leases on NJPBA infrastructure)	\$2.6M
EBS spectrum lease revenue (existing leases, through 2040)	\$1.6M
Montclair University in-kind support	\$1.3M
Membership	\$0.8M
Underwriting	\$0.6M
Major gifts, foundations, and other	\$0.6M
Total	\$9.9M

Figures rounded to the nearest \$100,000; rows may not sum exactly.

Most of the state-side support consists of revenue streams that already exist — tower rentals and spectrum leases on NJPBA-owned infrastructure that have long supported station operations — rather than new money, and Montclair projects the need for those pass-through revenues to decline from roughly \$4 million a year early in the term to roughly \$2 million by 2041 as membership, underwriting, and philanthropy grow. Final funding terms are set in the Programming and Services Agreement with the Department of the Treasury.

According to our projections, NJ PBS will be solvent in Year 1. Montclair's financial plan is built on a core premise: public television in New Jersey must become a strong nonprofit institution with diversified revenue. The loss of CPB funding and the broader pressures facing public media nationally make this not just aspirational but necessary. Our plan draws on evolving best practices from the nonprofit media sector and from the public broadcasting industry's own data on what works.

Membership is the foundation and the biggest opportunity. NJ PBS currently has at least 16,000 members, according to 2023 data. For a state with nearly 9 million residents and a coverage area reaching more than 25 million people across two of the country's top-five television markets, that number is far below where it should be. The recent NJCIC-commissioned benchmarking analysis found that NJ PBS generates just \$0.20 in membership revenue per capita, compared to \$1.00 for the state network average — a five-fold gap. Closing even half of that gap would generate millions in additional annual revenue.

Our plan attacks this from multiple angles. First, we will build a sustainer-first membership program. Industry data from Greater Public and the Contributor Development Partnership shows that monthly

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sustainer donors retain at roughly twice the rate of single-gift donors and contribute more over time. Public media stations (both TV and radio) that have reoriented their fundraising around sustainers — as NHPR and others have done — have seen meaningful, durable growth even as traditional pledge-drive revenue has declined. We will launch with sustainer giving as the default option across all platforms, supported by PBS Passport streaming access as the primary membership benefit.

Second, we will invest in digital acquisition. The 2025 public media new-donor surge — a 61% year-over-year increase in new donors nationally — was driven overwhelmingly by online giving, with over 70% of new gifts from donors under age 61 made online. Millennials and Gen Z donors are entering public media donor files in record numbers, and over 55% of them choose sustainer gifts. Our digital-first content strategy is designed to meet these audiences where they already are and convert engagement into membership.

Third, we will professionalize and staff for growth. Our Year 1 budget includes a Membership, Audience, and Marketing Director and a dedicated Membership Manager. By Year 2, we add a Major Giving Officer. By Year 4, a Corporate and Foundation Relations Officer. This is not a skeleton crew hoping for the best — it is a deliberate ramp-up of revenue-generating capacity timed to match our hiring plan and audience growth.

Next, we believe that major and institutional giving has huge potential. The same benchmarking data shows NJ PBS generates just \$600 in major giving revenue per 10,000 people in its coverage area, compared to \$3,670 for the state network average — a six-fold gap. New Jersey is one of the wealthiest states in the country, with a median household income of \$101,000 and a deep philanthropic base. There is no structural reason that a well-run New Jersey public media operation cannot close this gap. Our budget projects major individual gifts growing from \$300K in Year 1 to over \$1.5M by Year 5, which remains well below what peer stations achieve — meaning there is room to exceed projections with strong execution. The Friends of NJ Public TV 501(c)(3), with its own board of committed fundraisers, will be the vehicle for this work. We intend to recruit board members with deep connections to New Jersey's philanthropic, corporate, and civic communities.

Our plan anticipates underwriting and corporate sponsorship to grow as digital inventory grows. Traditional broadcast underwriting has been flat across public media for years, but digital sponsorship — pre-roll, mid-roll, newsletter sponsorships, event sponsorships, and podcast sponsorships, among other placements — is a growing category. Our budget projects underwriting growing from \$600K in Year 1 to over \$1.1M by Year 5, driven primarily by new digital inventory. We are hiring a dedicated underwriting sales representative in Year 1 and adding a second in Year 3.

Events are an untapped revenue and engagement channel in New Jersey for media. By Year 5, we plan to host 20+ community events annually — town halls, screenings, live tapings, forums, and performances — that serve dual purposes: deepening community engagement (which drives membership and loyalty) and generating earned revenue through sponsorships and ticket sales. Partnerships with arts organizations across the state and media entities such as the Montclair Film Festival will give us access to venues, programming, and audiences for these events.

The university model provides structural cost advantages. Every dollar that Montclair absorbs through in-kind support — studios, engineering staff, IT, HR, finance, legal, facilities — is a dollar that does not need to be raised or appropriated. We estimate this in-kind contribution at \$1.2 million or more annually. No standalone nonprofit operator can replicate this without adding equivalent overhead to their budget. This structural advantage means that our breakeven point is lower, our margin for error is wider, and more of every raised dollar goes directly to programming and journalism.

How the stations will be organized

New Jersey public television will operate as a lean, dedicated business unit within the College of Communication and Media. The station's general manager reports to the dean of the College, who reports to the provost, who reports to the president, who answers to the Board of Trustees.. The State of

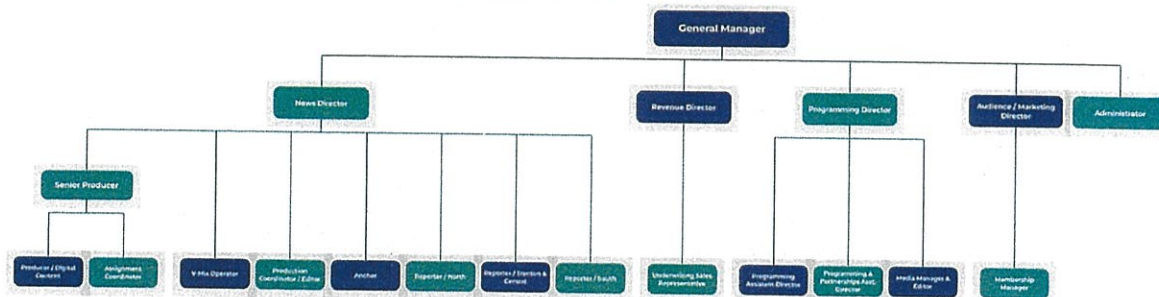
New Jersey is the FCC license holder; Montclair operates the stations under a Programming and Services Agreement.

Organizational reporting structure



Under the general manager, the station is organized into five functional areas — news, programming, revenue, audience and marketing, and administration:

Organizational reporting structure



The year-one plan funds 21 dedicated positions: a general manager; a ten-person journalism team (news director, anchor, three regional reporters covering North Jersey, Trenton/Central Jersey, and South Jersey, two producers, an editor, an assignment coordinator, and a control room operator); five content and programming staff; four development and revenue staff; and an administrator, plus contracted FCC counsel. Staffing grows to 26 positions in year two — adding a Washington reporter and education and fundraising roles — and reaches 32 by year five. The University contributes in-kind staffing a standalone operator would have to hire: a chief engineer, four to five broadcast engineering technicians, IT, and finance, HR, legal, and facilities services.

Independent external bodies surround the operation: the Friends of NJ Public TV with its own board for all fundraising; a community advisory board of 10 to 12 members reflecting New Jersey's geographic, racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity; a student media advisory board; a core partner council; and an external ethics and journalistic standards committee that enforces the firewall between the University, the State, and the newsroom.

Programming: what viewers will see

Year one is built for stability and continuity — current viewers should notice more New Jersey on their screens, not disruption. The schedule anchors an early-evening news block: a new daily New Jersey news discussion show at 5:30 p.m., national and international news at 6, and the weeknight NJ PBS newscast at 6:30, with repeats at 7:30 and 11 p.m. PBS children's, educational, and primetime programming — Masterpiece, NOVA, PBS NewsHour, PBS Kids — continues throughout the day, along with PBS Passport streaming for members.

New Jersey-focused programs in the year-one plan include:

- The weeknight New Jersey newscast and a new daily news and issues talk show.
- Reporter's Roundtable, a weekly New Jersey policy and politics program.
- State of Affairs, Think Tank, and One-on-One with Steve Adubato — more than 140 episodes a

- year.
- Enfoque, a weekly Spanish-language news program produced by WNJU-TV/Telemundo, and Que Pasa NJ, covering Hispanic and Latino issues and newsmakers.
- Pathway to Success, spotlighting African American business leaders, with the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey.
- A weekly New Jersey Athletic Conference sports show plus live NJAC games and championships — college sports coverage the stations have rarely offered.
- State of the Arts, Drive By History, and Here's the Story — New Jersey arts and history programming.
- A children's program with Josh Dela Cruz, the New Jersey native who starred in Blue's Clues & You.
- A monthly community correspondents program with the Center for Cooperative Media's statewide network, and a collaboration with WBGO New Jersey Public Radio.
- Anchored live coverage of the Governor's State of the State and budget addresses, the 2026 congressional elections, and the 2027 legislative elections.

The second broadcast channel will carry 24/7 news and nonfiction programming, with partnership options under evaluation, including American Public Television's WORLD service, First Nations Experience, and English-language international news services.

Livestreaming and coverage from Trenton

Legislators have asked specifically about streaming and "C-SPAN-style" coverage of state government. Montclair's proposal treats this as a priority — accessibility makes democracy real.

The plan commits to expanded live streaming of committee hearings, government meetings, legislative proceedings, and public forums, carried on the stations' apps, website, and YouTube channel at no charge to viewers. Montclair has been exploring PBS's emerging technology for multiple simultaneous livestreams — so a committee hearing, a public forum, and a sporting event can stream at the same time — and is evaluating other app platforms for the same capability. Beyond raw feeds, the plan calls for making government coverage usable: curated clips, social-first distribution of key moments, and anchored coverage of the State of the State, the budget address, and election nights.

Additionally, the Center for Cooperative Media is about to announce a partnership with Civilio that centralizes access to municipal and county-level government business, which will give this push for government transparency a well-rounded component.

There is engineering behind the commitment. Montclair has proposed investigating the revival of NJPBA's Vislink microwave system to create a direct signal path between the Trenton State House and the Montclair facility, and the news team includes a reporter dedicated to Trenton and Central Jersey. Montclair intends to begin investigating more thoroughly the cost to install remote cameras and related wiring into more rooms at the Statehouse. Montclair has also invited legislators' specific priorities for how legislative coverage should be carried out and will build them into its planning.

Technical capability

The production plant exists today — nothing needs to be built before July 1. The College of Communication and Media's facility includes:

- Three broadcast-quality television studios each with a dedicated control room running Sony HD production switchers, SSL digital audio consoles, VizRT graphics, AutoScript prompters, RTS Matrix and ClearCom intercom, and Harmonic and EVS video servers.
- A multimedia newsroom with a Sony studio and robotic cameras, plus a 200-seat presentation hall with 4K cinema projection and six-camera production capability for town halls and live events.
- More than 40 video editing workstations, 12 audio production suites, a single-operator vMix digital

19x

- studio, and multiple field production packages for remote and live coverage.
- Full redundancy: a core Evertz and RTS routing system that lets any control room connect to any studio, emergency UPS backup, and campus connection to the University's cogeneration power plant.



For broadcast distribution, Montclair will use NJPBA's existing transmission infrastructure — the Trenton Operations Center, the transmitter sites at Lawrenceville, Waterford, Warren, and Montclair, and the microwave relay network connecting them — all upgraded during the 2020 FCC repack. Master control will be contracted to one of two established public-media providers (CentralCast or Public Media Venture Group), which run 24/7

automated playout with live-override capability, FCC compliance logging, and redundant playout for major PBS stations nationwide. Traffic and scheduling run on the industry-standard Myers ProTrack system; Emergency Alert System compliance is maintained through Digital Alert Systems. Montclair has additionally proposed a backup production system at the NJPBA tower site next to campus and a second fiber path to eliminate a single point of failure.

The technical integration will be led by chief engineer Adam Goldberg, who served as engineer-in-charge of NJTV's nightly news broadcast and worked in NJN's air, master control, and engineering departments. On the ATSC 3.0 transition, Montclair's posture is to protect over-the-air viewers first, plan proactively with NJPBA as the standard matures, and educate the public well before any switchover.

The team behind the bid

University leadership for the stations starts with Keith Strudler, dean of the College of Communication and Media, who has led the College's growth from roughly 800 to 2,000 students since 2017. The station's own leadership — general manager, news director, programming director, and revenue director — will be recruited through national searches. The College staff supporting the stations includes:

- **Mark Effron**, professor of journalism and News Lab coordinator — former vice president of news at MSNBC, overseeing nine hours of live daily news; former news executive at Post-Newsweek Stations and WPIX-TV.
- **Al Prieto**, special assistant to the dean — 42 years at ABC News, rising to vice president of ABC NewsOne, leading 24/7 news delivery to more than 200 affiliates.
- **Adam Goldberg**, chief engineer — former NJN and NBC Sports engineer; engineer-in-charge of NJTV's nightly newscast.
- **Patricia Piroh**, director of production services and technology — credits spanning NBC News political conventions, two Winter Olympics, and Monday Night Football.
- **Stefanie Murray**, director of the Center for Cooperative Media — former vice president and executive editor of The Tennessean; a national leader in collaborative journalism.
- **Joe Amditis**, associate director of operations, Center for Cooperative Media — coordinator of national reporting collaboratives including Democracy Day; U.S. Army veteran.

- **Bryan DeNovellis**, assistant professor of sports communication and media — 30 years in sports broadcasting at ESPN, News 12 New Jersey, and MSG Networks.

Hiring is already underway — and the response has been strong

Montclair has posted the first nine positions for the stations, and those nine openings alone have drawn more than 450 applications. The response reflects both the depth of media talent in the New York–Philadelphia corridor and professional confidence in the project. Montclair is recruiting nationally for station leadership and encouraging experienced New Jersey public-media journalists — including those working at NJ PBS today — to apply.

Visit the campus

Montclair welcomes legislators to visit the 252-acre campus — 12 miles from New York City — tour the College of Communication and Media, see the studios and control rooms where New Jersey's public television will be produced, and meet the team. Photos and videos of the facilities are available on request. To arrange a visit or discuss any item in this package, contact Maria Rodriguez-Gregg, director of government relations at Montclair State University.

Frequently asked questions

Newsroom staffing and news production

Will NJ PBS still be staffed by professional journalists?

Yes. NJ PBS launches under Montclair with more than 20 full-time employees, including a news team of three reporters and a production staff of 11, and it is built to grow. We are hiring a general manager, a news director, producers, and the editorial and technical staff who put a newscast on the air every weeknight — and we are encouraging experienced New Jersey public-media journalists, including those working at NJ PBS today, to apply.

Aside from the facilities and in-kind cost coverage, how does a university strengthen the newsroom?

Alongside its paid professional staff, the College of Communication and Media puts student journalists into positions where they can participate in a working newsroom every semester, supervised by professional staff and faculty who are practicing broadcast professionals. Students train alongside the professional team; they do not replace it. The result is a pipeline of New Jersey journalism talent that renews itself every year.

Operational capacity

Can a university run four licensed television stations?

Yes. We have the facilities, infrastructure and talent already on campus. Nearly 50 public television stations nationwide are licensed to or operated by universities. Montclair is committing \$1.2 million a year in in-kind support — studio time, broadcast engineering, IT, human resources, finance, legal, and facilities — on top of its professional production studios and control rooms already operating on campus. Montclair also brings the Center for Cooperative Media, which for more than a decade has connected local newsrooms across New Jersey.

Why was Montclair selected?

Montclair was chosen through a competitive process run by the Department of the Treasury, from a field

of four bidders. Its bid offered in-state accountability, an established College of Communication with studios and faculty, a renewing student pipeline, and a statewide local-news network — plus \$1.2 million a year in University resources.

Streaming and coverage from Trenton

Will the public keep access to coverage of the state government?

Yes. NJ PBS will continue live coverage of the Governor's State of the State and budget address and keep its cameras on the Statehouse and the Legislature. As a university, Montclair brings current streaming and on-demand infrastructure to carry legislative proceedings and public-affairs programming on whatever platform viewers use.

Is "C-SPAN-style" legislative coverage part of the plan?

Public access to what state government is doing is central to the value of public television, and we intend to keep providing and expand it across broadcast, streaming, and on-demand — including more livestreaming of committee hearings and government meetings on our website, apps and YouTube especially. We welcome legislators' specific priorities for how that coverage should be carried and will build them into our planning.

Continuity of programming and public affairs

Will any programming be lost during the handoff?

The priority on July 1 is a clean handoff with no gap in service. Our commitment, reflected in the State's announcement of the selection, is at least six hours of New Jersey programming every week — a weeknight newscast, a weekly public-affairs program, live coverage of New Jersey elections, and live broadcasts of the Governor's constitutional addresses — and our year-one plan exceeds that obligation. We are planning the transition with the State and the current operator so the news New Jerseyans rely on keeps running without interruption.

Who decides what the newsroom covers?

The News Director will direct daily news coverage in coordination with the Senior Producer and the news staff. The newsroom's editorial judgment belongs to the newsroom. The University's role is to give the station the resources and reach to do serious journalism and to protect its independence — not to direct coverage, and not to shield anyone, the University included, from scrutiny. An external ethics and journalistic standards committee, with a code of ethics written for the news operation, enforces that firewall. That is the standard a public license demands.

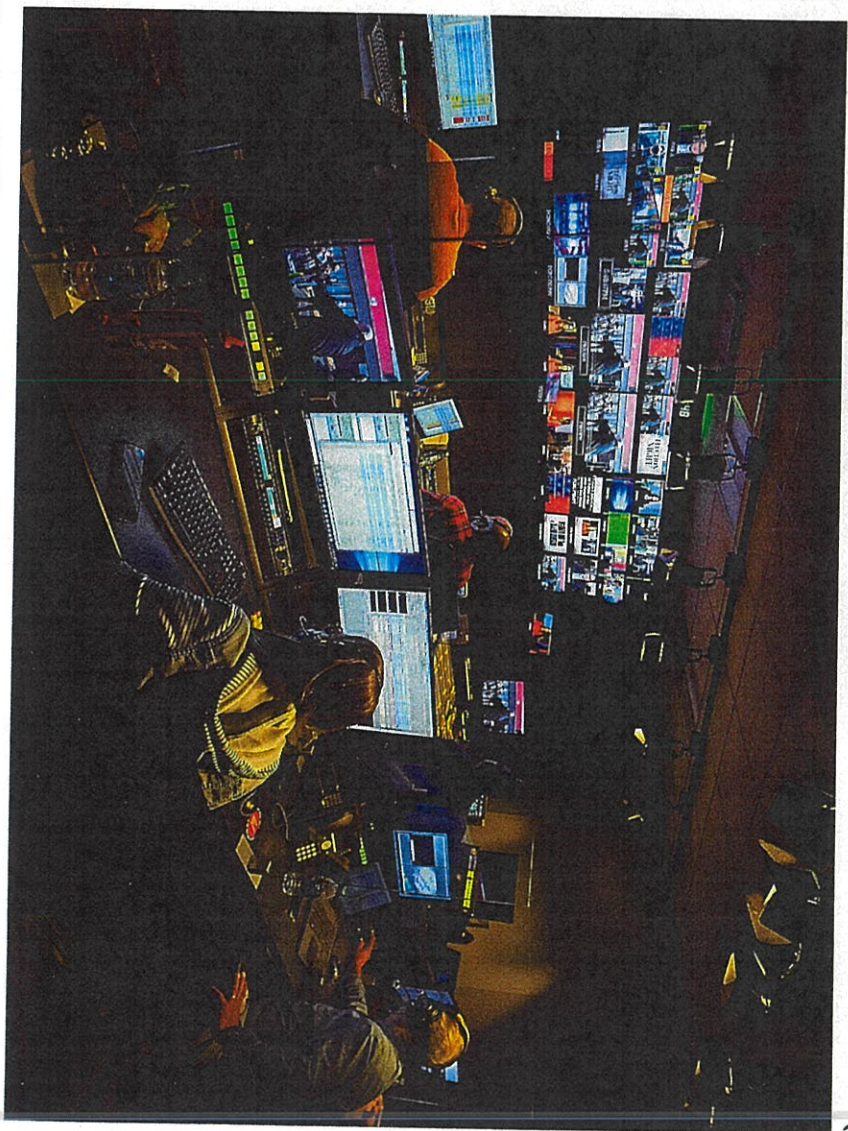
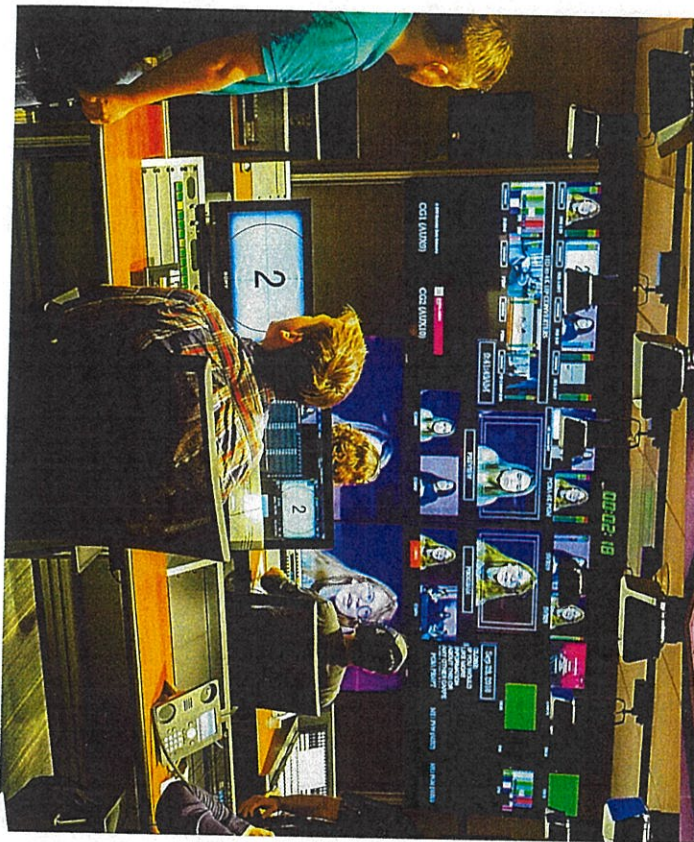
What happens to PBS programs and Passport?

The stations remain PBS members. National programming — Masterpiece, NOVA, PBS NewsHour, PBS Kids — continues, and PBS Passport streaming access continues as a membership benefit.

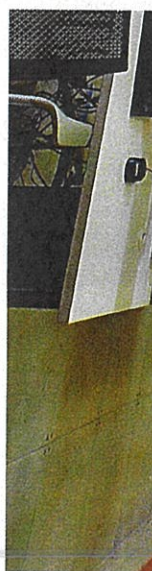
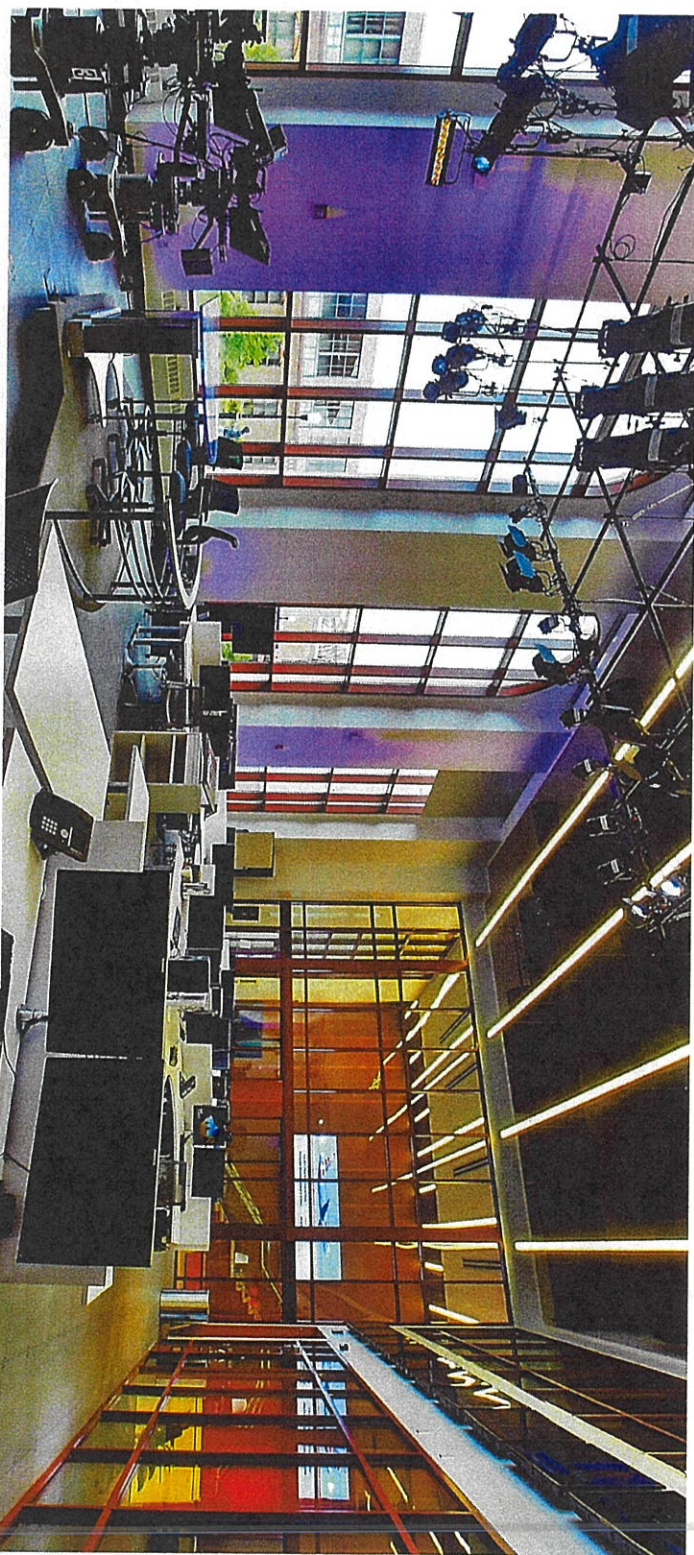
MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF
COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA

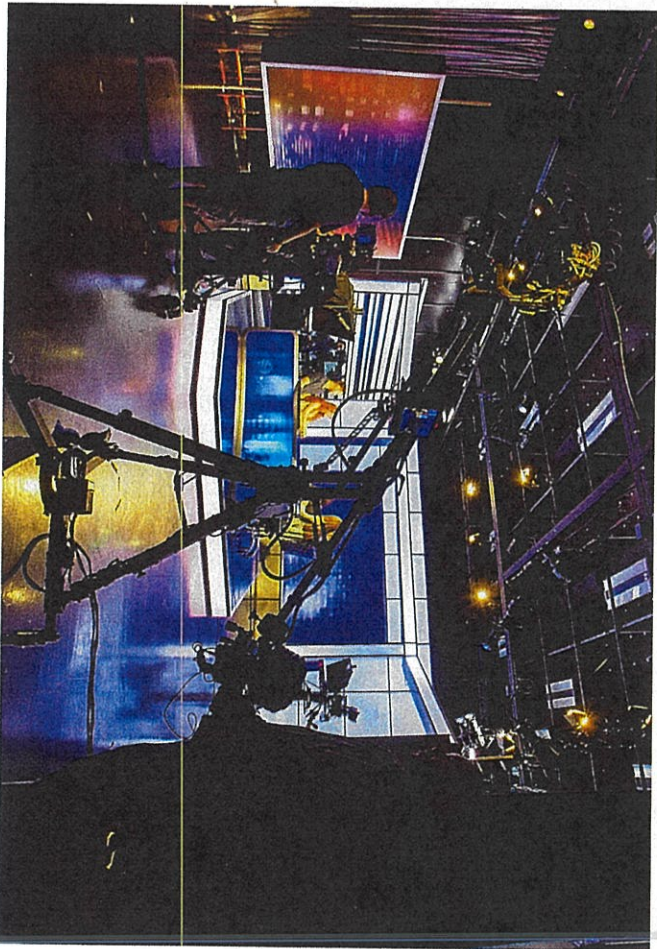
College of Communication and Media building images



24x



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PROTEST EXHIBITS

RFP: NJ Public Broadcasting Authority Television Broadcast Stations Agreements

Introduction

In all facets of the NJ Public Broadcasting Authority's selection criteria where transparent information is available from Montclair State University, New Jersey Independent Public Media has offered the stronger bid. Included, please find exhibits related to the selection criteria pulled directly from the RFP:

Selection criteria for PSA Bidders will include, but not be limited, to:

- (a) Public media programming, management and distribution expertise;
- (b) Adherence to the criteria and goals included in the Transfer Act;
- (c) Demonstration of credible service and business models;
- (d) Fiscal impact on the NJPBA and the State of New Jersey;
- (e) Willingness to act quickly and be responsive, flexible and creative in negotiations and agreement drafting;
- (f) Demonstration of actionable, innovative solutions;
- (g) Solutions for the programming, digital transition and audience engagement, and management of all Stations;
- (h) Quality of the overall response; and
- (i) Programming solutions that offer suitable amounts of New Jersey-centric news and information programming.

Protest Exhibits - Table of Contents		
Bidder eligibility under the 2010 Transfer Act & Journalistic Independence	Criteria B & C	Pages 2-5
Programming	Criteria A, B, H, I	Pages 6-11
Management	Criteria A, C, H	Pages 11-14
Modernization & Innovation	Criteria F, G, H	Pages 14-17
Funding & Financial Sustainability	Criteria C, D, H	Pages 17-18
Infrastructure & July 1 availability	Criteria E	Pages 18-19

Bidder Eligibility under the NJ Public Broadcasting System Transfer Act & Journalistic Independence

RFP Question 8.5 - C: *501(c)3 incorporation documentation and bylaws; or other demonstration of qualifications as a nonprofit entity under the Transfer Act, or a demonstration of intent to qualify with a plan and timeline for doing so.*

BACKGROUND

The 2010 Transfer Act initiated the privatization of the state-run New Jersey Network (NJN) and transferred its operations and assets to non-state entities. It was enacted under Governor Christie and passed with comfortable, bipartisan majorities. It has two primary objectives:

- 1) Minimize taxpayer financial burden
- 2) Make the network journalistically independent from State government.

Montclair State University should not be eligible for the broadcast license under this law as MSU's Board of Trustees is directly appointed by the Governor. In financial filings, Montclair State University self-identifies as "A Component Unit of the State of New Jersey." MSU's bid does not adequately affirm its eligibility.

From the MSU website:

Montclair State University Governance: Montclair's Board of Trustees, pursuant to the authority granted them by the State of New Jersey, is empowered to manage and administer the University affairs. The Board is composed of voting members appointed by the Governor, two undergraduate students (one voting and one non-voting), and the President, who serves as an ex-officio member. The term of office for a Gubernatorially appointed member is six years...

A newsroom operated by MSU is a return to State-run NJN. More concerning, unlike NJN, the Board of MSU has a primary and fiduciary responsibility to the University and its education objectives first. In an effort to maintain MSU's \$229 million in State funding, a conflict of interest may arise in reporting negatively on the State or Legislature.

29x

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2

1 d. Because of a concern that the best interests of the citizens
2 could be harmed by any wholesale elimination of public
3 broadcasting, the Legislature created the "Legislative Task Force on
4 Public Broadcasting," which was charged with evaluating a
5 potential transition of New Jersey public broadcasting assets to a
6 non-profit entity. The task force concluded that such entity should:
7 (1) continue to provide New Jersey-centric programming; (2)
8 operate Statewide; (3) implement the use of new technology; and
9 ~~(4) provide independent, civic journalism.~~

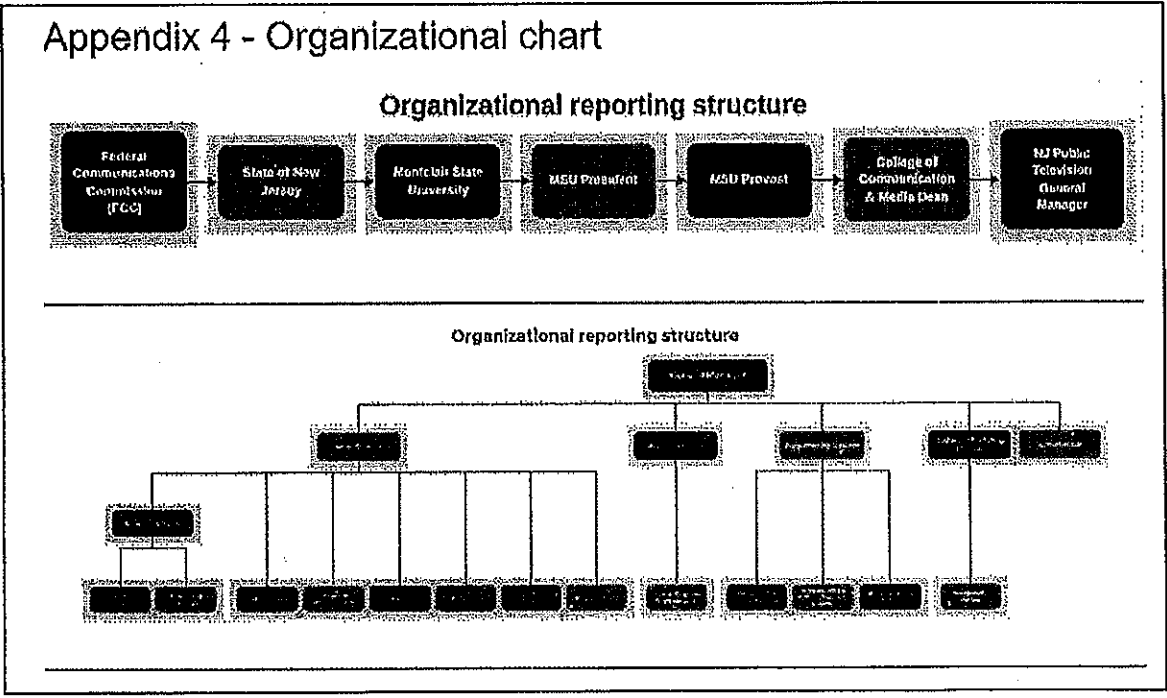
The Transfer Act (N.J.S. 48:23-18 et seq.)

MSU PROPOSAL:

Page 3:

Montclair is a public institution governed by a Board of Trustees appointed by the Governor of New Jersey.

Appendix 4 - Organizational chart



MSU Bid appendix 4 - Organizational chart (page 37)

Page 7:

8.5 - 3. Nonprofit Qualification

30x

Montclair State University is a public research university constituted under New Jersey law (the "Montclair State University Act," N.J.S.A. 18A:64N -1 et seq.), and, in accordance with the Transfer Act (defined below), is an educational and charitable corporation validly existing and in good standing under the "New Jersey Nonprofit Corporation Act," (N.J.S.A. 15A:1-1 et seq.) (the "Nonprofit Act") (New Jersey Identification Number 0101064807), and is incorporated, organized and operated in such a manner as to qualify as a nonprofit corporation described in section 501(c)(3) of the federal Internal Revenue Code, 26 U.S.C. s.501(c)(3) or any successor provision, that is exempt from taxation pursuant to section 501(a) of the federal Internal Revenue Code, 26 U.S.C. s.501(a) or any successor provision. Further, prior to entering into a Programming and Services Agreement, the University intends to amend its certificate of incorporation to expressly include as part of its stated purposes the operation of a public broadcasting system. The University's EIN is 22-2912682.

Prior to entering into a Programming and Services Agreement, a new 501(c)(3) entity, to be called Friends of NJ Public TV, Inc., will be formed under the Nonprofit Act and the University will be its sole member. Friends of NJ Public TV, Inc., will apply to be recognized as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization by the Internal Revenue Service.

The Transfer Act, P.L.2010, Chapter 104, approved December 17, 2010 (the "Transfer Act"), says on Page 2, beginning on Line 10:

"It is therefore necessary and in the public interest to establish a legal structure within which the transfer, either by sale or lease, of the State's public broadcasting system, or delegation by contract of the responsibility for operating that system, to a nonprofit corporation or other entity eligible to operate a public broadcasting system."

As described above, Montclair's status as a public educational institution incorporated under the New Jersey's Nonprofit Act fully satisfies this requirement. Additionally, as stated above, hundreds of universities across the country hold licenses from the FCC and operate television and radio stations, further underscoring the University's eligibility and suitability to operate a public broadcasting system from a regulatory standpoint.

As a State university, Montclair serves a public mission of education and community service. It operates on a nonprofit basis, reinvesting all revenues in educational programs. We are accountable to the public through our Board of Trustees and State oversight. Additionally, the Friends of NJ Public TV nonprofit, which will handle fundraising matters for the NJPBA stations, will be exempt from federal income taxation as a 501(c)(3).

As Montclair currently meets all nonprofit qualifications under the Transfer Act, we are prepared to execute a Programming and Services Agreement immediately upon selection.

NJIPM PROPOSAL:

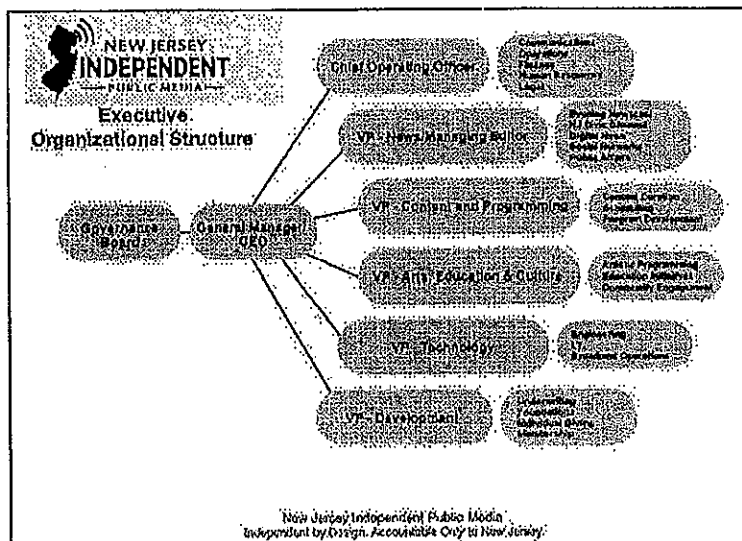


Exhibit 10 - Executive Organizational Chart (page 71)

Page 15

8.5 - C

New Jersey Independent Public Media is incorporated in the state of New Jersey with bylaws notably dictating that no employee of NJIPM is an employee of the State of New Jersey (NJIPM Bylaws attached - Exhibit 7)

NJIPM's application for 501(c)3 status is pending, though not necessary for the purposes of the award. Filing has already been made for Independent New Jersey 15A Nonprofit Corporation.

Page 27

8.12

NJIPM is the only Single-Purpose-Entity bidder. Running this station is our only priority. We are highly qualified and built around relevant New Jersey public media experience, and are fully detached from government appointments.

Programming

RFP Question 8.5 - F: "Proposed plans for the provision of customized New Jersey-centric issue-responsive programming, including specific amounts and types of programming, as well as a comparison of the bidder's plans with NJPBA's existing New Jersey-centric programming which consists of six hours of news and information programming per week, including 30-minutes of a local newscast on weekdays."

BACKGROUND

- There is a fundamental misunderstanding by Montclair State University of NJ PBS' present programming and what is required of the contract.
 - MSU's proposal falsely claims it will offer a 73% increase in original New Jersey programming compared to current service.
- MSU's plan for continued *NJ Spotlight News* programming is contingent on its ability to "work closely with WNET." WNET will have no part in producing *NJ Spotlight News* or contributing any news content after Sept 30, 2026. This has been confirmed by WNET President & CEO Neal Shapiro.
- To supplement its 3-reporter newsroom, MSU will rely heavily on The Center for Cooperative Media, "which operates within Montclair's College of Communication and Media, provides a built-in network of over 300 member news organizations across New Jersey through its NJ News Commons."
 - However, many of these small local news entities are hyper-local sites run by part-time staff or 1-2 individuals.
 - MSU's skeleton news team will not have the bandwidth to corroborate reporting.
 - These are not staff members of NJ PBS who must be available for assignments or breaking news.
- Of MSU's 9.5-10.4 hours of first-run NJ-centric programming, 1/2 an hour will be a cooking show hosted by MSU's President, Jonathan Koppell, called "Cooking With Koppell."

An apples-to-apples comparison is as follows:

Organization	First-run NJ-centric weekly programming	NJ-centric weekly programming (with re-runs)
NJ PBS - week of Jan 20, 2025	8	25.5 (17.5 hrs of re-runs)
NJ PBS - week of June 8, 2025	6	19.5 (13.5 hrs of re-runs)
MSU	9.5-10.4	37 (27.5 hrs of re-runs)
NJIPM	11.5	26.5 (15 hrs of re-runs)

NJ PBS Programming Grid for Jan 2025

34x

NJIPM PROPOSAL

Pages 17-20

NJIPM's programming strategy reflects a deep commitment to serving New Jersey residents with journalism, civic engagement, arts, culture, sports, and public access content that resonates across communities and across platforms. In an age of fragmented information sources, NJIPM will offer an integrated and inclusive slate of programming that informs, empowers, and reflects the diversity of the Garden State.

The following deliverables represent the heart of NJIPM's content ecosystem, programming designed for impact, accessibility, and statewide relevance. Viewers will see this programming, a mix of NJIPM productions, PBS programs, and other acquired shows. Sample Weekly Schedule attached (Exhibit 9)

NJ Spotlight News

Returning as a live 30 minute weeknightly broadcast, NJ Spotlight News will deliver comprehensive statewide reporting, anchor political and civic coverage, provide trusted analysis and accountability journalism, and serve as a daily civic touchpoint for residents.

New State House and South Jersey bureaus will contribute to the issues-based journalism as the broadcast focuses on state policy and legislation, education, infrastructure, public health, economic development, and community impact.

This marquee program will now be resourced to handle statewide breaking news, produce high-level political debates, cover major civic events including The Annual Walk to Washington and the League of Municipalities, and to execute investigative and long-form reporting.

Public Affairs & Insight Series

NJIPM will elevate long-form public affairs programming that dives deeper into policy, leadership, and civic life, offering residents not just headlines, but context and insight. NJIPM will collaborate with and amplify public affairs programming rooted in deep New Jersey context. Featured series and partnerships include:

Caucus Educational Corporation Programming — A portfolio of award-winning public affairs programming from Steve Aduato featuring in-depth interviews, policy discussions, and storytelling that highlights New Jersey's leaders, key issues, and influential figures, including State of Affairs, One-on-One, Think Tank, and Remember Them.

¿Que Pasa NJ? with Carlos Medina — a culturally significant public television program hosted by Carlos Medina that highlights stories from the Hispanic community and broader New Jersey civic and business leadership, connecting cultures, voices, and perspectives through storytelling that reflects the lived experience of diverse Garden State residents.

Arts, Culture & Community Identity

NJIPM recognizes that public media must celebrate cultural life with the same vigor as it covers civic life. Arts and culture programming deepens engagement, fosters community connection and pride, and reflects the creative pulse of the state.

Key Local Cultural Programming including:

State of the Arts — an Emmy Award-winning documentary series that goes on location with creative personalities and productions in and around New Jersey. This long-running program, co-produced by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts and Stockton University, highlights artists, performers, musicians, dancers, poets, and cultural festivals that define the state's diverse creative landscape.

TAP – The Arts Project with Maddie Orton — an NJIPM-produced arts and culture series that look

spotlights the state's vibrant arts sector, amplifying creative voices and providing a platform for New Jersey's visual, performing, and literary arts communities.

Treasures of NJ — an original NJ PBS documentary series that features the Garden State's most iconic places, from historic landmarks and cultural centers to popular destinations...

Community Engagement & Representation

In an effort to prioritize programming rooted in community voice, civic participation, and inclusive representation, NJIPM will bring viewers entirely new Jersey-produced programs as well as rebooted classics.

In Your Neighborhood — the acclaimed series will return with four annual on-location live broadcasts showcasing local stories, issues, and celebrations from different regions of the state. **Four Annual Town Halls** — moderated forums bringing residents, leaders, and experts together around the issues that affect their daily lives.

Local Sports and Youth Engagement — live and curated coverage of community sports, including select high school basketball games that cultivate community pride and visibility. This degree of focus does not currently exist on a statewide level.

Arts & Culture Specials — NJIPM will house a series of specials showcasing some of the state's most exciting and meaningful arts and culture events including Paper Mill Playhouse's Rising Star Awards, New Jersey Hall of Fame's Induction Ceremony, and the Poetry Out Loud State Finals.

Page 20

8.5 - G

NJ Civic Channel

Within this integrated newsroom structure, NJIPM will launch the NJ Civic Channel — a dedicated digital stream providing continuous access to state government and civic

proceedings. Modeled on the accessibility principles of C-SPAN, the NJ Civic Channel will provide:

- *Gavel-to-gavel legislative coverage*
- *Live streaming of committee hearings*
- *Live coverage of the State of the State and Budget Address*
- *Coverage of budget hearings and major proceedings*
- *Archived, searchable proceedings available on demand*
- *Educational programs like Civics Made Easy — a PBS series accompanied by classroom-ready support materials for grades 6-12 that breaks down the complexities of American government and civic participation, empowering viewers with essential knowledge to actively participate in their democracy.*

The NJ Civic Channel expands civic access in a modern format while remaining integrated within the broader newsroom ecosystem.

Management

BACKGROUND

- It is unclear whether MSU's team is employed by the University with education-focused interests or by the broadcast network. If employees wear both hats, they will not be full-time staff of the network.
- MSU does not presently have a News Director ready to start on day 1.
- The selected proposal contemplates approximately 12-20 interns, exceeding the number of identified newsroom and production personnel.
 - A "teaching hospital" model is not analogous. A teaching hospital relies on those who are nearing professional status with experience under their belts. This comparison over-estimates the readiness of interns to handle the demands of round-the-clock news information in a timely and accurate manner.
 - Are interns intended to supplement a professional operation or perform functions typically handled by full-time staff?
 - What level of professional supervision and continuity will be provided, and what strain does this put on an already skeletal staff?
 - If key positions are not being staffed (control room operator, stage manager, technical director, etc), who are interns learning from? If they are not getting first-hand experience overseen by staffed positions and they are not being paid or are underpaid, this is an exploitative labor practice.
- Staffing
 - MSU's proposed newsroom staffing consists of:
 - 3 reporters
 - 11-person production team that includes newsroom producers and digital staff
 - This is far short of the current NJ PBS staff needed to do the work.
 - It is unclear where video editors, camera operators, control room, fact-checkers, etc. come into play. Will the news program be run without these?
 - NJIPM's newsroom staffing consists of 53 full-time employees including:

- 2 anchors
- 6 broadcast correspondents (1 dedicated to State House coverage & 1 dedicated to South Jersey coverage)
- 4 digital journalists
- 2 social media specialists

MSU PROPOSAL

Page 24-25

Journalism and news programming (10 positions)

1. *News Director — directs all newsgathering, directs all news content production, coordinates with NJ Spotlight News on the daily newscast, oversees additional news and public affairs programming, and ensures editorial standards and independence.*
2. *Assignment Coordinator — manages daily news coverage logistics.*
3. *Reporter, North Jersey, regional reporter providing geographic coverage.*
4. *Reporter, Statehouse/Central Jersey, regional reporter providing geographic coverage.*
5. *Reporter, South Jersey, regional reporter providing geographic coverage.*
6. *Anchor — On-air lead for the daily newscast, all digital videos, lead community liaison for external events.*
7. *Producer, daily news — produces daily news video content and the newscast.*
8. *Producer, digital content — produces content across streaming, social, and digital platforms.*
9. *Production coordinator/editor — production coordination and post-production editing for original content.*
10. *vMix Operator — operates the virtual production mixing system for the daily newscast. Ensuring accuracy, preventing lawsuits, rights and clearances*

NJIPM PROPOSALNews Staff excerpt from NJIPM Staff list –Exhibit 11

Executive Producer	EDITORIAL (Nightly NJ Programming Unit)
Senior Producer	
Assignment Manager	
Assignment Editor	
Production Manager	
Assistant Production Manager	
Producer	
Producer	
Producer (State House)	
Producer (South Jersey)	
Associate Producer	
Associate Producer	
Production Assistant	
Production Assistant	
Anchor	
Anchor	
Correspondent	
Correspondent	
Correspondent	
Correspondent	
Correspondent (State House)	
Correspondent (South Jersey)	
Senior Digital Content Editor	
Senior Futures Editor	
Digital Journalist/MMJ	
Digital Journalist/MMJ	
Digital Journalist/MMJ	
Digital Journalist/MMJ	
Social Media Specialist	
Social Media Specialist	

Continued on next page

News Staff excerpt from NJIPM Staff list (CONTINUED) –Exhibit 11

Head of Production Media Manager Media Manager Media Manager Creative Director Graphic Artist Graphic Artist Field Camera Operator/Editor Field Camera Operator/Editor Field Camera Operator/Editor	POST PRODUCTION (Nightly NJ Programming Unit)
Coordinating Producer, State House Streams Digital Director, State House Streams	STREAMING (Nightly NJ Programming Unit)
Director/TD Robo Camera Op Audio Engineer Server Op Stage Manager MUA/Hair EIC Director of Engineering Ops Director of IT Director of Operations	STUDIO CREW (Nightly NJ Programming Unit)

Modernization & Innovation

RFP Question 8.5 - g: *Proposed plans for provision of digital New Jersey-centric programming including targeted audiences, production and streaming and social media distribution plans.*

BACKGROUND

- MSU's bid addresses modernization and innovation with strategies that have all long been in use by NJ PBS
- MSU's bid addresses modernization of the news show, and innovation in strategy, yet it utilizes a low-budget virtual platform for producing the news, called vMix. What role will the physical MSU studio play in the production of the news? Or will the studio be dedicated to student operations?

41x

- MSU's bid addresses serving NJ's diverse community simply with a platitude and list of groups on page 15-16:

Additionally, New Jersey public television should be sure to also consider the needs of:

- *Hispanic/Latino communities (the fastest-growing demographic in New Jersey).*
- *Asian American communities (particularly in North and Central New Jersey).*
- *Young adults 18-35 (digital-native audiences with future buying power).*
- *Suburban families seeking educational and cultural content (current group with most buying power).*
- *LGBTQ+ communities across the state.*
- *Senior citizens that largely prefer broadcast platforms.*
- *Schools and teachers.*

All of this informs an effective digital and multiplatform strategy.

- MSU's focus is using data to create a strategy that does not yet exist
- There is no acknowledgement of A.I., the greatest digital transformation facing journalism today.

MSU RESPONSE

Page 15

Digital and multiplatform strategy... We plan to develop a well-rounded strategy that we expect to have in the field by Year 2.

NJIPM RESPONSE

Page 16

Public Access & Emerging Creator Support

To ensure public media is made by the people of New Jersey, NJIPM will invest in infrastructure and programs that expand access to professional tools and training. A publicly accessible podcast studio will be a professional-grade facility available to New Jersey residents for media production, storytelling, and community voices. The New Jersey Content Creator Development Program will be a statewide initiative providing equipment, coaching, and production support to emerging New Jersey content creators, enabling grassroots storytellers to build skills and contribute to NJIPM content ecosystems. This democratizes access to media production and reinforces the mission that public media is made for and by the people of New Jersey

Where Our News and Information Model Excels

NJIPM's operational model is designed for durability, scale, and statewide reach. The robust newsgathering infrastructure and publicly accessible facilities will be structured as a multi-platform operation from inception, not a legacy broadcast model retrofitted for digital. The combination of linear broadcasts, streaming platforms, real-time digital updates, and on-demand content ensures maximum accessibility and impact.

Pages 20-21

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24/7 Digital News Platform

With a newsroom built on a story-centric, not platform-centric model, NJIPM will operate a continuously updated digital news platform providing real-time coverage of breaking news, investigative reporting, multimedia storytelling, and on-demand content. As the NJCIC Public Media Ecosystem Report states, "Streaming, social video, podcasts, newsletters, distribution, and on-demand access are core channels, not secondary extensions." This platform ensures NJIPM serves audiences beyond traditional broadcast windows and meets modern consumption habits.

NJ Civic Channel

Within this integrated newsroom structure, NJIPM will launch the NJ Civic Channel — a dedicated digital stream providing continuous access to state government and civic proceedings. Modeled on the accessibility principles of C-SPAN, the NJ Civic Channel will provide:

- *Gavel-to-gavel legislative coverage*
- *Live streaming of committee hearings*
- *Live coverage of the State of the State and Budget Address*
- *Coverage of budget hearings and major proceedings*
- *Archived, searchable proceedings available on demand*
- *Educational programs like Civics Made Easy — a PBS series accompanied by classroom-ready support materials for grades 6-12 that breaks down the complexities of American government and civic participation, empowering viewers with essential knowledge to actively participate in their democracy.*

The NJ Civic Channel expands civic access in a modern format while remaining integrated within the broader newsroom ecosystem.

Dedicated Social Media Team

A dedicated social media team brings this story-centric model directly to residents' fingertips, allowing important news and weather updates to go out as soon as possible, rather than being held for scheduled broadcasts. All staff members from production assistants to the news director can provide necessary content and keep open lines of communication with the public. The result is faster response to breaking news, deeper storytelling, and consistent high quality journalism that serves New Jersey communities anytime anywhere.

A.I. Awareness and Optimization

As artificial intelligence continues to challenge public trust in journalism, transparency in process, sourcing, and organizational management will be at the forefront of NJIPM's news division and overall operations.

A.I. is also changing the technological side of journalism by platforming news and other content

based on an evolving set of parameters. By staying abreast of this changing landscape, NJIPM, will maintain its viability and relevance in an increasingly competitive climate.

Page 22

NJPBA.RFP.Questions.2026.5.11 Document in response to follow-up questions from NJPBA
Digital Content Strategy (Post-Award)

- Integration of new media content creators to expand reach and engage audiences on digital platforms
- Inclusion of trusted, recognizable voices (e.g., educators, community leaders, and subject-matter experts with established followings) to provide commentary and analysis
- Development of a network of "creator-critics" to expand coverage of arts, culture, and community life across New Jersey.

Funding & Financial Sustainability

BACKGROUND

MSU claims it has plans for scenarios in which NJ PBS receives funding from the State in the amount of \$0, \$250K (current allocation from the State) or \$1 million. This makes MSU's NJ PBS budget (especially without a development team in place) look remarkably, if implausibly, lean.

However, MSU receives \$229 million from the State, and it is unclear what amount of that state funding goes to its new College of Communication and Media, the umbrella under which NJ PBS is operated, and how much of that money would indirectly go to NJ PBS. The actual state funding commitment is not disclosed.

Additionally, MSU does not have a dedicated fundraising 501c3 in place—only plans to build one out.

Pensacola State College should be reviewed as a cautionary tale of what can happen when the a college's priorities shift and the local PBS station is not the entity's sole focus:

"WSRE's nonprofit fundraising foundation just filed a first-in-the-nation federal lawsuit to stop Pensacola State College from taking control of millions in private donor dollars that have sustained the station's community service for nearly 60 years.

"The lawsuit alleges PSC didn't just decide to walk away from its decades-old relationship with PBS, it formally terminated the Foundation as its partner and "Direct Support Organization." It went even further, demanding the nonprofit dissolve and "that funds donated by private citizens be turned over to the government entity, PSC."

-<https://floridapolitics.com/archives/769484-a-mission-under-fire-wsre-foundation-pushes-back-on-pensacola-state-college-power-money-grab/>

<https://current.org/2025/09/licensee-of-wsre-ends-pbs-affiliation-moves-to-decertify-foundation/>

44x

<https://www.wuwi.org/local-news/2025-09-17/psc-trustees-vote-to-end-wsres-pbs-affiliation-dissolve-station-foundations-college-status>

MSU PROPOSAL

Page 3

"New Jersey public television will be a business unit within the College of Communication and Media. We are ready to create a dedicated 501c3, Friends of NJ Public TV, to handle all fundraising activities."

Infrastructure & July 1 availability

BACKGROUND

NJPBA has made clear that readiness to take over the NJPBA licenses on July 1, 2026 is of paramount importance.

- While MSU has showcased its facilities as a key selling point, they have not provided staffing to use those facilities for the daily news broadcast. (Camera operator, control room operator, multiple daily video editors for day-of-air news, etc.)
- As established above, MSU's proposal relies on a relationship with WNET that will terminate on September 30, 2026.
- As established above, MSU has also indicated that they will use a low-budget virtual platform to produce the news, called vMix. How much of the studio facility itself will be utilized in producing the daily news broadcast? This is very unclear.
- If students are expected to fill these roles, how does that align with the concept of a reliable, professional statewide public media operation?
- As established above, MSU does not yet have:
 - News Director
 - Fundraising Infrastructure

NJIPM PROPOSAL

NJIPM made clear in follow-up meetings with NJPBA that they are ready to take over the station on July 1st.

- **Facilities:** While this is a quick turn-around, NJIPM has access to a state-of-the-art 4K mobile production unit that can manage broadcasting while the former NJ PBS station studio and offices in Newark are re-established.
- **Continuity of service:** WNET has agreed to produce and Broadcast *NJ Spotlight News* through Sept. 30th in any scenario, so there will be no break in news service. NJIPM has met with PBS national to lay groundwork for taking over station membership, if given the opportunity.

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- **Staffing:** A General Manager is in place, and primary leadership, along with several key roles, have already been tapped and would be formally hired. NJIPM Board members would fill any initial gaps in July while hiring takes place.
- **Funding:** There are several legislative proposals NJIPM is backing that would supplement funding to a required level without the need for new budget allocations.
- **Cash flow:** The Community Foundation of NJ, which oversees \$1.17 billion in assets and 1,200 funds, will advance NJIPM funding if needed.

46x