Sustaining the Democratic Medium: Philanthropy and Community Radio in Australia

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Abstract

The community radio sector in Australia has been experiencing rapid growth as a result of the increase in the number of licensed radio stations. However, Australian government funding has not proportionally increased, thus threatening the financial viability of many community radio stations. A key issue to be addressed is the need to find ways to enhance community radio's sources of funding without imperilling its status as a not-for-profit sector. Philanthropy is therefore an option that community radio stations could cultivate and develop. Philanthropy and community radio have a lot in common, as they are both connected in their mission. Philanthropy involves active community capital building and community radio is dedicated to offering media services to the community. Common objectives can lay a solid foundation for a pro-active financial relationship. This paper looks into the nature of philanthropy and explores the opportunity of it acting as a potential source of income for community media in Australia.

Introduction

This paper is part of a larger research project that investigates the survivability of community radio in Australia in the face of diminishing government funding and, as a result, the lack of financial support. With licences increasingly being granted to sprouting community radio stations, most government grants are devoted to seed funding. With this in mind, community stations are finding it difficult to sustain their operation and are being forced to find alternative sources of funding. Although this might be a positive direction for community radio stations to take, it is not an easy one. This broader research investigates various options that community radio stations could develop such as sponsorship revenue, subscriber contribution, membership drives, training fees, marketing strategies, and philanthropic funding – and it is the latter that this paper will focus on.

With community media juggling to prove their social worth while at the same time redefining themselves to find a position in the marketplace, there is constant pressure to operate whilst maintaining a balance between the two. This research argues that there is a "need to find alternative ways to enhance community radio's sources of income without imperilling its status as a not-for-profit sector… This study suggests that there is no inherent conflict between entrepreneurial principles and not-for-profit principles… [and] by taking an entrepreneurial open-minded approach to community radio operation[,] that would ensure a positive direction towards financial success rather than operating within restrictions that would result in the station's struggle to survive" (El-Ghul, 2005).

A key issue that begs to be addressed is the need to find ways of enhancing community radio's sources of funding without jeopardising its status as a not-for-

profit sector. Philanthropy is therefore an option that community radio stations could cultivate and develop. Philanthropy and community radio have a lot in common, as they are both connected in their mission. Philanthropy involves active community capital building and community radio is dedicated to offering media services to the community. Common objectives can lay a solid foundation for a pro-active financial relationship.

This paper looks into the nature of philanthropy (in particular financing through larger foundations or corporations), and explores the possibility of it acting as a source of income for community media in Australia. It is necessary to highlight that the case of funding community radio is part of a larger issue related to the private financing of community organisations in Australia. This paper recommends the need to maximise community radio's income by promoting a culture of building philanthropic ties with larger corporations. This could pave the way to opening new channels of revenue without the need to rely on government funding for sustainability.

During the research, case studies were chosen to illustrate some of the financial difficulties that are echoed throughout the sector, and to exemplify possible philanthropic links with community radio. As part of the overall research from which this paper stems, a mapping of the literature, government reports, in addition to interviews with key participants in the sector are included.

This paper will begin by pointing out issues pertaining to the sector in general, followed by a background of Australia's community sector in particular. Then a mapping of the community radio sector's financial environment will be outlined. A discussion on the nature of government funding will act as a background, and also illustrate the role of the Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF) as a potential philanthropic organisation for community radio in Australia. To emphasise the

importance of philanthropy for community broadcasting, experiences and concerns from the Australian community sector will then be highlighted. It is not within the scope of this paper to discuss other funding opportunities for community radio, as the author has previously published work related to this matter and has referred to it in the framework of this text.

The Issue

Mainstream media today dominate the flow of information where alternative views are seldom represented. As a result, the emergence of alternative media as a platform for 'other' views to be expressed has played a role in giving a voice to unconventional perspectives. John Downing (1995) explains that "[w]hen the mainstream media misrepresent social and political realities, then, again, alternative media come into their own. They provide an alternative public forum… to the official forum and the official story" (p. 250). The question here, however, is how can alternative media enjoy at least some of the financial security and stability mainstream media do, in order to carry out their role as a niche voice?

Alternative media are regarded as a form of media operating on the margins of the overall media landscape. This is due to what has been labelled as the 'amateurishness' of alternative media. Clemencia Rodriquez (2001) refers to alternative media constantly accused of being shattered and dispersed (p. 12). Other views (as cited in Harcup, 2003) indicate that:

> [a]lternative media have been dismissed as inhabiting an 'alternative ghetto' and as exemplifying 'radical failure' – failure to attract advertisers, failure to operate in a businesslike manner and failure to reach significant audiences. (p. 356)

These views on alternative media's failures at an organisational level were initially

highlighted in Comedia's (1984) article entitled *The Alternative Press: The development of underdevelopment*. Comedia are a group that put this article together as a result of experience in alternative press in the UK for ten years. The article highlights the weaknesses of this form of media, many of which still exist today, through an economic outline of the sector. Comedia (1984) accuse alternative media of failing to adapt to the marketplace through lack of marketing, financial and organisational planning (p. 95). However, Comedia (1984) do point out a few alternative media success stories of publications that managed to gain ground in the mainstream (p. 100). In their article, Comedia (1984) question to what extent alternative organisations can survive the market place while still pursuing political ambition (p. 96). Comedia (1984) clarify this by saying that:

> [t]his issue increasingly came to assume a quite central and determining position in the political structure of the sector. The field of 'politics' having been redefined to include the 'personal', increasingly the politics of the internal/personal matters of the organizations concerned came to be the central, and at many points exclusive focus of debate and energy, to the detriment of any concern with the necessities of survival in a capitalist market-place. (p. 98)

Comedia (1984) therefore see that without strategic overview, not only will the economic aspect of alternative organisations suffer, but so will the operation be affected (p. 99). If alternative media organisations do not make use of market opportunities, according to Comedia, they are in danger of remaining in their 'alternative' ghetto.

At an Australian level, the community radio sector is experiencing rapid growth, resulting in an increase in the number of licensed radio stations. However, Australian

government funding has not proportionally increased, and is therefore threatening the financial viability of many stations (this issue will be discussed further in the article). A key issue to be addressed is the need to find ways to enhance community radio's sources of funding without imperilling its status as a not-for-profit sector. Philanthropy is a potential option that community radio stations could cultivate and develop. It is necessary, however, to first outline the community broadcasting journey in Australia and the economic factors associated with the sector.

A Short History

Broadcasting in Australia is organised as complementary sectors of public, commercial and most recently, community broadcasting. Community broadcasting is regarded as the third tier of the country's media. It was known as the public broadcasting sector until the *Broadcasting Services Act*, 1992, designated the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) and the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) as 'public broadcasters' (previously known as national broadcasters), and the not-for-profit third sector as community broadcasting. This sector was established to address gaps in the service that were not addressed by the commercial sector or the government funded public sector – particularly in the areas of access and special interest programming.

The ABC has four national network radio stations (Radio National, Classic FM, Triple J and News Radio which is only available in capital cities and Newcastle, or as streamed audio), an international network (Radio Australia), an Internet station (DiG Radio) and 46 local radio stations (Contact ABC Radio, 10 Oct 2002). SBS is the other government-funded multicultural and multilingual broadcasting service. SBS includes a television service, and a national radio service which broadcasts in 68 diverse languages from Sydney and Melbourne (Language Groups, 6 Oct 2002). As

for the commercial radio sector, there are 241 commercial stations around Australia, 108 broadcasting on AM and 133 broadcasting on FM (Commercial Radio Broadcasting Licences, 10 Oct 2002). In addition to these three main sectors, the industry includes subscription broadcasting, open narrowcasting and subscription narrowcasting.

The need for community radio in Australia arose in the 1960s. As Phoebe Thornley (2001) indicates:

> [r]adio broadcasting had remained almost unchanged since before the War... While many people thought there was a need for reform, the only thing these people had in common was a belief that current broadcasting services were defective. (p. 3)

Educational interests were prime movers towards community radio. Music Broadcasting Societies that had formed in Sydney and Melbourne were seeking permission to broadcast as independent FM services, and be funded by listener subscriptions. The lobby for the extension of radio services broadened out to include other specialist music, ethnic programming, and educational and political information.

The Public Broadcasting Association of Australia (PBAA), later to become the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA), was formed in mid-1974 when the Whitlam government was going through procedures to legislate for public broadcasting. Signs of a government intention to develop the sector by prescription rather than in response to community demand, motivated key activists to establish the PBAA, a national public service broadcasting secretariat, which would "lobby for the establishment and development of public broadcasting..." (Thornley, 2000, p. 3).

The early 1970s saw a range of new radio services created and it was in the mid-1970s that a third tier was finally formed. According to the CBAA (CBAA Handbook):

> [i]n 1972, and under a Liberal government, the Australian Broadcasting Control Board recommended… 'a new type of service, comprising FM stations, to be known as Public Broadcasting Stations which would be conducted on a non-profit basis to cater for the needs of educational, religious, professional, musical and other like interests, but which would be available to the general public. (p. 2)

There was pressure for change as a consequence of both this government inquiry and recommendation. According to the CBAA Handbook:

> [t]he pioneers of community broadcasting had three shared motivations and objectives: (1) to make broadcasting accessible to individuals and sections of the community seeking access, particularly those who did not obtain access to other media; (2) to expand meaningful programming choice to satisfy a wide diversity of needs and interests of listeners, whether numerous or not; and (3) to enable community organisations to own, operate and control their own independent broadcasting services, thereby diversifying control of the media. (p.2)

These objectives now constitute the mission of community radio.

In 1976 amendments to broadcasting legislation were introduced to parliament, partially to provide for public broadcasting. In early 1978 the amendments came into effect and a third distinct public radio sector came into existence alongside national and commercial sectors. By 1988, there were 79 public radio licences, with many of the new licensees representing regional and sub-metropolitan communities.

Within the public radio licence category there were three sub-categories. Stations were classed as either 'Community', 'Educational' or 'Special Interest' public broadcasters. 'Community' public stations had a charter to provide a community service, designed to serve a geographical area, and provide for the participation by a variety of community groups and interests in that area. 'Educational' licensees were usually affiliated with a university and carried a high proportion of educational content, and 'Special Interest' stations served a clearly defined interest group such as musical, sporting, ethnic and religious. In 1985, educational stations were brought under the umbrella of 'Special Interest', but all of these legislative sub-sectoral distinctions were eventually abandoned.

With the development of specialist community radio stations, came the development of national bodies to represent these specialist interests. These now include: Australian Christian Radio (ACR), National Ethnic and Multicultural Broadcasters Council (NEMBC), National Indigenous Media Association of Australia (NIMAA) and Radio for Print Handicapped Australia (RPHA). In 1984 the Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF) was established to act as a funding agency for the development of community broadcasting in Australia.

In the early 1980s, in response to a call from stations wanting quality programming produced by other community stations, the National Program Service was established by the PBAA to distribute taped program material via post. In 1993, with over 130 permanent licensees, the CBAA (as the PBAA had become by this time) took advantage of more affordable satellite technology and launched the Community Radio Satellite Service (ComRadSat). In 2002, 140 community radio stations were linked to ComRadSat which could select programmes from a 24-hour schedule for re-broadcast on the station (ComRadSat, 28 Nov 2002).

The year 1992 heralded a new era not just for Australia's 130 public radio licensees but also for the entire media industry. The *Broadcasting Services Act,* 1992, provided for a new deregulated media environment. Three new licence categories were introduced: subscription broadcasting, open narrowcasting and subscription narrowcasting; the Australian Broadcasting Authority replaced the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal; and the public broadcasting sector became the community broadcasting sector.

The old Act presumed spectrum was scarce. The new Act took a different approach to technical planning and allowed a more pro-active approach on the part of the regulator in identifying demand for community broadcasting licences. The Australian Broadcasting Authority (ABA) (now known as the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA)) allowed aspiring groups to test broadcast under the open narrowcasting licence category. In 1997, due to long delays in the licensing schedule for narrowcast category, the Act was amended to provide for Temporary Community Broadcasting Licences (TCBLs). This amendment gave way to the administration of test broadcasts by aspirant community broadcasting groups. The issuing of over 200 TCBLs, between 1997 and 2000 by the ABA, is a strong sign of the demand for community broadcasting (CBAA Handbook, p. 4).

In early 2003, there were 276 permanent licensed radio stations, in addition to 150 aspirant radio community broadcasters, with 81 holding TCBLs out of the 276 permanently licensed radio stations; 94 were in NSW, 63 in Victoria, 45 in Queensland, 26 in Western Australia, 25 in South Australia, 13 in Tasmania, 5 in the Northern Territory and 5 in the Australian Capital Territory (Our Stations, 18 Feb 2003). This distribution of community stations across Australia is indicative of the

need for this broadcast service on a national scale, however government funding has not been able to fully support this growing need.

Financial Environment

This section will outline the nature of government funding to the community radio sector (See El-Ghul 2005 for an extensive discussion on other sources of funding). In general, community radio in Australia has three main sources of income: government funding, sponsorship and subscription. The CBAA estimates that government funding makes up between 7-10 percent of the sector's total operating revenue, sponsorship makes up 46 percent of the sector's income, whereas subscriptions make up around 20 percent (CBAA Handbook).

Although sponsorship, according to these estimates, makes up most of the sector's income, not all radio stations have been able to secure sponsors due to the varying circumstances of each station. Within the community radio sector, there are vast differences among stations in size, audience and location, particularly between metropolitan and regional stations. Some stations, such as 3RRR in Melbourne, operate in highly competitive metropolitan markets whilst other stations, such as Bordertown community station 5TCBFM, offer the only radio service in their region. More than 60 percent of community radio services are in regional areas (Forde et al., 2002, p. i).

Despite government funding making up the lowest of the three main sources of overall income for community radio, as outlined above, the sector is highly reliant on this source for seed funding. Additionally there are some stations for which the main source of recurrent income is government funding. Government grants are distributed to community radio stations in Australia through the CBF. The CBF receives an

annual grant from the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts (DCITA), and a smaller grant from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission. It is independent from the government and from the community broadcasting organisations that it funds.

The government determines the proportion of annual grants that should be allocated to general community broadcasting and to the different sub-sectors of community broadcasting according to social justice, access and equality criteria. The CBF then assesses applications for funding and distributes grants for development, programming and infrastructure support using the following categories: Aboriginal community broadcasting, ethnic community broadcasting, Radio for the Print Handicapped (RPH), general community broadcasting, the Australian Ethnic Radio Training Project (AERTP) (which faced a shortage in funding), in addition to sector coordination and policy development.

The CBF solicits and administers other grants for special projects as the government introduces new policy initiatives. These grants include the Contemporary Music Initiative for community broadcasting that is managed by the CBAA. In line with general grant distribution guidelines, special funds are divided between licensed stations, new licensees, program production, training and development, and sector coordination.

Community radio stations also apply for additional grants from other government funded agencies. Larger stations have successfully applied for funding on a regular basis through various arts and music initiatives – usually associated with the cultural contribution made by the station. Community-based grant programmes of local and state governments are also a regular target for community radio stations (Forde et al., 2002, p. 104).

An analysis of government funding allocation to the CBF, in the 1999/2000 and 2000/2001 financial years, reveals that this trend is continuing. Although there have been modest increases in government funding year to year, the average distribution back to stations has actually decreased, as rapid increase in the number of stations means government funds need to be spread further than ever before. In 1999/2000 $4.8 million was distributed to community radio in the form of government subsidies (Forde et al., 2002, p. 94).

The level of government funding provided to the CBF in 2000/2001 for disbursement to the community broadcasting sector amounted to $5.462m. In addition to $3.313 million for ongoing funding, $0.973 million was provided for the funding of special projects. These included ongoing development of the Community Access Network (CAN) and Community Broadcasting Database (CBD), support for Multicultural Community Broadcasting, support for the satellite network, the Australian Ethnic Radio Training Project (AERTP), the National Transmission Network Grant (NTN), the Australian Music Radio Airplay Project (AMRAP) and the Digital Delivery Network (DDN) (CBF Annual Report, 2000, p. 2).

Funding to permanently licensed stations from DCITA for the 2002/2003 financial year is around $5.28 million (Forde et al., 2002, p. 94). Core funding levels per station declined by 36 percent over the past years as a direct result of increase in the number of licensed stations by 60 percent (Forde et al., 2002, p. 95).

Another aspect of funding that has affected community radio stations' ability to survive has been the decrease in the supply of government services. The ongoing corporatisation of government services has affected community stations' relationship with these services, a trend that is occurring in many countries including Australia. In the 1970s and 80s community broadcasting in Australia often depended on the

principle of cooperative effort. For example, the local council would often supply premises for little rent; locally-based Telecom technicians would assist in the construction of transmitters; the Broadcasting Tribunal's State Engineer would provide a consultation without charge; or the Department of Communications would allow radio stations to access government owned transmitter sites at low rates (Thompson, 1997, p. 17).

The traditional sources of assistance mentioned above have been on the wane for some years. Practically all help from public institutions is now offered on a cost-recovery basis only. Similarly, the universities which operated community radio stations in the past have either cut the stations loose to find their own way or have reduced subsidies and required them to seek other sources of income. This has been the case with 2NCR Lismore in Australia which started out as part of Northern Rivers CAE and was cut loose by Southern Cross University in 2002. Some stations continue to receive subsidised rental in local council-owned premises, but new stations have found such arrangements more difficult to secure. Today, not only do community radio stations no longer receive assistance and low rates, but they also face additional expenses in the future as a result of public policy shifts in the management of transmission sites and infrastructure, and radio frequency spectrum.

An example of such future expenses is the Mount Dandenong tower in Australia, used as a broadcast transmitter by community radio stations in metropolitan Melbourne. It is now owned by Broadcast Australia. Previously called National Transmissions Limited (NTL), Broadcast Australia is a telecommunications company that provides transmission services to ITV channels and radio stations in the UK. NTL bought the transmitter from the Australian government on condition that for 10 years NTL would freeze transmission rents for community radio stations, according to Roger Jones who

is Station Manager of PBS FM. Jones says that community radio stations each paid

Broadcast Australia $16,000 a year in transmission site rental fees, after which the

rent on today's scale, would rise from $16,000 to $100,000 a year (personal interview

with Jo Tacchi, Jun 17, 2002). This will be unaffordable to community radio stations

and they will undoubtedly fight to get that rent down to a more reasonable figure. Yet

even if the rent only doubles, community radio stations will still need to develop plans

to cope with this increase (personal interview with Jo Tacchi, Jun 17, 2002).

Community broadcasting organisations are aware of such future challenges, and the

funding strategy group at the CBF is trying to broker a common sector position on the

escalating costs of transmission site access. The CBAA, according to the director of

the CBF Ian Stanistreet, was undertaking a survey (at the time of the interview) of all

costs connected to transmitters in order to get a hand on the national perspective of

transmission site costs to work out appropriate arguments (personal interview, Jan 22,

2003).

So far it can be seen that while the community radio sector has been experiencing

rapid growth, Australian government funding has not proportionally increased, and

this is threatening the financial viability of many stations. Therefore it is critical for

the community broadcasting sector to engage in various strategies to sustain itself

without jeopardising its operation as a not-for-profit. Philanthropy therefore, could

develop into an opportunity that community radio stations might employ.

Philanthropic Associations

According to Max MacDonald (1995), corporations engage in funding for many

reasons that include "building or reinforcing corporate and brand awareness,

reinforcing or changing the corporation's image, positioning a brand in a new market,

targeting specific market audiences, building sales and distribution opportunities and supporting advertising campaigns" (p. 25). Accordingly, philanthropy could serve as a financial support strategy that is of use to both corporations and the community sector.

The term 'charitable foundation' is used internationally to refer to organisations whose primary purpose is to make grants to other organisations for charitable purposes. According to Loren Renz (1991), such a foundation is usually defined as:

> [a] non-governmental, non-profit organisation with its own funds (usually from a single source, either an individual, a family or a corporation) and program managed by its own trustees and directors, established to maintain or aid educational, social, charitable, religious or other activities serving the common welfare, primarily by making grants to other non-profit organisations. (p. 111)

Most foundations have built an asset base, which is invested to produce an income, all or some of which is distributed in grants.

In Australia, estimates of the number and resources of philanthropic foundations vary widely. In the early 1990s the Industry Commission estimated that trusts and foundations contributed $122 million to the total income of voluntary organisations estimated at $840 million. The other sources for the $840 million were: $260 million donated in bequests and $470 million from businesses (Industry Commission, 1995, p. 25).

The Australian Directory of Philanthropy contains over 400 trusts and granting bodies (Links, 27 Sep 2002), many of which are appropriate bodies for community radio stations to approach. There are five broad types of foundation – these types are mostly, but not mutually, exclusive. In other words, according to Philanthropy

Australia (2001), a foundation may fall into more than one of the following categories:

a. Private - endowed by private individuals or families;

b. Business sponsored – similar to above but established by businesses;

c. Operating foundations – running their own programs but may also make grants to others;

d. Community foundations – receive funds and endowments from a variety of sources; and

e. Government sponsored or initiated foundation. (p. 5)

The CBF could fall under the last category as a philanthropic organisation that receives its funding for grants from the government. However the CBF has not taken on the task of seeking funds from other sources such as corporations, as it does not regard itself as a philanthropic organisation trying to source philanthropic funding at its present phase of development; it is simply a gatekeeper of government funding. Stanistreet, director of CBF, states that the foundation is not planning philanthropic assistance for the sector at this stage. He says that a natural process exists for an organisation like the CBF: it starts off with the organisation as a funding agency, then takes on a broader role by looking into areas of development, and then is taken further into philanthropy. The CBF is still at the funding agency end of the spectrum (personal interview, Jan 22, 2003).

However, according to Stanistreet, the CBF also faces many challenges in its role within the community broadcasting sector. The CBF constantly faces tension in deciding whether to spend allocated money on securing additional funds or to distribute it to the sector, as every dollar spent and operated in the foundation is a

dollar that is not made available for distribution. The foundation also tries to balance funding to all interest groups and ensure that all funding received reaches the appropriate levels of support, as the sector is not monolithic. The CBF tries to balance a consensus with various sub-sectors that make up the sector and consequently achieve a common course of action (personal interview, Jan 22, 2003).

Many large corporations have specialised departments to handle grant allocation. Their role is to examine proposals, manage them and ensure the company is getting value for money. The Jupiters Casino Community Benefit Fund (JCCBF), which previously funded Bundy FM Community Radio and Noosa District Community Radio in Queensland, also conducts its grant processing through a separate department. For the financial year 2000/2001, JCCBF (2000) supported 246 projects with grants totalling almost $5.5 million, which were aimed at benefiting the community via community non-profit organisations. The grant funds have been used to purchase facilities such as equipment, premises and vehicles. They were also used to fund the cost of running limited time community training and education programmes, in addition to funding the appointment of staff and costs associated to conduct pilot programmes (p. 3).

The JCCBF was created by an act of Parliament under the Casino Control Act 1982. As stated in the JCCBF Annual report (2000), "$36.8 million has been allocated through 1,537 grants in normal funding rounds. The smallest grant has been $300 and the largest single grant $200,000" (p. 3). According to the report, grants are allocated quarterly with Trustees recommending suitable applications that fall under the Trust's aims and objectives. The local authority area monitors the distribution of funds by ensuring that the percentage of grants allocated against the area's population falls

under the fund's jurisdiction. The fund ensures that smaller populations in rural and western Queensland are also included (Jupiters Casino Annual Report, 2000).

Bundy FM, in Bundaberg, was successful in its application for a grant to purchase broadcasting equipment. JCCBF supported Bundy FM by providing a transmitter link for a total of $6,700, which was part of the August 2000 round. JCCBF also granted Noosa District FM in Tewantin, an amount of $9,363 for outside broadcasting equipment for the November 2000 round (Jupiters Casino Annual Report, 2000, p.15).

Although not all stations feel comfortable about benefiting from gambling, as in the above case it could be a helpful source of income for community radio despite it not being a frequent practice. Long-term philanthropic relationships would be of more benefit for community radio stations, as this would provide more security for the daily operation of a radio station. However one-off grants come as a solution to certain expenses community radio encounters, such as the purchasing of essential equipment.

An example of successful philanthropic associations internationally is the Soros Foundation Open Society for South Africa (OSF–SA) support to community radio in South Africa. OSF–SA aims to support open society values across many areas that include media, and has provided studio and transmission equipment to seven radio stations. This assistance has enabled these stations to operate when granted licences. OSF–SA formed an alliance with the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa and the World Association for Community Broadcasters to develop and deliver workshops on community radio development and planning. These workshops were attended by countries such as Ghana, Mozambique, Namibia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Zambia and Zimbabwe. OSF–SA has also supported the National Community Radio Forum (NCRF), which was created to lobby for the diversification of the airwaves in

South Africa (NCRF, 15 Nov 2004). This support was intended to persuade policy makers to accelerate licensing procedures, and draft a piece of legislation which would endorse an agency responsible for government funding promotion (Open Society Foundation for South Africa, 2 Dec 2002).

To conclude, the examples in this paper offer a glimpse of how philanthropic linkages could provide a breathing space for struggling community stations in different parts of the world. As highlighted earlier, although these funding opportunities may often be short-lived and not able to sustain a long-term radio operation, they could still assist community radio stations at times of financial insecurity. Therefore, philanthropic relations must be further enhanced between corporations and community radio stations. However, philanthropy will always remain complementary to main sources of funding. It is therefore vital for community radio stations to seek these philanthropic opportunities and maximise their potential.

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Web Links

Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF) http://www.cbf.com.au

Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA) http://www.cbaa.org.au

Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) http://www.acma.gov.au

Philanthropy Australia http://www.philanthropy.org.au

Biography
Saba has worked as a radio broadcaster and journalist overseas, and as an administrator, broadcaster and trainer in community radio in Australia. She completed her first MA on community radio analysis from Monash University, and her second MA thesis on community media policy from Queensland University of Technology in Australia. Saba lectures in the MA programme of Media and Communications at Monash University; and is currently working towards a PhD at the University of Melbourne on alternative media.