

Voices and Equity Fund



The United States is at a crossroads. Cuts to federal funding and the dismantling of government agencies have contributed to an atmosphere of division and antagonism. Trust in media has continued to erode, and efforts to tell stories that represent all Americans are waning. Public media was founded on the premise that a sense of belonging will make our country and civic life stronger. Never have we been faced with such opposition to our fundamental values, and never has our work been more important. In the face of these challenges, GBH remains committed to telling the stories that matter and ensuring that people of all identities and backgrounds are heard and valued. During this volatile time, the need for independent perspectives and trusted information is more critical than ever. Public media is built for this moment. Fostering connection and understanding through storytelling is at the core of what we do, and that will begin to bridge the deep divides that plague our nation.

Relevance

As a trusted producer reaching 28 million people every week, GBH is a leader in public media, serving local and national communities with free programming and educational resources that inform, engage, enlighten, and empower. Core to our mission is responding to the needs and interests of all of our viewers and supporters, who come from various communities and mirror the world around us with the breadth of their experiences. GBH shines a light on issues of injustice, provides information and educational support, improves content accessibility for people who use assistive technologies, and creates opportunities for participation and expression for all. Through our work, we aim to foster greater awareness and appreciation for diverse perspectives and storytellers of all backgrounds – all with the intent to inspire greater learning, better understanding of the world around us, and positive change.

Impact

Through the GBH Voices and Equity Fund, GBH will build on our role as a trusted media producer and our deep legacy of leadership in media accessibility and inclusive storytelling. While other media outlets are narrowing their focus, we are widening our lens and creating content about and created by people of all backgrounds, ages, and abilities. Examples include:

- *Basic Black*, a groundbreaking program that began on GBH in 1968 as *Say Brother*, has been reimaged as [GBH News Rooted](#), a multiplatform series that centers on communities of color through timely discussion of current events, elevating all voices, and highlighting joy in the Black experience.
- [GBH WORLD](#) features documentaries and original programming that document, amplify and engage communities, here and outside our borders. WORLD focuses on untold stories so that our viewers can discover what we have in common, appreciate how we are different and create opportunities for

connection, sharing, and understanding. In May 2024, WORLD was honored with a Peabody Award in the arts category for the [AfroPop: The Cultural Exchange](#) documentary [Can You Bring It: Bill T. Jones and D-Man in the Waters](#).

- **GBH Kids** productions increase awareness and understanding of diversity. [Molly of Denali](#) is the first nationally distributed PBS KIDS series to feature Native American lead characters and include Alaska Natives in every aspect of production. [Work it Out Wombats!](#) affirms children's cultural backgrounds and models the needs of others as key to solving problems. [GBH Education](#) has for decades created resources that support equitable learning. PBS LearningMedia addresses the need for culturally responsive content and uses Universal Design for Learning (UDL), ensuring that our digital resources are accessible to students needing assistive technologies.
- **GBH News'** [Equity and Justice Desk](#) focuses on racial and socioeconomic equity issues in Greater Boston around healthcare, housing, income, and other topics.
- GBH is the original creator of closed captioning and audio description. [GBH's Media Access Group](#) has been providing accessible media services on many platforms for more than 45 years to millions of deaf, blind, hard of hearing, and visually impaired Americans.

Vision

We at GBH are aware of the power we wield as a multiplatform media producer and understand our responsibility in deciding which stories to develop and broadcast, who tells those stories, and who is behind the camera or microphone. By amplifying the voices of producers and filmmakers of all backgrounds, and creating more opportunities for perspectives that represent all the communities we serve, we are returning to public media's original promise to educate, engage, and inform Americans of all backgrounds while counteracting disinformation which could perpetuate centuries-old biases and deepen political and cultural divides.

Goals

To be the public media content producer that manifests this vision, we will require additional resources to invest in:

- Media makers and creators of all backgrounds to develop, produce, distribute, and promote new stories, giving space to a broad array of creative voices and perspectives.
- Expanded rural, regional and international coverage to promote cultural understanding.
- Enhanced broadcast, digital and social media presence for GBH and its partners, and more in-person and virtual screenings to engage our local and national audiences around important social issues.
- Programs, initiatives, and strategies that ensure the sustainability of public media long term.

How you can help

Gifts to the GBH Voices and Equity Fund provide resources to create content that inspires a sense of belonging and is representative of all Americans and public media audiences. Contributors to the fund will receive an annual report highlighting and reporting on key initiatives and successes during the year, along with periodic content updates and invitations to special events, screenings, and convenings around relevant issues.

For more information contact

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