



93.5 Nelson
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New handbook helps communities start their own radio station

NELSON, BC—Twelve years ago, CJLY-FM Kootenay Co-operative Radio flipped a switch and started broadcasting, neighbour to neighbour, within their community of more than 10,000 people. Now, teaming up with the National Campus and Community Radio Association (NCRA), they've produced a handbook to help other communities do the same.

“As commercial radio and CBC shrink their coverage, communities want and need to tell their own stories,” said Shelley Robinson, Executive Director of the NCRA. “We get nearly a call a week from a community that wants to start up a local station. It's nice to finally have a resource just for them.”

The NCRA currently represents more than 80 members across the country, including community groups that are applying for licences.

The *Sounds Co-operative Handbook* was funded by a grant from the Co-operative Development Initiative and covers topics like forming a co-operative, how to start a not-for-profit community radio station from idea to first transmission, and profiles of the 15 co-operative community radio stations across Canada.

Zoë Creighton, one of the founders of CJLY-FM and the handbook's editor, says the connection between co-ops and community radio stations is a natural one.

“Both co-ops and community radio are about people coming together and doing for themselves,” she said. “That's a powerful force, even moreso when they're brought together in the same place.”

The handbook was launched at a regional conference in Nelson, BC hosted by CJLY-FM. It included a keynote speech by David Barsamian, long-time host of “Alternative Radio”, and CRTC Commissioner Stephen Simpson, as well as a meet and greet with local co-operatives.

In addition to the handbook, the *Sounds Co-operative* project includes three more regional conferences across the country and a series of five radio documentaries about the overlaps between community radio and co-operatives. It also commemorates 2012 as the International Year of Co-operatives, declared by the United Nations.

To view the handbook, hear the first documentary, and for project updates, visit the project's freshly launched website, at www.soundscooperative.coop.