

# **WTJU STRATEGIC PLAN**

**2017-2020**

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# INTRODUCTION

## WHAT IS WTJU?

Founded in 1955 and on-air since 1957, WTJU began as a student organization and an educational radio station at UVA centered around classical music. By the early 1970s, WTJU expanded its programming to include a broad and eclectic variety of music, including classical, jazz, rock, folk, and more. Generations of DJs passed through and were shaped by their experiences at WTJU.

In 1993, WTJU hired its first paid staff member. The station shifted from predominantly student broadcasting to a more outward-facing community radio station in the mid-1990s, though students remained involved in all WTJU departments to varying degrees. By the early 2000s, WTJU's paid staff grew to four full-time staff members.

As with many nonprofit organizations, WTJU has experienced periods of great accomplishment as well as times of challenge. Turning those challenges into opportunities, WTJU continues to grow our listenership, fundraising, student involvement, and community engagement.

Today, WTJU continues to broadcast four main genres of music (classical, jazz, folk, and rock), as well as community stories. It has greatly reinvigorated student broadcasting with the addition of WXTJ in 2013. WTJU has also invested heavily in education and community engagement initiatives, including live music and remote broadcasts, community concerts, summer youth radio camps, and more. WTJU is also developing its digital initiatives, including its podcast network Teej.fm.

Today, WTJU is a "special academic unit" at the University of Virginia, reporting to the Office of the Vice Provost for the Arts. Its staffing includes 5.6 FTE paid staff members and approximately 300 volunteers. While it has grown in multiple ways, on-air radio broadcasting remains its core activity. On-air hosts are volunteers from the community, and each of WTJU's four primary departments (Classical, Jazz, Folk, Rock) are headed by volunteer leadership. In addition to on-air programming on WTJU-FM, "WTJU" now also encompasses additional complementary media platforms, including WXTJ-LP (student radio at UVA) and Teej.fm (podcast network).

## WTJU'S MISSION & OBJECTIVES

**Mission:** WTJU enriches the culture of Virginia and extends the educational mission of UVA by bringing together diverse individuals and communities through exceptional music and conversation.

**Objectives:** WTJU carries out its mission by:

- Presenting original, rich, and diverse programming in non-commercial radio broadcasting and digital media
- Being a premiere venue for exceptional music of diverse styles and supporting musical performances in our region
- Providing opportunities for participation in the creation of media and the experience of broadcasting
- Engaging our communities through live music concerts, cultural events, and educational programs
- Serving as a communications link between the University of Virginia and the communities we serve

## WTJU CORE VALUES

Based on three sets of data collection -- web surveys in 2013 & 2016 and focus groups in 2014 – WTJU has identified six core values

- **Diverse** music
- **Unique** content
- **Personal** connection
- **Local** rootedness
- **Passionate & knowledgeable** hosts/curators
- **Non-commercial** presentation

## WTJU AS A COMMUNITY INSTITUTION

### WHAT COMMUNITY NEEDS CAN WTJU MEET?

As with many arts & media organizations, when it is at its best, WTJU serves its community's needs in at least three ways:

- **Individual:** WTJU provides rich and often emotional experiences for individuals to explore the incredible variety of music, arts, and human experience
- **Social:** WTJU connects people to the local and regional music scene, and it connects people to one another through shared music experience.
- **Cultural:** WTJU is an institution that nurtures and sustains a genuine sense of community and cultural vibrancy in our place. WTJU serves to make UVA, the Charlottesville area, and Virginia a destination for music, arts, and culture.

## WHO IS OUR AUDIENCE AND POTENTIAL AUDIENCE?

WTJU-FM's present audience is approximately 12,000 FM listeners per week and approximately 10,000 online streams per month (local & non-local combined). We focus here on WTJU-FM, as it has the largest audience of our platforms, and it is by far the longest running and most studied/analyzed of WTJU's media platforms. We have little hard data compiled on WXTJ or Teej.fm listenership, as these are both quite new, though Teej.fm has averaged about 1,200 Soundcloud streams per month in its first six months of beta test operations.

Demographically, WTJU-FM's audience shares many traits with other public radio stations around the country. A demographic profile:

- The strongest correlating factor to listening to WTJU-FM is education level. People with college degrees (and graduate degrees) are more likely to listen to and donate to WTJU.
- WTJU-FM's audience is more urban than rural, with most listeners in the city of Charlottesville and the urban ring in Albemarle County. That said, a significant number of people in Earlysville, Crozet, Nelson County and other rural areas are also among WTJU listeners.
- WTJU-FM's audience is gender balanced. It is predominantly white.
- WTJU-FM's listeners come from all ages, but the median age is about 48 years old.

Given WTJU's multi-genre programming across platform, its audience is diverse in its specific tastes. But in a broader sense, what WTJU listeners are looking for goes beyond access to the specific musical selections and on-air DJs that listeners say they like. WTJU inspires loyalty that is heart-felt, and listeners describe the station as authentic. WTJU triggers a deep emotional response that transcends specific programming preferences. Core listeners develop personal connections to the station and a sense of investment in it as a local institution.

Geographically speaking, WTJU's most concentrated donor base – which can be taken as an approximate analogue for its core audience – resides in four zip codes: 22901 (Rio, Hydraulic, Greenbrier, Ivy), 22902 (Downtown, Belmont, SE Albemarle), 22903 (West side of C'Ville, W/SW suburbs), and 22936 (Earlysville). The 22902 zip code, in particular, has by far the highest percentage of residents who are WTJU donors – even much higher than factors highly correlated with donating (e.g. educational attainment, median home value) would otherwise predict.

WTJU has much room for growth in the North Albemarle and Crozet zip codes – both of which have a lower percentage of residents who are WTJU donors than factors highly correlated with donating would suggest. These two areas also happen to be designated growth areas in Albemarle County, and their overall population numbers are growing.

WTJU also has much room for audience growth among younger people (<45 years) and communities of color. While WXTJ and Teej.fm have brought in both younger audiences and

younger and more racially & ethnically diverse volunteers creating media on these platforms, WTJU-FM continues to have a predominately white listenership with a higher average age. WTJU would benefit from a long-term, holistic approach to inclusiveness, integrated into all of the work of the organization.

## **WHAT IS WTJU'S AUDIENCE LOOKING FOR?**

WTJU listeners (and potential listeners) are looking for three key things from the station: 1) a high quality source of eclectic, non-commercial music; 2) community impact and engagement; and 3) music discovery and personal connection. Here are a few select responses to the open-ended questions on our 2016 strategic planning survey:

### *High quality source of non-commercial music:*

- an exceptional source for high quality music
- WTJU is my sonic life raft
- WTJU means the world to me. It makes my community stronger and more diverse by presenting music of many different genres and eras, exposing me and other listeners to new music, cultures and ideas. I think WTJU teaches tolerance and acceptance through listening.
- community-supported, legitimately non-commercial, eclectic music programming
- a diverse community radio station that's commercial free
- A wonderful source of diverse music, innovative programming.
- What WTJU means to me is exposure to new music, both new releases and just stuff I have never heard before. Wanting to turn the radio up and being transported to another place in my mind. And learning about cool local shows and events.
- Same, but needs better quality control, especially consistent sound levels, fewer technical errors and less rambling by DJs. Being known for consistency and professionalism will broaden the community.

### *Community impact and engagement*

- WTJU provides the good people of Charlottesville with radio that cares about the music. The DJs share their passion for their genre with their audience. The free concerts provide for a great event while fostering the local music scene.
- Enhance appreciation for music and opportunities to hear music in the community.
- To keep people aware of our musical heritage
- Increase the awareness of a very diverse universe of music & culture in Virginia.
- Events like the concert series at Ix Park have been great. I do feel like the station could do more live music events or music-related events (films,...) at UVA targeted at a younger audience.
- I think it should be more involved in concerts AND with UVA. There are so few student DJs on WTJU itself.
- WTJU should be a major player in the arts and music community, bridging groups and cultures. More than "just a radio station", WTJU brings people together. It makes our community more interesting. It helps this community stand out from the corporate homogenization of pop culture.

### *Music discovery and personal connection*

- One of the major ways I discover new music
- A rich resource for music I know and appreciate as well as for music that I should know and appreciate.
- Access to a very broad spectrum of music and expert curators of music.
- Where else am I going to hear/request to feed my Beefheart habit? Seriously, where else?
- Hear varied genres of music in a non-canned format, chosen and played by people with a genuine interest in the music they are playing
- knowledgeable and passionate people who know and care about music
- A personal connection to the volunteer DJs
- Guaranteed interesting music on my drives around Charlottesville. Always able to discover music that is new to me while hearing songs I know and love.
- I love to hear unusual music that I then have to track down for purchase since I may only hear it once! I really enjoy the absence of chronic repetition.

## **WHY IS WTJU BEST SUITED TO DO THIS WORK?**

Fundamentally, WTJU is a different type of project than commercial radio stations and even other non-commercial stations. WTJU is a multi-platform music and cultural organization that seeks to enrich the culture and build & nurture genuine community connections. We use broadcast audio as our primary means of doing this, though we view that as a particularly valuable medium at which we excel rather than a limitation on the many ways in which we can carry out our mission.

WTJU brings a bevy of other strengths to this work, including:

- Hundreds of connected and committed volunteers, including our on-air hosts and department directors, as well as a very dedicated and multi-skilled staff
- A tremendous history in this community, a very loyal core audience, a lot of public good will toward the station
- Broad and deep connections with both UVA units (especially arts) and UVA students, as well as community non-profits, musicians, and organizations
- Being a part of the University, which provides stable funding and organizational infrastructure, even while enabling the station to be creative and relatively nimble in trying new things
- A substantial investment over the last several years in tech, web infrastructure, and live music production
- Extraordinary diversity of thoughtful, eclectic, high quality programming

# STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

## ASPIRATION

WTJU strives to be an indispensable part of our community fabric, serving the social and cultural needs of people to help them lead flourishing and meaningful lives. We will be the model for what a non-commercial, community-based media enterprise can be.

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- 1. Explore opportunities to move WTJU to a well-outfitted location on or near UVA grounds, where it can thrive for at least 5-8 years**
  - Marshal finances and other resources; build out new location and move the station
  - Digitize CD library and improve processes for managing and playing digital audio files
- 2. Continue to emphasize and grow live music programming that brings people together through shared music experiences.**
  - Assess, continue, and improve fall concert series
  - Assess, continue, and improve signature on-air concert events
  - Assess, continue, and improve sponsored shows and live-DJed public events
- 3. Develop revenue streams for long-term funding sustainability.**
  - Establish endowment
  - Cultivate and sustain major giving program
  - Grow business sponsorships and underwriting
- 4. Improve volunteer management practices.**
  - Draft and adopt a volunteer rights & responsibilities document
  - Develop structure, mechanism, and expectations for volunteers to participate beyond on-air hosting
- 5. Deepen and grow our relationships and community engagement on-Grounds at UVA and in the broader community.**
  - Develop and update roster of important institutional partnerships and a set of priorities for forming and cultivating partnerships
  - Ascertain the goals, aspirations, and needs of the diverse communities we serve
  - Complete mobile studio / pop-up concert venue and plan for its effective use
- 6. Expand our educational activities for young people around music, media, and radio education.**
  - Grow summer youth radio camps
  - Develop opportunities for year-round radio, media production, and music education for young people

## **7. Experiment with digital content initiatives and opportunities that may extend WTJU's mission and reach into new platforms.**

- Grow podcast network
- Create genre-based streaming audio stations
- Develop local journalism platform for music/arts/culture

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

While all of the goals and objectives listed above are important, it is important to note the priority order of them. The goals and objectives are listed in approximate order of priority.

### **1. Explore opportunities to move WTJU to a well-outfitted location on or near UVA grounds, where it can thrive for at least 5-8 years**

This is a key priority because WTJU may be required to move to a new location in the relatively near future – possibly as soon as September 2018. UVA Student Affairs and Housing have other plans for our building, Lambeth Commons, and WTJU and UVA Provost's Office staff are presently assessing what practical options are available. As part of this process, we will also digitize as much of the CD library as possible in order to maintain very few physical CDs in our new TBD space. This will include implementation of a strategy to provide backups and secure digital data. We will overhaul our internal processes for managing and playing music on-air that is now CD-based.

*Who:* Planning phase – General Manager, Business Manager, Office & Operations Manager, UVA Space Management, UVA Vice Provost for the Arts, WTJU staff.  
Implementation phase – all WTJU stakeholders; UVA IT Services; UVA Facilities Management

*When:* Assuming the more aggressive timeline – Planning phase: Now - May 2018;  
Implementation phase: summer 2018

*Resources needed:* Substantial financial resources; cooperation from other University units; staff time

### **2. Continue to emphasize and grow live music programming that brings people together through shared music experiences.**

WTJU has made a name for itself as a destination for excellent live music. This is a key priority because it is directly in line with our mission and efforts to date have been tied to the station's growth in community service impact and revenue generation. It also ranks among the station's highest priorities as identified by both a public survey (late 2016) and WTJU's ad hoc strategic planning committee.

With this priority, WTJU will assess, continue, and improve our live music events – including the fall concert series at IX Art Park, our signature in-studio concert events like *Lambeth Live*, and more. The assessment will be geared toward increasing attendance and community impact – how do we continue to enhance our live music events and programming to ensure they have a strong positive impact on the Charlottesville community? This assessment will answer these questions and will also provide a road map for aligning staff, volunteer, technical, and financial resources with this priority in future decision-making.

*Who:* To conduct assessment – Volunteer, Programs, and Engagement Coordinator and Producer & Content Director; Leadership Team and/or an ad hoc committee of WTJU stakeholders

*When:* Completed assessment by Jan 2018

*Resources needed:* To conduct assessment – staff time, volunteer time. Post-assessment – Financial, technical, and staff capacity resource needs to be determined by assessment.

### **3. Develop revenue streams for long-term funding sustainability.**

Since 2011, WTJU has seen rapid growth in its revenue streams – most notably in individual donations, events, and grants. The station's total annual revenues have approximately doubled from 2011 to 2017.

However, expenses have also increased. To serve our community in more, deeper, and better ways, WTJU must invest more resources. Coupled with this is a great uncertainty about the long-term future of WTJU's third largest revenue stream: the annual Community Service Grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. The present administration in Washington has already submitted budgets that would zero out CPB funds that go to support public broadcasting stations around the country.

Finding ways to sustain WTJU's fundraising revenue for the long term is of critical importance. To that end, WTJU will especially focus on establishing an endowment, growing our major donor fundraising, and growing business sponsorships and underwriting.

*Who:* WTJU staff, especially General Manager and Development & Underwriting Director. Campaign committee made up of WTJU volunteers.

*When:* Establish endowment by January 2018. Plan major donor campaign to formally launch in 2018, with pre-campaign activity beginning in late 2017. Grow sponsorships and underwriting throughout FY2017-18 and beyond.

*Resources needed:* Staff time. Volunteer time. Ongoing support resources from UVA Advancement.

#### **4. Improve volunteer management practices.**

While much of WTJU's work is outward facing, it is an organization made up of approximately 300 volunteers – including WTJU and WXTJ hosts, Teej.fm producers, substitute hosts, and off-air volunteers of various sorts. There are certain aspects of volunteering that have never been well-elucidated, e.g. volunteer rights & responsibilities, program improvement process, off-air volunteering expectations, etc.

We will draft and adopt a volunteer rights & responsibilities document, as well as develop better processes and clearer expectations for volunteers to participate in WTJU operations beyond on-air hosting.

*Who:* To develop both of these documents – Leadership Team and an ad hoc committee of WTJU stakeholders, led by WTJU's Volunteer, Programs, and Engagement Coordinator and Producer & Content Director. Review and buy-in by all WTJU stakeholders over the course of the process.

*When:* Rights & responsibilities document drafted by August 2018. Mechanisms and expectations for volunteering beyond on-air shows in early implementation by fall 2018.

*Resources needed:* Staff time, as well as buy-in and a shift in WTJU's internal culture. In the future: may require increases in wage staff hours

#### **5. Deepen and grow our relationships and community engagement on-Grounds at UVA and in the broader community.**

WTJU will continue to thrive when it collaborates with and amplifies the voices of community, student, and UVA groups. We need to develop and update our roster of important institutional partnerships, and draft a set of priorities for forming and cultivating partnerships – both with an eye toward inclusivity and equity. To take it to the next level, WTJU also needs to ascertain the goals, aspirations, and needs of the communities we serve. And in service to all of the above, we need to complete WTJU's new mobile studio / pop-up concert venue and plan for its use throughout UVA and the broader community.

*Who:* 1) Roster of institutional partnerships: Leadership Team; General Manager; Volunteer, Programs, and Engagement Coordinator; Other WTJU stakeholders. 2) Ascertain goals & aspirations: General Manager; Volunteer, Programs, and Engagement Coordinator; UVA Center for Survey Research and/or UVA qualitative research class/program. 3) Mobile studio / pop-up concert venue: General Manager and volunteers

*When:* 1) Roster of institutional partnerships: Completed first working draft by Jan 2018. 2) Ascertain goals & aspirations: Completed by Jan 2019 with plans for recurrence. 3) Mobile studio / pop-up concert venue: Functional enough to use by August 2017

*Resources needed:* 1) Roster of institutional partnerships: Staff and volunteer time. 2) Ascertain goals & aspirations: Staff and volunteer time; possible research costs. 3) Mobile studio / pop-up concert venue: Staff and volunteer time; <\$3000 to complete the work

## **6. Expand our educational activities for young people around music, media, and radio education.**

This year marks the fourth summer that WTJU has hosted a pair of summer youth radio camps. Given that these camps have been a relatively modest WTJU project in terms of budget and participants, youth educational opportunities were a surprisingly highly ranked priority in both our public survey (conducted late 2016) and by WTJU's ad hoc strategic planning committee.

As part of this priority, WTJU will adapt and refine our summer youth radio camps to include more age groups and more attention to inclusive and diverse attendees. We plan to promote the camps more aggressively in local schools and free publications, as well as provide modest scholarships. We will also develop opportunities for year-round music, media, and radio education for young people.

*Who:* Summer camps: General Manager; Producer & Content Director; Student and temp staff to plan and run the camps. Planning year-round educational opportunities: General Manager; Producer & Content Director; other WTJU stakeholders.

*When:* Expanded summer camps in Summer 2018, space permitting. Year-round youth educational opportunities beta test in 2018-19 academic year.

*Resources needed:* Additional student workers and wage staff for expanded summer camps. Modest financial resources increase. Additional staff/wage time for year-round educational opportunities, with attendant financial resources.

## **7. Pursue digital content initiatives and opportunities that will extend WTJU's mission and reach into new platforms.**

Increasingly, public and community broadcasters recognize that they are in the "content" business, not just the "radio" business. What does "radio" look like in 10 years? 20 years? Chances are, it'll look less driven by and rooted in consuming content over FM airwaves. And yet, local content that connects people to one another and that enriches our community's culture will continue to be important.

WTJU has recognized this reality of the changing media landscape since 2015, including codifying this approach to being a media company and cultural institution into our mission statement. To that end, this priority will continue this trend, exploring and experimenting with new platforms for developing content that is valuable to our current and potential audience. This includes growing our Teej.fm podcast network, experimenting with creating genre-based streaming audio stations based on existing FM content, exploring the development of a local journalism platform for music/arts/culture, and more.

*Who:* Primarily General Manager and Producer & Content Director. Also Teej.fm student directors.

*When:* 1) Teej.fm: Add 10 new Teej.fm podcasts and begin to monetize network podcasts with sponsor announcements during 2017-18 school year. Develop goals for future years by May 2018. 2) Genre-based streaming stations: Develop "WTJU Classical" and "WTJU Live" streaming stations by May 2018; develop other genre-based streaming stations in future years. 3) Local music/arts journalism platform: Seek collaborators for a potential beta test in 2018-19.

*Resources needed:* 1) Teej.fm: \$5,000-8,000/year and committed student leadership for 2017-18 operation. Can do more with more resources in future years. 2) Genre-based streaming stations: \$3,000-5,000 in staff wages for 2017-2018 operations + marketing budget TBA. 3) Local music/arts journalism platform: Substantial financial and personnel investment, with assistance of project collaborators TBA.

## **CLOSING STATEMENT**

The strategic plan presented in this document lays a strong foundation for building a strong community media organization that moves nimbly in a multi-platform world; serves the individual, social, and cultural needs of our community; provides high quality content and experiences that bring people together; and positions WTJU as a model of community impact and innovation in community media. This strategic plan charts a course of action that will help WTJU marshal the financial, technical, infrastructure, staff, volunteer, and social resources needed to thrive in the years ahead.