Digital Transformation Program - Phase 2

<u>Fundamentals</u> Track

Frequently Asked Questions

Important notes:

- This FAQ is for the <u>Fundamentals</u> track of the Digital Transformation Program.
- The deadline to apply for the Fundamentals track is Friday, **September 6, 2024**. <u>Apply here</u>.
- If you're an alumni of the Digital Transformation Program or the Digital Culture Accelerator (DCA) program, please go <u>here</u> to find the <u>Advanced</u> track FAQ.

Q: <u>What is the Digital Transformation Program - Fundamentals Track?</u>

A: The Digital Transformation Program - Fundamentals Track is a nine (9)-month virtual program offered to 50 station leaders and their staff each year for three (3) years. This track is designed specifically for stations who have not yet participated in a digital transformation program. CPB has partnered with The Poynter Institute to deliver this program, with rolling start dates over a three year period.

The program will identify strategies and best practices to help GM/CEOs and their staff adapt their organizational culture to more effectively deploy a digital-first, audience-centric approach. The program will provide coaching, webinars and resources to help stations become more agile and leverage digital content, platforms, and data to maximize business outcomes, including growing and engaging new and existing public media audiences and converting them to loyal members and donors.

Each station will form a team composed of the station leader (GM/CEO) and four-to-six additional, cross-functional and cross-hierarchical station personnel/team members who will receive core digital transformation training and work on a specific digital challenge focused on audience and revenue growth.

Q: <u>What stations are eligible to participate in the Fundamentals track of the program?</u>

A: Any CSG-qualified public media station who has not previously participated in either the first Digital Transformation Program or a similar program (i.e. Digital

Culture Accelerator, Poynter Table Stakes) is eligible to apply now to participate in the Fundamentals track of the program.

Q: My station participated in the first Digital Transformation Program. Can I apply for the Fundamentals track in this new program ?

A: No. If you participated in the first Digital Transformation Program you are eligible to apply to participate in the **Advanced track** of the new program. This track is customized for "alumni" of the first Digital Transformation Program. (For more information, see the link at the top of this document).

Q: What is the cost of this program?

A: This program is supported by CPB funds and is offered at no cost (i.e. free) to station personnel.

The support includes the entire program curriculum and resources, webinars, individual and group coaching and training and most GM/CEO-related travel expenses (i.e. hotel, airfare) for the in-person, three-day GM workshop included in the Fundamentals track.

Q: When does the Fundamentals track start and how long does it last?

A: Dates for the 2025 program are below. There will be additional Fundamentals track cohorts in 2026, with applications opening up in summer 2025 for the 2026 program.

Fundamentals Track 2025:

Cohort 1 (up to 25 stations):

- Session #1:   Thursday, January 9, 2025.
- GM/CEO workshop: January 14-16, Poynter's offices in St Petersburg, FL.
- Most sessions: Held on Thursdays from 1-3pm ET.
- Cohort ends: September 2025.

Cohort 2 (up to 25 stations)

- Session #1: Tuesday, March 25, 2025.
- GM/CEO workshop: April 1-3, Poynter's offices in St Petersburg, FL.
- Most sessions: Held on Tuesdays from 1-3pm ET.

- Cohort ends: December 2025.

Q: If accepted, what will our station focus on in the program?

A: Each station will select a digital project "challenge" with measurable, ambitious audience and revenue goals, focused on growing audience and revenue on one of the following "owned" platforms:

- Digital audio (e.g. podcasts)
- Digital video (e.g. YouTube)
- Newsletters /email
- Text/SMS
- Website

Teams will learn the program's framework for digital audience/revenue growth; learn digital analytics, including use of a digital dashboard, data access, integration, reporting and insights. You can read outcomes and testimonials from the first Digital Transformation Program here.

Q: Who should participate on my station team?

A: This program is designed around teams of five (5) to seven (7) members. The lead team member is required to be the station's CEO/GM.

Two of your team's members will serve as a data and analytics subteam. One member should be a digital technology lead and another should be a digital marketing/audience/member development lead. If you do not have team members with these exact titles or dedicated entirely to these areas; that is fine. Your team will need to include members designated for these roles.

The rest of the team should be cross-functional, coming from areas key to digital audience and revenue development (e.g., content creation, audience development, technology, marketing and membership and underwriting development). The team should also be cross-hierarchical, and we encourage you to look beyond formal leaders and consider staff who are emergent informal leaders, even if still junior at your station. This program provides an opportunity to develop emerging talent and diversify your station's leadership.

On the application form, GMs will indicate their preliminary team selection. If accepted to the program, GMs will have an orientation call with a Poynter program lead to discuss and finalize team composition.

Q: <u>How is the nine (9)-month Fundamentals track in the program structured?</u>

    A: There are four primary elements:

1. **General session workshops (all team members)**: 16 sessions that teach the program's framework for digital/audience growth, including using data, analytics and insights to set quantifiable metrics to track and measure digital performance and inform business decisions; adopting new strategies and ways of working; and learning best practices around key digital areas like newsletter growth.

2. **Coaching (all team members):** Each team will be paired with a coach who will work with your team over 12 sessions to ensure success in identifying your digital challenge and provide guidance on effective strategies for digital audience and revenue growth. Coaches will also facilitate a group coaching session every 6-8 weeks for stations to discuss digital challenge progress with each other.

3. **Data/Analytics workshops (subteam of 2-3 people)**: Stations will receive focused data and analytics training to advance their degree of data fluency, and capability to identify, engage, and monetize new and existing audiences.
   The data/analytics workshops will improve a station's ability to use data and analytical tools through use of dashboards to track key metrics and revenue from "owned" digital platforms (e.g. website, email/newsletter, SMS/text, apps, audio/video streams, podcast) and third-party "borrowed" digital platforms (e.g. YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, etc.). This training will consist of six (6) two-hour workshops as well as individualized coaching.

4. **CEO/GM Leadership workshops (CEO/GM only)**: Launched with a three (3)-day in-person CEO workshop, followed by eight (8) sessions focused on leading a multiplatform organization and change management. Station leaders can access up to five (5) Executive Coaching sessions as part of the program.

Participants will have access to program materials, recordings, and case studies for at least two (2) years after completing the program.

Q: <u>**What is the specific time commitment for the Fundamentals track in the program?**</u>

    A: We anticipate that team members will generally spend 1-3 hours per week in program sessions and coaching, along with time needed to complete team assignments and pursue their digital challenge to grow audience and revenue.

    Because stations will select a digital challenge for this program that is core to existing strategy, the work of the program is intended to be integrated into and supportive of the team's day-to-day work. Successful stations will incorporate the work of the program into their day-to-day operations.

    Team members will attend only one workshop most weeks, and will schedule coaching on a cadence that works for the team. The time commitments for each element of the program, and for specific team members, are shown in the table below.

Team members	Program Components	Time commitment
Full Team (5-7 members)	16 full-team workshops (2 hours each) 12 coaching sessions (1 hour each) 4 group update sessions with other station teams (2 hours each, once every 6-8 weeks)	1-3 hours per week throughout the 9-month program
Data/Analytics subteam (2 members from Full Team)	Six workshops (2-3 hours each)	- Workshops will be on different weeks than full team sessions - Workshops will occur within the first half of the program
CEO/GM	- One three- day workshop at Poyner in St. Petersburg FL (see dates above) 8 CEO/GM group calls held about once a month - Up to 5 one-hour executive coaching sessions available	- One hour per month - GM sessions will be held on different weeks than full-team sessions

Q: Why should my station and I participate?

A: Station GMs/CEOs who are seeking to transform their organization's digital operations and culture or advance/accelerate it to become more audience centric and multi-platform media entities should participate.

This program will help organizations accelerate their digital transformation by emphasizing the development and use of multi-platform digital content tied to local audience needs and expectations; and leverage "owned" digital platforms (e.g., email, podcasts, YouTube Videos, website) as well as data analytics and insights to reach and engage new audiences; convert them to donors and capture new revenue opportunities.

Stations can expect to learn how to:

- **Transition from a broadcast-focused mindset to an audience-centric mindset** for the creation and distribution of multi-platform local content and audience growth to meet the needs of local communities.
- **Access and use data analytics and insights to set quantifiable, digital performance goals and inform business decisions.**
- **Reach and engage new audiences by creating and distributing local content on digital platforms**.
- **Break down internal organizational silos, build high-functioning teams, and achieve better cross-department collaboration, greater operational effectiveness, and agility** (using test-and-learn and "fail fast" approaches).

Outcomes from previous Digital Transformation Program participants:

Stations who participated in the first Digital Transformation Program achieved significant business outcomes and organizational change from their work in the program. These include:

- Brought in almost **$3.1 million in net new digital revenue**.
- Achieved over **10 million net new digital audience growth.**
- Achieved **significant digital and organizational change.**
- **Significantly increased data and digital analytics capabilities**.
- Achieved **many digital "firsts"**, including generating first digital revenues and membership, accessing digital analytics for the first time; and launching new digital products for the first time.

Feedback from past participants :

"The Digital Transformation Program was exhilarating - it was the best thing that I and my staff have ever been through. It has really focused us on our future and given us the tools to meet the challenges ahead."
- Pat Crawford, Executive Director, WUWF, a university licensee radio station based in Pensacola, Florida

"The Digital Transformation Program delivered by the Poynter Institute has been both transformational and enduring for Colorado Public Radio. I feel if we had done this program five years ago that we'd be ten years ahead as the program's innovation methodology is a multiplier. In short, the program helped us develop an audience-centric, outcome focused, data driven and collaborative approach to a specific project challenge - that we continue to use today."
- Stewart Vanderwilt, CEO, Colorado Public Radio, a public radio station based in Denver, Colo.

"This program came at exactly the right time for Classical KING. We are building digital from scratch, and we are more likely to build it efficiently and effectively thanks to the DTP. I think all stations that haven't been through the program would benefit from it no matter where they are in the digital transformation process."
- Brenda Barnes, CEO, Classical KING, a public radio station based in Seattle, Washington

Q: <u>What are the steps after I apply?</u>

A: After assessing applications, Poynter will be in touch with you no later than early October to notify you if you have been accepted into the program.

Station GM/CEOs who have been accepted into the program will:

- Set up an orientation call in October with program leaders to discuss program expectations, challenge focus, and team selection.
- Sign an MOU detailing their commitment to participating in the program, including their willingness to share station data and analytics with the program team, which includes audience, membership, sponsorship and digital underwriting numbers.
- Fill out an intake survey with data and analytics across programs

Q: <u>What happens if I am not accepted into the program? Can I re-apply again for a future cohort in the 2026 or 2027 program?</u>

> **A:** We will put stations not accepted into the program on a waitlist and will notify you ahead of the next application period.

Q: <u>Who can I contact if I have additional questions about the program?</u>

> **A**: If you have any further questions regarding the program, you can reach out to Poynter at info@poynter.org and/or to Beth Jacobs, Vice President for Digital Strategy and Innovation - CPB, at bjacobs@cpb.org.