

Westsider Radio overview

Westsider Radio is a new community radio station for Melbourne's west, launched in April 2025. The station will be hosted at Kindred Studios in Yarraville, on the unceded lands of the Marin-balluk clan of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation. Westsider Radio is operated by Inner West Community Media, the same not-for-profit body behind The Westsider newspaper. Inner West Community Media's sole shareholder is the Inner West Community Foundation, who trade as Local Impact.

Westsider Radio extends the work of The Westsider newspaper into the audio space, providing a hyperlocal, community-powered, online platform for radio and podcast content. The station will feature original, hyperlocal programming, including news, arts, music and storytelling, and will offer access to recording equipment and training for individuals and community groups. It is committed to amplifying diverse voices and creating pathways for participation in media, particularly for people underrepresented in traditional broadcasting.

Mission, vision, values

Mission

To amplify the voices, stories and music of Melbourne's western suburbs through inclusive, community-led programming, accessible training and proactive outreach that informs, connects and empowers.

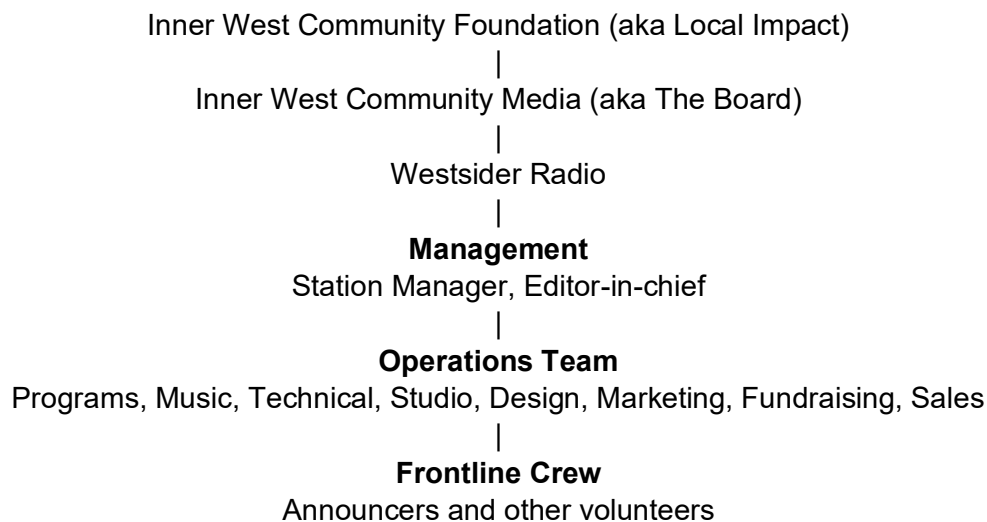
Vision

A vibrant, independent media space where people of the west are heard, represented and inspired, building stronger, more inclusive and connected communities.

Values

- *Community*: We serve the people of the western suburbs, centring local voices, stories and culture in everything we do.
- *Inclusiveness*: We welcome people of all backgrounds, abilities, identities and ages. We stand firmly against discrimination and strive for equity and representation.
- *Participation*: We provide access to tools, training and airtime, empowering people to create and share their own stories.
- *Learning*: We build confidence and skills through hands-on media training, mentoring and collaboration.
- *Creativity*: We encourage original content and celebrate the diversity of music, storytelling and artistic expression.
- *Sustainability*: We aim to create a media model that is environmentally conscious, community-supported and financially resilient.
- *Independence*: We are community-run and non-profit, free from commercial or political influence, and accountable to the people we serve.

Organisational structure (*a work in progress*)



Potential revenue streams

- Grants
- Advertising
- Partnerships
- Selling services
- Membership
- Donations
- Merchandise
- Events

Market landscape

Online radio stations – Melbourne

Hope St Radio – community-focused, music-led (Collingwood) - hopestradio.community

Area 3000 Radio – 24/7 underground music (Pahran) - area3000.radio

Skylab Radio – eclectic online community radio (Northcote) - skylab-radio.com

Online radio stations – Australia

Freocast – Fremantle community station - freocast.net

Totally Radio – national independent streaming - totallyradio.com.au

Online radio stations – international

NTS (UK/US), Worldwide FM, Totally Wired Radio, Soho Radio (London)

Dublab (Los Angeles), The Lot Radio (New York), SomaFM (San Francisco)

Refuge Worldwide (Berlin)

Community radio – Melbourne’s west and surrounds

WYN FM – Wyndham community radio - wynfm.org.au

North West FM – northwestern suburbs - northwestfm.org

Community radio – Melbourne-wide

PBS FM, Triple R, 3CR, SYN Media, JOY FM, 3ZZZ, LightFM, 3MBS, 3KND, Southern FM

Other community media

C31 Melbourne - c31.org.au

Underfoot – Western suburbs history - 3cr.org.au/underfoot

Melbourne Westside Explorers – local video content

Theory of change

Context / problem

Melbourne’s west is diverse and changing, but local news and inclusive media haven’t kept pace. Culturally diverse communities are underrepresented, creative platforms are often inaccessible, and local storytelling opportunities are limited. The decline of local newspapers has further reduced access to place-based information, weakening community connection and civic participation.

Inputs and resources

- A volunteer-run, independent, not-for-profit station
- Experience and support from The Westsider newspaper
- Equipment, training tools and broadcasting materials
- Local networks and community support

Key activities

- Produce and broadcast local shows and podcasts
- Deliver volunteer media training, including in schools
- Share local news and council coverage in audio format
- Report from community and cultural events
- Adapt The Westsider content for radio

Outputs

- Community-led radio and podcast content

- Locally trained volunteers with media skills
- Audio versions of local journalism
- More visibility for local voices and stories

Outcomes

Short-term: More access to local news and storytelling; new creative opportunities

Medium-term: More diverse voices in local media; stronger community connection

Long-term: A resilient, inclusive local media platform; a more informed, connected community

Impact

Westsider Radio strengthens local connection, supports community storytelling and contributes to a more inclusive media landscape in Melbourne's west.