



## **Sounds Co-operative – Canada needs more community voices**

**Wednesday, October 12 2011**

**For immediate release**

The National Campus and Community Radio Association (NCRA) and Kootenay Co-op Radio, CJLY-FM in Nelson, BC are working together to get the word out about community radio, co-operatives and co-operative community radio.

The two organizations were awarded a grant of more than \$65,000 from the Co-operative Development Initiative, funded by the government of Canada and administered by the Canadian Co-operative Association.

The money will support an online handbook, a series of radio documentaries on co-operation in Canada and around the world, and regional workshops to help community radio groups that want to start up co-operatives.

The project will run from Fall 2011- December 2012, spanning, appropriately, the entire year of 2012, proclaimed by the United Nations as the International Year of Co-operatives.

“There’s a natural fit between community radio and co-operatives,” said NCRA Executive Director Shelley Robinson. “Both involve people coming together to serve their communities and build something stronger than what they can do alone.”

She added that it’s a good time for the project since it’s the NCRA’s 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and that as part of the celebration they’re kicking off a campaign to reserve frequencies for these, and other, prospective community radio stations across Canada.

“Giving people the chance to speak for themselves and to their neighbours, highlighting local news and culture, is a primary service that should be protected,” she said.

Jay Hannley, the station manager of Kootenay Co-op Radio, agrees. The station was founded in 1997 and has more than 150 volunteers and 1500 members.

Kootenay Co-op Radio broadcasts 18 hours a day, and includes programs from the local French association, a Japanese music show, a local morning news magazine, and music and spoken word programmes that are syndicated regionally and nationally.

“Being a community station in a rural setting it is important that we work cooperatively. Our role is to tie together communities that are physically separated, and voices that are often isolated from one another.”

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