



Disaster Recovery: Program Guidelines

INTRODUCTION

Public media stations play a vital role in keeping communities informed during times of crisis. The Public Media Bridge Fund's Disaster Recovery program provides rapid response, one-time financial assistance to public media organizations whose ability to deliver essential service has been disrupted due to a force majeure-type event.

Funding is intended to help stations restore service, repair or replace essential equipment, cover temporary operating costs, and address urgent community communication needs. Approval of emergency funding is dependent on available funds from the Public Media Bridge Fund.

GUIDELINES

Disaster Recovery funding is intended for stations that have experienced significant disruptions to service and/or equipment damage caused directly by severe weather or other major external incidents *and do not have the liquid capital necessary to restore service to their communities in a timely manner*. Funding is intended to support efforts immediately following an emergency. Applications should be submitted within 30 days of the occurrence of the event.

For the purposes of this program, a "qualifying emergency" is unforeseeable, unpreventable through reasonable measures, and not caused by human error, deferred maintenance, or avoidable equipment failure. Eligible events may include, but are not limited to:

- Severe weather (storms, flooding, lightning, high winds, extreme heat/cold)
- Natural disasters (earthquakes, hurricanes, wildfires)
- Utility and infrastructure failures beyond the station's control (water main breaks, power outages)
- Major accidental external impacts (tower collapse due to falling trees, vehicle collision with station property)

Note: The Public Media Bridge Fund is not a primary relief agency and does not seek to duplicate the work or assume responsibilities of governments, insurance carriers or private relief efforts.

Eligible Stations:

- FCC-licensed noncommercial public radio or television stations that either a) were a qualified CPB Community Service Grant (CSG) grantee as of September 30, 2025 OR b) are a current member of the National Federation for Community Broadcasters (NFCB).
- Intend to continue operations once service is restored
- Provide a unique local service (geographic coverage and/or format)
- Must be located in — or demonstrate operational impact from — a severe weather event or other qualifying emergency
- Do not have the liquid capital necessary to restore service in a timely manner

Permitted Use of Funds:

- Repair or replacement of critical technical infrastructure
- Temporary broadcast operations (e.g., generators, fuel, temporary antennas)
- Emergency engineering services
- Costs to reestablish connectivity, STL links, or internet service
- Safety-related facility repairs that directly affect continuity of service

Prohibited Uses of Funds:

- Pre-existing maintenance needs not related to the disaster
- Routine capital upgrades or long-term capital projects not tied to emergency recovery
- Costs already covered by insurance, FEMA, state emergency management funds, or other committed sources.
- Institutional overhead, indirect costs, and administrative charges, or other expenses not directly related to restoring operation of the station.

Grant Terms and Review Process:

- Grants will be awarded in amounts up to \$100,000.
- Grants will be considered on a rolling basis, and funding decisions will be made within 10 business days upon receiving an application.
- Applications will be reviewed and evaluated based on:
 - Urgency: Imminent risk of service disruption
 - Audience impact: How many people would lose access if the station goes dark?
 - Financial need: Availability of reserves or other support
 - Reasonableness of estimated costs

Reporting Requirements:

- A short final report (1–2 pages) within 60–90 days after work is completed, including:
 - Actual expenditures and use of grant funds
 - Status of service restoration
 - Status of any insurance, FEMA, government, or other relief funding received

- Lessons learned and/or testimonials from community members (optional but encouraged)

HOW TO APPLY

Eligible stations affected by a qualifying emergency can submit an application via the Bridge Fund's GivingData system here:

pmbf.givingdata.com/portal/campaign/disasterrecovery.

[Click here](#) to view a full list of the Disaster Recovery application questions.

If you have questions about the Disaster Recovery program, please contact the Public Media Bridge Fund team at bridgefund@publicmedia.co.

If your station requires financial assistance exceeding \$100,000, please indicate the nature of additional expenses in your application. The Bridge Fund will review special circumstances on a case-by-case basis.