



## WEKU Underwriting Guidelines

These guidelines seek to preserve the non-commercial style of WEKU public radio. Our listeners value this characteristic as part of what makes WEKU unique in sound and substance. It is critical that, in addition to providing exceptional programming, we maintain a non-commercial, uncluttered and intelligent environment, keep listeners engaged during breaks and air underwriting announcements in keeping with our programming values, as well as with FCC requirements. Your underwriting support represents a partnership between your organization and WEKU. It demonstrates your commitment to community service and quality programming.

An announcement must identify, but may not promote, the underwriter, its services, facilities or products. It may not express the underwriter's views on any matter of public interest or importance. It may not support or oppose any political candidate. And it must be scheduled so as not to interrupt station programming.

In addition to these legal requirements, underwriting announcements must be in keeping with the non-commercial nature of our station. To maintain the consistency of our sound, all messages are read live or are prerecorded by a station voice.

### **Underwriting announcements may:**

- Describe your business or organization;
- Identify facilities, services, products or product lines (no more than a total of four mentions per announcement);
- Describe your mission;
- Inform the public of events you sponsor;
- Include an established non-promotional slogan or tagline;
- Include a web address, phone number and street address for your business or organization;
- Indicate the number of years you have been in business; and
- Include the name of a nonprofit organization you support, although it must be clear that you are providing the funding for the announcement.

### **Underwriting announcements may not include:**

- Qualitative language (e.g., award-winning, leading, etc.);
- Comparative language. (e.g., better, best, oldest etc.);
- A call to action ("Visit our store...");
- An inducement to buy, sell, rent or lease;
- References to price or value; or
- Personal pronouns, unless as part of a slogan.

## **Length of Announcement**

Including the station preamble (“Support for WEKU comes from . . .”), underwriting announcements may not exceed 20 seconds.

## **Web Addresses**

Unique tracking web addresses are permitted. However, web addresses with a call-to-action are not acceptable.

## **Political Organizations**

To respect the prohibition against accepting payment for the expression of any views, WEKU does not accept financial support from political organizations, nor will it broadcast a message advocating a position with respect to any political issue, political party, or candidate for government office, elected or otherwise.

WEKU reserves the right to determine that an underwriter or the content of a proposed announcement are inconsistent with the station’s mission or would undermine community support for the station. In these cases, sponsorship may be declined.

## **Advocacy Groups**

Underwriting by organizations that, as their primary business, seek to influence matters of public concern, either through public outreach on a matter or through affecting the legislative process, is permitted under appropriate circumstances and under appropriate conditions. Underwriting by such groups will be taken on a case-by-case basis, applying a reasonable listener standard. While there is no prohibition in these rules against underwriting by advocacy groups, in no circumstances will the language of an underwriting announcement express an opinion on matters of public concern or otherwise advocate positions on controversial matters.

## **Alcoholic Beverages**

Underwriting by makers and distributors of alcoholic beverages, including wine, beer and distilled spirits, are permitted. Credit language must be restrained in tone, and should not involve product descriptions, other than that necessary to identify the sponsor's line of business.

## **Instrumentalities of Government**

Underwriting by governments or instrumentalities of government is permitted under certain circumstances. Underwriting from politically or policy-oriented instrumentalities of government, including foreign countries, will not be accepted. At the same time, we encourage underwriting by government agencies or government funded organizations that are engaged in commerce, tourism or public education.

## **Religiously-Affiliated Organizations**

Underwriting by churches or other religiously affiliated groups is acceptable. However, given that most listeners will be of different religions, care should be given to ensure that underwriting messages are appropriate to the context of public radio, consistent with our

publicly-supported mission and funding profile, and not unacceptable to those listeners who may not share the underwriters' religious perspective.

A reasonable listener test will be applied under these circumstances. The previous rule concerning advocacy groups would also apply to these organizations. In addition, this rule prohibits proselytizing language or other language intended to draw distinctions between different religions.

### **Lotteries and Casinos**

Underwriting by lotteries or casinos that identifies or describes their gambling activity is not permitted.

Language that identifies a casino as a concert venue would be acceptable.

### **Tobacco Products**

Underwriting from diversified companies engaged in the manufacture of tobacco products (e.g. Altria, formerly Philip Morris) is acceptable, but specific references to tobacco products are not allowed.

### **Editorial Control**

The station exercises absolute editorial control over underwriting announcement copy and reserves the right to edit copy to conform to station and FCC guidelines.

*Last updated 1/15/2020*