

CKCU launches Keep Media Human campaign amid growing pressures on media

Canadian media organization aims to raise \$215,000 as funding cuts, political pressure and disinformation challenge independent voices.

OTTAWA, ONTARIO, CANADA, October 19, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As independent media faces funding cuts, political pressure and disinformation, CKCU FM is pushing back with its [Keep Media Human](#) campaign, launching Oct. 23 with a \$215,000 CAD fundraising goal.

Based at Carleton University in Ottawa, CKCU is an independent, non-profit media organization that brings people together through news, music, arts, culture and public affairs. For 51 years, volunteers, students, artists and community members have shaped its programming and created space for voices that might otherwise go unheard.



"At a time when it's getting harder to know what to trust, community media matters more than ever," said Lia Kiessling, station director at CKCU. "Real people are at the heart of everything we do. By sharing stories and different perspectives, we help build the trust, empathy and understanding that strong communities and healthy democracies depend on, in Canada and around the world."

In the United States, restrictions on press access and cuts to public broadcasting funding have raised alarms about press freedom. In Canada, local news outlets keep disappearing. As AI-generated content becomes more common, questions about trust and misinformation add to the challenges facing independent media.

Founded in 1975 as Canada's first campus-based FM station, CKCU is part of a global community of campus and community media organizations working to make space for diverse voices, cultural expression and public dialogue.

"What makes CKCU special is that our community doesn't just listen. It helps create what goes on the air," said Corrie Rabbe, chair of CKCU's board of directors. "For 51 years, people have brought their music, ideas, experiences and curiosity to this station. Keep Media Human is about protecting that spirit of participation and making sure there's room for the next generation of voices."



CKCU's Campaign Launch Poster

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It's getting hard to know what to trust, so community media matters more than ever. By sharing different perspectives, we build understanding and empathy that healthy democracies depend on.”

Lia Kiessling

The challenges facing independent and community media reach beyond borders. According to Northwestern University's 2026 State of Local News report, almost 47 million Americans live in counties with limited or no access to local news. A 2025 Pew Research Center survey found that 56 per cent of U.S. adults had at least some trust in information from national news organizations.

In Canada, the [Public Policy Forum](#) reports that 605 local news outlets closed across 388 communities between 2008 and 2025. Even with this number, audiences continue to seek out community-powered media. A 2025 national

survey found that 32 per cent of Canadians listen to campus or community radio regularly or occasionally, rising to 48 per cent among people aged 18 to 29.

Keep Media Human runs from Oct. 23 to Nov. 8, 2026. Donations support CKCU's programming, volunteer training, community partnerships and long-term sustainability.

Support the campaign: ckcufm.com/donate

Funding drive launch and media opportunities

CKCU's funding drive launch takes place Friday, Oct. 23, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Fono, 473 Bronson Avenue, Ottawa. Interviews, photos and audio opportunities are available.

Lia Kiessling, CKCU station director, is available for in-person and remote interviews.

About CKCU

CKCU is an independent, non-profit campus and community media organization based at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada. Founded in 1975 as Canada's first campus-based FM station, CKCU connects people through music, news, public affairs, arts, culture and conversation. Powered by volunteers and community support, CKCU serves Ottawa-Gatineau and audiences worldwide.

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