

# **The Wave Project - Application**

Project Description and Program Application

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VERSION: C

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KFAI's Community Access Program: Sundays 10:00 - 11:00 am.

KFAI 90.3 FM (Minneapolis) and 106.7 FM (St. Paul) and online at [www.kfai.org](http://www.kfai.org)

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# WAVE PROJECT - APPLICATION

This document provides an overview of KFAI's WAVE PROJECT. Having read it, you should be able to decide if you wish to go ahead with an application for an air date.

## Introduction

We are glad that you are interested in presenting a program on the WAVE PROJECT. We hope you will decide to go on the air and share your music, interests, and insights with the KFAI listenership and we encourage you to think about doing more volunteer work at the station.

## Your application

You start the process by reading this document and submitting a completed application which you can find in [APPENDIX A: APPLICATION](#) on page 6.

Once your application has been approved and you are assigned an air date, you should read and understand the document, WAVE PROJECT-PROGRAM, which contains more detailed information about developing and broadcasting your WAVE PROJECT program. You can, of course, read the WAVE PROJECT-PROGRAM document now but it is essential reading once you have an air date.

## Your audience

You need to think about the audience you want to reach and create a program that is interesting to that audience.

**TIP:** If you don't already do so, start listening to the weekly WAVE PROJECT programs. Decide what makes each program interesting. Think about how you might do it differently to make it more interesting. Listen to how the host handles various issues, guests, music plays and so on.

## Program types

There are two types of program common to the WAVE PROJECT. Both types are approximately 55 minutes long. The program types are:

- Programs that are predominantly music (with some talk).
- Programs that are predominantly talk (with or without some music).

## Your engineer

For most KFAI programs, the host not only speaks on the air, they also operate the *board*, which is another name for all the controls used to generate the program live on air. To operate the board requires the host be *board certified*. WAVE PROJECT hosts (you) are not normally board certified which is why a board certified engineer will be assigned to operate the board during your program. Your engineer will manage the microphones, CD players, record players, phones and all other equipment as well as reading special announcements during your program. This allows you to concentrate on your task of presenting the program in such a way that holds your audience's interest for the entire hour by talking to the listeners, introducing music, interviewing guests in studio and/or on the phone.

## FCC guidelines on sensitive language

**NOTE:** Please read this section carefully. If you have any questions or concerns about its content, contact the WAVE PROJECT Coordinator. Your signature on the application form signifies that you have read and understand this material.

KFAI's licence to broadcast is issued by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The FCC has issued guidelines on the use of inappropriate language on the air. If a WAVE PROJECT host (you) or a guest violates the guidelines during the program, KFAI may be fined or, at worst, lose its licence to broadcast. It is critical that you and your guests understand and follow the FCC guidelines described below.

Sensitive language is a term that refers to three types of language that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) says that broadcasters may not use on the air. This document provides the information you need to know to keep from running afoul of these rules during your WAVE PROJECT program. If you have any questions about this material, talk with the WAVE PROJECT Coordinator or with KFAI's Program Director. You need to be aware that the FCC takes these rules very seriously, and it has

been handing out big fines to stations and programmers for violations. For a one-time, single violation of its indecency rules, for example, the FCC is handing out fines of \$12,500 or more.

In this document, sensitive language is described under three headings:

- [Obscenity](#) on page 3
- [Indecency](#) on page 3
- [Profanity](#) on page 5

## Obscenity

The FCC uses a definition of obscenity set out by the U.S. Supreme Court in the early 1970s that you may already have heard of. In order for programming to be considered obscene, all three of the following elements must be present:

1. The average person, applying contemporary community standards, must find that the work as a whole appeals to the prurient interest. In other words, the point of the work must be to arouse an unhealthy sexual desire.
2. The work must describe or depict, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically described by applicable state laws.
3. The work as a whole must lack serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.

For example, you probably would not get in trouble if you read excerpts from James Joyce's *Ulysses* on the air, even though the book was once banned as obscene. Since Joyce is considered to be a great writer of serious literature, language that might be obscene when used by someone else is not legally obscene when Joyce uses it. On the other hand, you might run afoul of the FCC if you did a program featuring only the "dirty" parts of *Ulysses*, especially if you interlaced your readings with comments like, "*If you think that part was hot, wait until you hear this!*"

## Indecency

A December 1992 newsletter from the broadcast law firm of *Haley, Bader and Potts* listed things that the FCC recently found indecent. The list included:

- The so-called seven dirty words: shit, piss, fuck, cunt, cocksucker, motherfucker, and tits.
- Popular songs that contain repeated references to sex or sexual organs, including Uncle Bonsai's *Penis Envy*, Prince's *Erotic City*, and Monty Python's *Sit on my Face*.
- DJ banter concerning tabloid sex scandals, such as Vanessa Williams' photos in *Penthouse* and the tale of a man whose testicle was caught in a hot tub drain.
- Discussion of intimate sexual questions between DJs and callers: *What's the grossest thing you've ever put in your mouth?*, *What makes your hiney parts tingle?*
- Dirty jokes and dirty puns. For example, *Liberace was great on the piano but sucked on the organ.*

- Non-clinical references to lesbian or gay sex, masturbation, breast or penis size, sodomy, erections, orgasms, etc.
- Excerpts of a play about a person dying from AIDS.
- And, according to the law firm, any reference to non-heterosexual sex or oral sex is likely to be considered indecent by the FCC.

**Indecency Defined:** The first tool you need to have to keep your program legal is to understand just what the FCC means when it says something is indecent. According to the FCC, indecency is the broadcast of language that “*describes, in terms patently offensive as measured by contemporary community standards for the broadcast medium, sexual or excretory activities or organs.*” Don’t be fooled by the fact that this definition bears a resemblance to the one for obscenity – the differences between the two are significant and the main differences are listed below.

- Indecent language doesn’t have to appeal to the prurient interest – it doesn’t even have to be titillating. For example, the FCC doesn’t think that humorous, but lewd, references to genitals are funny – it thinks they’re indecent.
- The fact that material has literary, artistic, political, or scientific value is irrelevant when the FCC determines whether the material is indecent.
- Material must be indecent according to the “contemporary community standards for the broadcast medium,” which are more restrictive than general community standards. For example, people who think it’s okay for the word fuck to appear in a magazine article don’t necessarily want to hear someone say fuck on the radio, especially if they think their children might be listening.

In addition, the FCC applies a single national standard for indecency. It makes no distinction between say, Los Angeles and Berea, Kentucky, even though cultural and moral standards might differ between those two cities.

#### **How to Avoid Indecency Violations:**

- Don’t assume that something is okay to broadcast just because you heard it on another program or another station. That other programmer could have made a mistake.
- Preview any music you haven’t heard before.
- Read lyric sheets and avoid songs with problem lyrics.
- Don’t air any pre-recorded material unless you have listened to it in advance.
- Keep away from the so-called seven dirty words: shit, piss, fuck, cunt, cocksucker, motherfucker, and tits. While they’re not the only words that can get you in trouble, they are the only ones ruled indecent by the U.S. Supreme Court.

- Clear any material of an erotic nature or that deals explicitly with sex acts, in advance with KFAI's Program Director.
- Never broadcast any material you have doubts about. If you are not certain that something is okay for the air, talk to KFAI's Program Director.

## **Profanity**

Compared to obscenity and indecency, profanity is easy. If you say hell, damn, goddamn, or similar words with the intent of bringing down divine wrath or divine condemnation, then you are using profanity. However, the courts have said, and the FCC agrees, that the intent of the speaker is what matters when judging whether language is profane. For a complaint to stick, the FCC would have to prove that you really meant for God to damn something or someone – that you really hoped that someone would be struck down by lightning, for example. In general, complaints about profanity tend not to get to the FCC in the first place because people usually just call or write the station. Since KFAI depends so much on listeners for the financial support that makes the station possible, we prefer not to anger our listeners by using profanity unless there is a compelling artistic or other reason to do so. In practical terms, then, KFAI rules forbid the use of profanity on the air regardless of whether your language would be judged profane by the FCC.

## **Conclusion**

This concludes The Wave Project - Application document. If you are ready to go forward, turn to [APPENDIX A: APPLICATION](#) on page 6 and complete the application.

## APPENDIX A: APPLICATION

Complete the application on the next two pages, sign and date, and mail both pages to:

KFAI 90.3 FM and 106.7 FM  
The Wave Project, Box 31  
1808 Riverside Avenue  
Minneapolis, MN 55455

OR

Go to the WAVE PROJECT web site and open the electronic application form. Save the electronic form to your computer, complete it (you can sign it later) and save it again. Then e-mail it as an attachment to [kfaipublicaccess@yahoo.com](mailto:kfaipublicaccess@yahoo.com)

Your application will be reviewed and the WAVE PROJECT Coordinator may be in touch with you with additional questions. When your application is approved, the WAVE PROJECT Coordinator will assign you the air date you requested. If that air date is already assigned, the coordinator will offer you a series of dates to choose from.

Currently the WAVE PROJECT is broadcast on Sunday morning from 10am to 11am so you and any guests must be available to come to the KFAI studio at that time on the assigned air date.

# The Wave Project

KFAI's Community Access Program: Sundays 10:00 - 11:00 am

KFAI 90.3 FM (Minneapolis) and 106.7 FM (St. Paul) and online at [www.kfai.org/waveproject](http://www.kfai.org/waveproject).

## Program application for guest hosts (printed version)

Please fill out as completely as possible. Please print or write clearly. Use additional sheets, if necessary.

Name:		
Address:		
City:	State:	ZIP:
Daytime phone:	Evening phone:	
E-mail address:		

Program type (check one):	<input type="checkbox"/> Recorded music	<input type="checkbox"/> Talk/Interview	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
If you selected <i>Other</i> , please explain (e.g. phone interview, live music):			
Program title:			
Program subject:			

What do you think is special or interesting about your program? Tell us about it.	
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<p>What kind of people will be interested in your program, and what will the listeners gain?</p>	
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On occasion (for example, during pledge drive or in case of program cancellation), KFAI rebroadcasts previous WAVE PROJECT programs.

Yes, I give KFAI permission to rebroadcast my program.

Before you submit your abstract, read and understand the information in the WAVE PROJECT APPLICATION document and in particular the information regarding sensitive language.

Yes, I have read and understand the content of the WAVE PROJECT APPLICATION document.

Print both pages of this application, sign and date below, and deliver or mail both pages to:

KFAI 90.3 FM and 106.7 FM  
 The Wave Project, Box 31  
 1808 Riverside Avenue  
 Minneapolis, MN 55455

<p>Signature:</p>	<p>Date:</p>
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You'll be hearing from us soon. Thanks for your interest in The Wave Project.