

New report shows success of local radio thanks to government fund

- Report shows community radio continues to go from strength to strength
- Community Radio Fund has proved a lifeline for smaller stations and boosted their growth
- Fund helps local stations increase income and recruit more staff

The Community Radio Fund (CRF) was established in 2005 to help to fund the core costs of running Ofcom-licensed community radio stations.

The CRF evaluation report, published today, demonstrates how the community radio sector has grown and annual income streams have increased due to the grants received.

After receiving a grant from the CRF, a station's income increased by more than a third on average.

Over a third of stations have been able to employ more staff due to their grant award and nearly 60 per cent of stations said their grant funding has enabled them to recruit more volunteers. Thanks to the CRF, more than half of grant recipients have been able to develop a new fundraising strategy or business plan.

The Fund has also given life and voice to smaller radio stations – such as Salford City Radio – that were on the brink of closure. Now, thanks to CRF grants, they have transformed into self-sustaining stations and some have even been able to expand their coverage. Salford City Radio now has ambitions for expansion, including onto DAB so they can reach even wider audiences.

In the past two years the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has also given an extra £400,000 to the Fund, in recognition of the sector's significant contribution to reducing loneliness and helping to level up communities.

Media Minister Julia Lopez said:

The Community Radio Fund has been a lifeline for local radio, benefitting listeners across the UK. We've been able to target this funding at local stations that need it most and once again we've seen the valuable role the radio industry plays in being responsive to connect with its listeners.

The CRF has been instrumental in allowing the sector to bring in people with the skills and experience to grow their commercial income streams.

The research also shows the impact of law changes in 2015 that allowed smaller radio stations more opportunities to secure income from advertising

and sponsorship.

In the months to come, DCMS will carry out further work with Ofcom – who administer the Fund – to help it become even more efficient and benefit communities as much as possible.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

- The evaluation report can be found [here](#).
- [Research](#) commissioned for the [Digital Radio and Audio Review](#) shows stronger listener numbers than ever and the sector has a huge part to play in bringing communities together, supporting and benefiting local businesses, volunteer organisations such as food banks, schools and members of the community as well as providing opportunities for people to get into radio.