

Building Synergy: Public Radio and Universities

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Current Levels of Collaboration between Public Radio and Universities

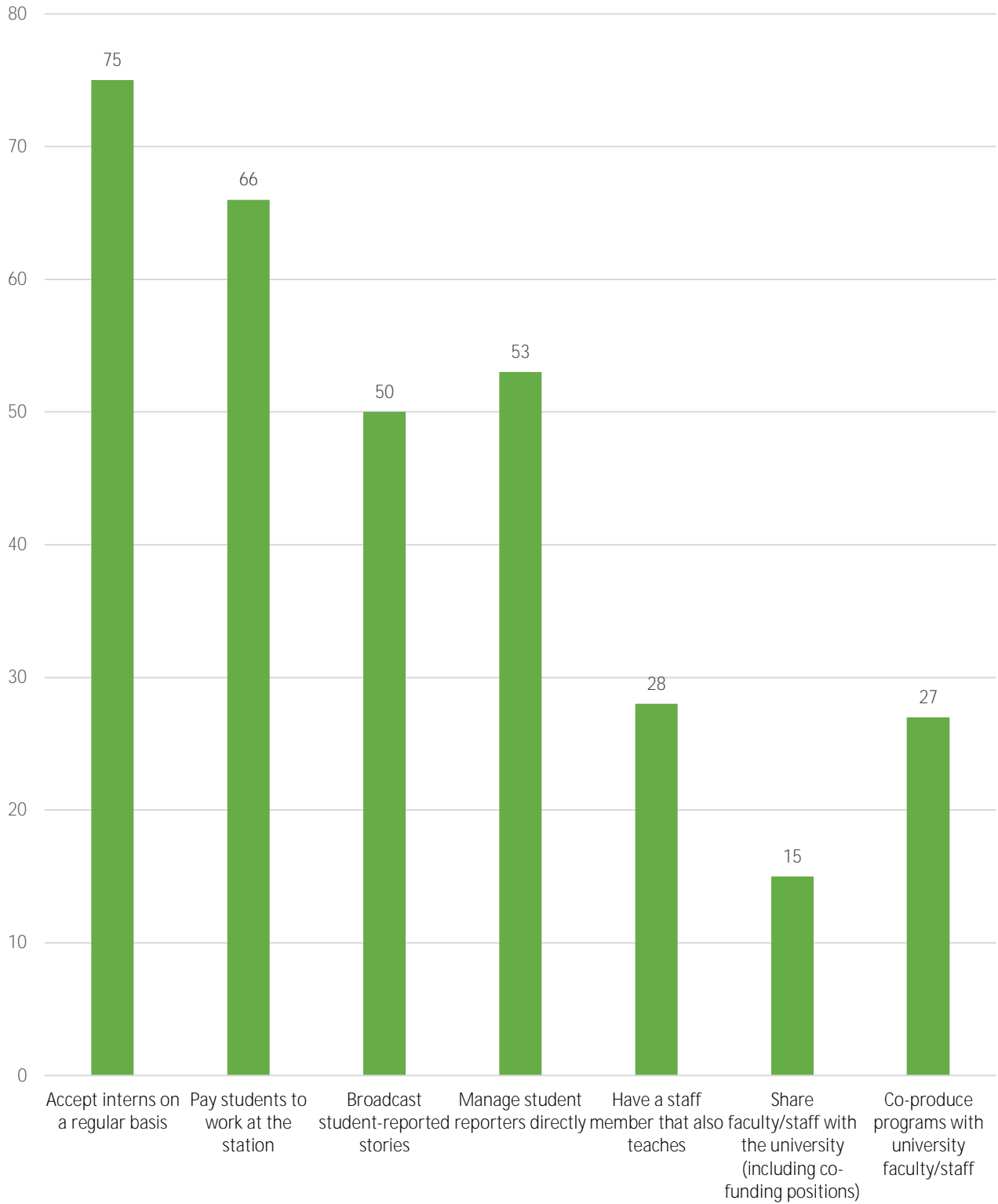


Table 1: Current Levels of Collaboration between Public Radio and Universities. n=95 partnerships

Potential for Growth

There are 182 public radio stations licenses associated with universities. In many cases these stations are co-located on university campuses. Although there are striking examples of public radio stations leveraging the resources of their host university to expand local news, many stations do not have deep collaborations with their university licensee.

Given the growth in news-academic partnerships, and the interest by some universities to contribute to local news, this report seeks to examine obstacles and opportunities for greater synergy between university licensees (or other public radio stations) and universities.

For this report, CCN focused specifically on partnerships between public radio outlets and university-led reporting programs. Under this model, universities take the lead in managing, mentoring, and supporting students; rather than rely on the traditional internship model of placing a student intern in a public radio station that is managed by the station. Here, university-hired professionals edit and guide student work, ensuring that all reporting adheres to professional journalism standards and ethics.

Types of Collaborations

CCN has identified three types of public radio-university collaborations. In each of these, the university leads student reporting and contributes resources.

Background

Appendix: Responses

Curriculum

Faculty

"Finding willing faculty is key for a successful, and continuing, partnership within the universities."

"Would like to rely more on our institution's faculty as sources of expertise for local news stories, to further demonstrate our value to the institution. Would also like to expand our collaboration with communications faculty to host their projects online."

"I think university-station collaborations are very useful and worth pursuing. The challenge in both public media stations and the colleges is simply time and someone to shepherd through things that usually everyone thinks are good ideas."

University Support

"I wish they would do wealth screening and planned giving for us, I would like to have a pipeline for student-produced stories (edited, vetted) to air on the station. I would also like to have students do production and host on-air (middays, weekends)."

Why It Matters

“As described above, the bureaucracy is an obstacle. We are not a department of the university, but our payroll is handled through the university (as an in-

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On the Cover

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign students Charrice Jones and Vivian La in the Illinois Student Newsroom at Illinois Public Media. Photo by Chris Evans.

Corrections

Any corrections or additions should be sent to Hannah Kirkpatrick at hkirkpat@uvm.edu. We welcome comments and suggestions.

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