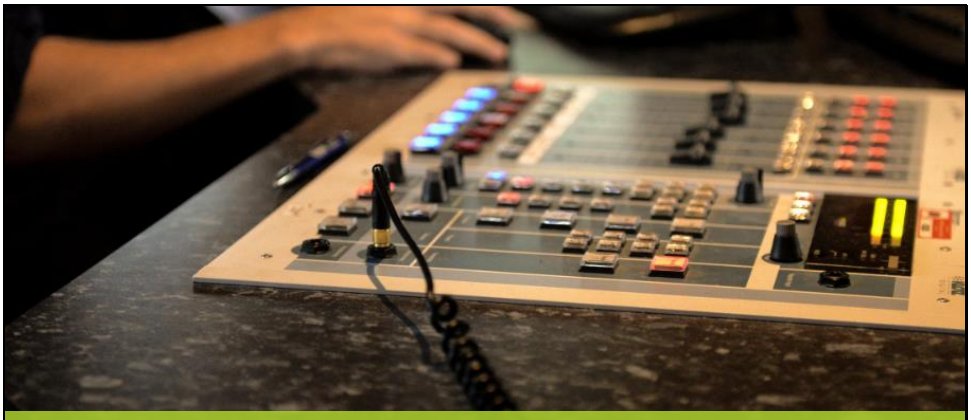


Inspiration + planning:
a grant winning combination!

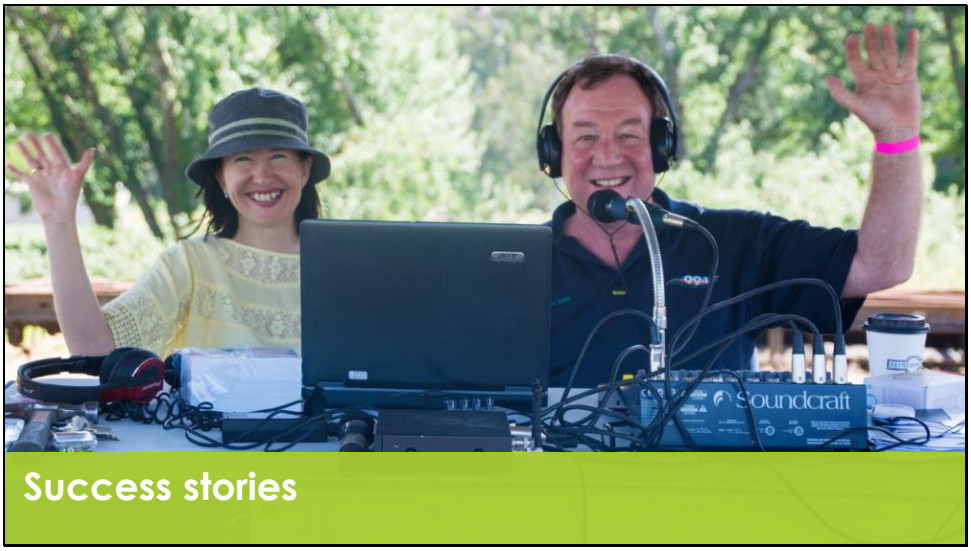
Hi everyone, just before I get started I'd like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands we meet on today, I pay respects to their elders, past, present and emerging and I thank them for allowing us to work here in Melbourne today.

My name is Georgie and I am a Grants Administrator at the CBF – most recently I have taken on the role of volunteer management, in particular supporting our growing assessor team across the country. I'm also in charge of recruiting and we desperately need more techies, your expertise is so helpful so please come and chat to me if you'd like to be involved and there'll be more info at the end of the presentation so stay tuned.

I want take a moment to point out the other CBF'ers in the room - my fellow GA's: Jon King who looks after stations in Victoria, Tasmania and TV stations and independent producers partnering with TV stations. Barbara Baxter who looks after stations in the ACT and NSW - for those who don't already know BB has announced her retirement at the end of this year after 27 years of service. I'd also like to point out Jurgen Schaub and Scott Black who are members of DOGAC, Cameron Paine who is a member of SIAC, as well as anyonein the room who is a member of our assessor team.

In this session we're going to start by showcasing some successful projects that the CBF has funded recently that have built the technical capacity of stations to help inspire ideas for your station. Plus we'll talk through some best practice planning tips to give your future grant applications a higher chance of success. We'll also touch on what we see as best practice for the role of technicians at stations: how you as techies can operate most effectively to contribute to the success of your station (and we've learned these things from most of you in the room through hearing about all the great work that you do). We believe these two themes tie in closely together – strong equipment requests always demonstrate strong technician consultation and input.

I'd like to get started by just going around the room and getting everyone to tell us about one thing that has worked well for your station. It can be related to technology or anything really, just as long as you consider it a success. Start by introducing yourself, which station you're from and then tell us about your success story…. Big or small!



We'd now like to turn your attention to a couple of technical grant requests that stood out to us for their innovation and the ways in which they made strong cases for support.

3RPP in Mornington received a grant for video production equipment as part of their 2017-18 Development & Operations grant to complement their live radio coverage of local sports with online video coverage as well. The equipment allowed the station to televise their local football OB's live on You Tube, while simultaneously broadcasting on FM and their apps. This first foray into video streaming allowed the station to develop a television template to add vision to a range of station OB's - music, festivals, council meetings, performances. The station effectively tied this equipment request back to its Strategic Plan, to provide their local community with a more complete multi-media broadcast experience. The station used a very simple technical setup - using two locked off and one pre set camera that didn't require operators and then a fourth operated camera for variation and mid field coverage options. The coverage was then mixed with commentary, uploaded and distributed online.

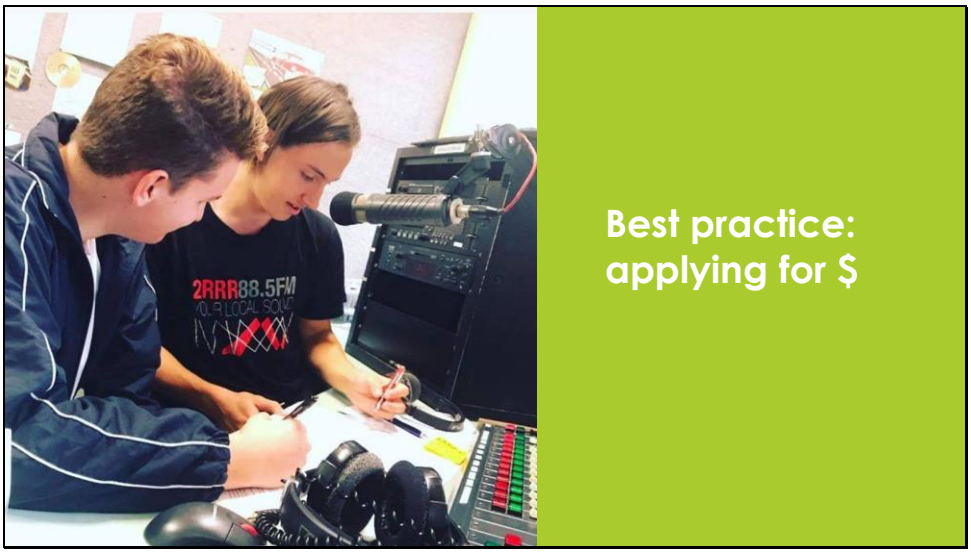
3VKV Alpine Radio in Mt Beauty recently received support as part of their 2017-18 Development & Operations grant to create a UPS using a bunch of car batteries to support their main studio computers. This request was based on the fact that a UPS system incorporating 4 car batteries and a charger had been trialled successfully at their transmitter site providing 8-10 hours uninterrupted supply during an electricity overhaul to the site. The station made a strong case for wishing to replicate this setup for their studio in order to replace older less reliable UP boxes. Assessors liked the way the application explained how the system had already been tried and tested by station technicians at the transmission site and their commitment to regularly plan a mock "power failure" to ensure the systems are working and power is continuous even if the mains power is cut off. Rob from Alpine Radio says – "The installation consists of four deep cycle AGM batteries connected in series to provide a 48V bank. This is floated by a smart battery charger. There are two inverters connected. One is a 250VA which permanently powers the studio 1 PC mixing desk and first

screen. The second inverter is 50VA and powers the sound processor, stereo encoder, distribution amp and 900MHz link transmitter."

Other items our assessors often support that you may not have considered include remote monitoring (less wear and tear on overworked techs) and automatic switchover backup power (UPS or generator) WHEN there is clear and demonstrated evidence it's needed, like a record of outages over the past year. For example, in 17/18 2RBR Radio Coraki in NSW was funded for an extra-quiet studio end generator because they're located in a retail neighbourhood.

We have a whole range of success stories listed on the CBF website and we publish them on our social media sites all the time. So if you're not already following us on Facebook I would recommend doing that because we point to these kinds of ideas all year round there and also in our eNews. Don't forget to sign up on the mailing list that is circulating around the room.

Alpine Radio's
Car battery UPS
1000W Battery Charger
For 24V/36V/48V Lead Acid Batteries
Power
Charging
Full
OFF
ON



Now that we've considered some examples from stations, we wanted to take a moment to remind you of some best practice planning tips to give your future grant applications for technical support a higher chance of success.

- Often where technical applications fall down is a lack of required documentation. You must get on to these applications early in order to allow time to pull all this information together. You will be marked down against the planning criterion if you can't attach everything that is asked for.
- When applying for transmission related projects such as increasing your station's frequency or an other major upgrades you will require ACMA approval. It's nail-biting to be waiting on ACMA's response if you leave it too late and things get down to the wire. Extensions are not granted by us simply due to leaving things too late.
- Equipment fault logs are excellent evidence for making a case for equipment replacement and upgrades, take time to get them in order and include them as supporting documentation
- Quotes, quotes, quotes. I'm sure everyone in the room has participated at some time in the ole why do we need 3 quotes debate in relation to CBF equipment applications. Our guidelines state that **3 current quotes** are required for any equipment requested to the value of $1,000 or higher, identifying which quote is your preferred supplier and your reason(s) for that preference, or an explanation of why quotes for comparable items are not available. So its 3 quotes per item not 3 in total for your application. We understand you may have a preferred supplier, in fact this is a positive demonstration that you have done your research and you're choosing the most economical and effective match for your station, HOWEVER the reason for the 3 quotes is so that the assessors can gauge the context for this decision and feel confident that you have undertaken the necessary investigation.
- Have you acquired solid, detailed technical consultation and advice? Again this takes time, stations that do this well identify their technical advisor by name and reputation and clearly list the work that has been undertaken so far in order to support the request that is being made.

- As you can see that most of these tips are time-sensitive, put the deadlines in your calendar and meet them is the best piece of advice you will get and possibly the hardest one to achieve.
- As you are required to identify, you should also always be asking does your idea fit with your organisation's strategic plan? Our committees want to support stations to achieve their goals for the year ahead so drawing these connections between the infrastructure that you need and the overall technical planning of your station will make for a strong application (we have a great profile of 3MDR's strategic planning process on our website if you're looking for inspiration there).

As an example of sound planning, one of Barbara Baxter's favourite grant applications of recent times went to 5RRR in Woomera, SA to replace their antenna after cables and the existing bird spikes were eaten by an invasion of extraordinarily aggressive birds. Possibly just because she got to write 'unexpected bird damage' in the project description but also because the application was robust for a number of reasons:

- the time taken to put together a number of photos such as this one with clear labelling to demonstrate the extent of the damage,
- solid planning including details on what the station planned to do if they received less money than requested (plans to borrow a temporary antenna from another community broadcaster however also made the case well for why this was not a good solution and hence the need for the grant)
- advice sought from SACBA's Station Assistance Program through their Technical advisor and the decision to undertake field surveys before and after the installation and a detailed letter of support (including photos of wedge-tailed eagles)
- a reception map indicating the normal area of reception and the current area due to the bird damage
- clear reasoning on why the chosen rigger was preferred due to their familiarity with the site and economical options

Overall, despite being an application that required immediate consideration, the time taken to put forward a strong case for support was commendable.

We also wanted to point out that collaborative projects are often really well received by our assessors, as they encourage a supportive sector ethos and also save money. Two excellent boxes to tick.

1WAY, 1CMS and 1ART currently share a transmission site. Rhema FM Central Coast share a Gosford transmission site with Central Coast Radio, todayscountry94one and Five-O-Plus.

Claire Stuchbery was at a conference a few years ago in Nambucca Heads and a group of four stations in the NSW coastal region got talking and realised they all needed some additional OB gear and they probably didn't need to use it all at the same time. Each of the stations run OBs from time to time, but not every weekend, so they decided to just purchase some codec equipment between them and set up a shared calendar to book it. The stations were about an hours drive apart in total, so it was reasonable for them just to send someone to pick it up from another station before each event. So that's one thing that worked well in a shared equipment sense.

In South Australia the SACBA has actually set up an equipment bank to help stations at times of crisis and they just send equipment out using the bus system when it's needed in a particular area. That's working well for the South Australian stations and the CBF has provided funding to purchase a lot of the equipment.

Some of the NSW Christian stations have worked together to hire a Business Manager between them, with support from a CBF grant, because they realised it was a lot more appealing for one person to have a full time role working remotely across a number of stations, than to try to hire different people for one or two days per week. It also means there's greater opportunity for that person to learn from the four different stations he's working with.

As you would be aware, a lot of techs in the sector work that way, but usually as a contract situation by default. More recently we've helped 2SER hire an assistance technician in Sydney to work across a number of stations in Sydney's suburbs. Again

getting the benefit of that coordinated effort.

Is there anything that your station does with other stations?

Next we just want to touch briefly on some ideas for how you as techies can operate most effectively to contribute to the success of your station and by extension the success of your station's grant applications.

As we've demonstrated through our case studies, the strongest applications are those that read with a technician's influence, the research has been done, the expertise has been applied and the suggested solutions are robust and convincing to assessors.

To take a step back then, we'd like to ask how many of the technicians in the room today are involved with their stations strategic planning, in particular the equipment attrition plans for stations?

How many techies have assisted with the preparation and submission of Development & Operations grant applications with us?

We see the role of techies at stations as integral to preparing stations within our sector for technological change as well as leading processes such as secession planning for technical roles at stations. It is clear when reading applications from stations when technicians are working in isolation from station staff and volunteers. Great examples we've heard of from the likes of people in the room are when techies roles are integrated within broader station processes whereby they might provide regular technical updates/reports to station committees and boards for example.

Too often we see technical input in applications only when the need is responsive to e.g. broken equipment however strong contributions can be made by technicians in more forward thinking applications that map out a station's infrastructure needs in future. Your insight can really strengthen this form of planning and produce robust applications from an assessment perspective.

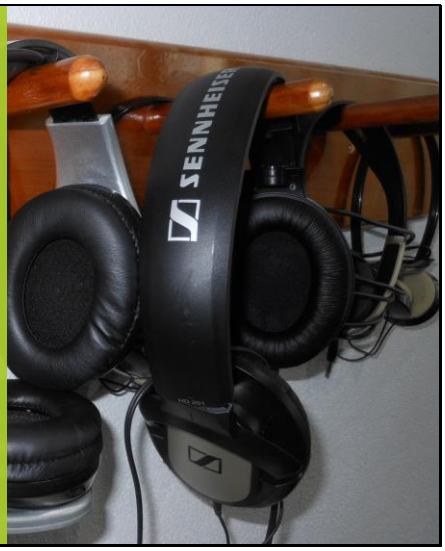
You may have heard from the CMTO in their presentation earlier today about their ‘station tech blitz’ days aimed specifically at technicians passing their skills down. There is a wealth of technical knowledge in our sector and we’d like to ask you as technicians what you are already doing to ensure you’re sharing that knowledge. Would anyone like to tell us about their work in this area?

I do want to give us an opportunity for questions, so make a note if there's anything I've touched on so far that you want to revisit. But now I want to pass over to Jurgen and also Scott from DOGAC for a few minutes because these guys actually read a stack of applications this grant round so they can share some of their thoughts as assessors.

And finally, the CBF continues to grow with more than 100 volunteers now supporting our work including our Grant Assessor team, Committee Members and Board Members (some of whom are featured on the screen).

We are always looking for more experienced community broadcasters to join our ranks as grant assessors. It's a great way to learn more about the diversity of community broadcasting and in the process to get to know more about how to improve as a grant writer. An induction program provides training and support. You need to have several days available each April and September to devote to the task. If you would like to know more speak to the assessors we have here at the conference or myself, Barbara or Jon about what's involved.

Ok, I might leave it there in terms of talking. The Round 2 dates are on the screen here as well as some other CBF channels of communication.

Any questions?

Questions?