

BSR Constitution

A. Purpose

BSR was established in 1997 as a noncommercial radio station for Brown University students interested in freeform radio and coverage of university sporting events. The organization grew out of WBRU-AM, which had been founded in 1936 as The Brown Network, a carrier-current AM station broadcasting to Brown dorms. In 2003, BSR expanded its volunteer base to include students from Rhode Island School of Design, as well as Providence community members.

BSR aims to provide a local and international outlet for unheard and underheard bands and for creative and original features and news programming.

BSR's purpose, as expressed in its Mission Statement, shall be to act as "Providence student and community radio that serves the curious listener."

Its goals shall be:

- 1) to teach people interested in producing radio how to do so,
- 2) to further interactions between Brown students and the greater Providence community, and
- 3) to cultivate a thoughtful and dedicated listenership.

Its values shall include localism, education, diversity, entertainment, and public participation.

B. Membership

BSR is a Category 3 student group of Brown University which must maintain a majority (51%) membership of Brown University students amongst its Station Membership. It is open to Brown University and Rhode Island School of Design students, and members of the general Providence community.

BSR membership consists of three different categories. Members of the station may be: Volunteers, Station Members, or Programmers.

Volunteers are individuals who have contributed to an assignment under the dominion of at least one of the station's departments, the General Manager, or the Station Manager.

Station Members are individuals who have successfully completed Station Membership training. The content of this training and the criteria for its completion are at the discretion of the General Manager or the Station Manager each semester; however, the training should aim to prepare potential Station Members for voting privileges not reserved for non-Station Members. Station Members may attend meetings of the BSR Executive Board (without voting privileges); they may formally propose changes to the BSR Constitution; and they may formally propose a request for resignation from any Executive Board member. All individuals applying to serve on the Executive Board or the Programming Board must be Station Members before voting for the respective boards commences. In order to be eligible for Station Membership, a Volunteer must have had at least two consecutive months of the minimum number of required volunteer hours, as described below. Station Members are expected to attend all Station Member and General meetings and to complete the required number of volunteer hours each month. Additionally, Station Members are responsible for providing annual evaluations of members of the Executive Board. An individual's failure to attend a meeting or to uphold any of the aforementioned responsibilities may result in a temporary or permanent suspension of Station Membership privileges, at the discretion of the General Manager or the Station Manager. A Station Member may take a Period of Leave from the station by informing the General Manager or the Station Manager; however, during this Period of Leave, the individual submits his/her Station Membership privileges, which are to be reinstated upon his/her return.

Programmers are individuals who have successfully completed Programmer training. To broadcast a program on BSR, one must become an approved programmer. This involves successfully completing a training process and

maintaining volunteer hours. An approved programmer must be in the studio at all times when BSR is broadcasting, including internet-only times. Up to two guests are allowed in studio at a time without prior notice. Features and news producers who are not programmers can air pieces as long as a programmer is in the studio with them for the entire duration of the piece. Programmers have the power to create and broadcast their own music sets or features pieces. However, this power carries responsibility with it. Programmers are liable for their actions, and the actions of their guests, while on air. Any violation of BSR policies is subject to disciplinary action, including suspension from the air. Programmers are also expected to attend the station meetings as well as maintain 8 hours of volunteer work per month. Programmers are subject to the same probationary period as described above for station membership. Any candidate for the Programming Board must be an approved programmer, although they do not have to be actively programming (i.e., they do not need to have a regularly scheduled show on air at the time) to run. Candidates must also be station members at the time of election and during their term.

Volunteer Hours - Any work which benefits BSR counts towards volunteer hours, with one exception. A programmer can not count the time spend airing his regularly scheduled program. Substituting for another programmer's show, however, does count towards volunteer hours. Volunteer work includes, but is not limited to, show preparation, meetings, trainings, and office and departmental work. The Volunteer Director will track hours for each volunteer to ensure that volunteering is being completed sufficiently and satisfactorily.

If a station member or programmer cannot not meet the monthly requirement for personal or other reasons, they should inform the Volunteer Director before the month is complete. The Volunteer Director, along with the Station and/or General Managers, will consider the member's situation to determine if probation is necessary. As mentioned above, a station member and/or programmer who has been placed on probation must maintain hours as expected for the next two months or privileges will be revoked. If a station member or programmer consistently is short on hours (i.e., is placed on probation multiple times within a year period), the Volunteer Director will report this to the Station Manager, General Manager, and/or Programming Board as he sees fit.

C. Structure

BSR shall be governed by several leadership bodies backed by a large group of volunteers. These bodies will include the Executive Board, the Programming Board, and the Advisory Board.

The Executive Board (E-Board) - This seven-member group shall be comprised of the General Manager, Station Manager, Programming Director, Development Director, Publicity Director, Tech Director, and Volunteer Director. Its primary responsibility will be to direct the long-term planning of the station to ensure that the station is pursuing a vision consistent with its mission, goals, and values. The E-Board must recruit, train, and encourage volunteers, and its meetings are open to any interested station members. E-Board members shall be evaluated annually, and station members may at any time pose a vote of no confidence in an E-Board member, who may then be asked to resign. E-Board members are expected to serve for a minimum of one year but may resign at any time after giving two months notice.

The *General Manager* shall be responsible for the overall operation of the station. He or she shall provide leadership, sustainability, and financial stability. He or she must coordinate the actions of the various departments; preside over E-Board, station member, and general meetings; enforce station policies; and develop external relations with alumni and with the community.

The *Station Manager* shall oversee the day-to-day operations of the station. Along with the General Manager and Development Director, he or she shall propose the budget. He or she must also oversee station purchases, office staffing, equipment maintenance, and the internal calendar. He or she is additionally responsible for developing relations with the University and its various bodies to ensure that BSR's status as a student group is maintained.

The *Programming Director* shall supervise and develop all on-air programming. He or she must lead the Programming Board (see below) in creating each season's schedule, training new programmers, developing new programming, and reviewing existing programming throughout the season, ensuring that programming is consistent

with BSR's mission, and proposing new programming policies.

The *Development Director* shall ensure that BSR is financially stable and is in charge of any revenue streams, including fundraising, underwriting, and grant writing.

The *Publicity Director* shall be responsible for all activities relating to promotions, public relations, or University/community outreach. In addition to event planning, his or her responsibilities to the station's image may include overseeing website design, merchandise distribution, and media coverage.

The *Tech Director* shall be responsible for all engineering/computing equipment, the archiving and databasing systems, and the website's technical side. He or she will also need to document BSR's technical setup and ensure that the station develops technologically.

The *Volunteer Director* shall coordinate BSR's many volunteers, providing them with opportunities through the various departments, as well as through other station-run activities. He or she will also be responsible for ensuring that all programmers and station members perform their required hours of volunteer work.

The Programming Board - The Programming Board shall consist of four at-large members elected for one-year terms, in addition to one representative each from the Features Department and the Music Department. It is responsible for upholding BSR's mission through its supervision of on-air programming. The P-Board must ensure that programming is distinct and of high-quality and that programmers comply with all guidelines and standards. If possible, there shall be at least two Brown students and two community members serving on the Board at all times. Meetings, led by the Programming Director, will occur bi-weekly and will be closed.

The Advisory Board - The Advisory Board shall consist of Brown and RISD administrators, community members, and alumni of the station whose diverse areas of expertise may be useful to the station's leaders as they undertake various large tasks. It must advise the station's leaders in major projects and ensure that the station continues to pursue its mission, goals, and values. Its duties shall include evaluating the station budget, approving new General Managers, and reviewing the General Manager's actions on a regular basis.

BSR shall be organized into several departments, each led by one or two directors who will meet bi-weekly with the Station Manager and all other directors to report on their undertakings. These departments will include the following:

Development

The Development Department, which shall raise revenue through means such as underwriting, grant writing, alumni fundraising, event hosting, and merchandising.

Programming

The Programming Department, which shall supervise programming to ensure that it is consistent with BSR's mission, in addition to training new programmers and developing new shows.

The Programming Department must have a *Training Coordinator* to administer training for new programmers and a *Reviewing Coordinator* to oversee the completion and distribution of show reviews.

The Programming Department will also include all approved programmers and show reviewers.

Features Programming

The Features Department, which shall provide programmers with the opportunity and means to create original non-music programming in forms including but not limited to documentary, interview, drama, discussion, and poetical expression.

- There must be a *Features Director* who coordinates the activities of the Features Department, supervises features programming, and oversees the training of new features programmers.

There will be a *Features Advisory Board* consisting of seven BSR alumni with valuable experience in public radio who will serve as mentors to features programmers.

Each features show must have a designated *Producer*, and many will have *Assistants* who may or may not be

approved programmers.

Under the Features Department, there shall be a **News Department** that produces the show "Off the Beat." The News Department's activities will be coordinated by a *News Director*, who will oversee the tasks of a group of volunteers serving in positions that may include *Lead Gatherer, Administrative Assistant, Sound Gatherer, Interviewer, Writer, Editor, Audio Editor, Producer, Anchor, and Broadcaster.*

Under the Features Department, there shall also be a **Sports Department** that broadcasts sports games and produces "The Bear's Den," a weekly discussion of Brown athletics. The Sports Department will be led by a *Sports Director*, who selects games to broadcast and oversees the process of doing so. The Sports Department will also include *Broadcasters, Engineers, and Interviewers.*

Under the Features Department, there shall also be a **Youth Department** that produces the show "Flow Radio," which brings Providence-area teens to collaboratively learn programming techniques in the studio and to develop a group show, as well as a summer youth radio program that matches Providence-area teens with BSR volunteers who train and mentor them for five weeks.

Music

The Music Department, which shall obtain and process recorded music from labels and distributors.

In addition to a *Music Director* who coordinates the Music Department's activities and trains new staff members, the Music Department must have a team of *Genre Directors* (several for Rock, in addition to at least one each for Loud Rock, Country/Folk, Hip Hop, RPM, Jazz, Blues, and World) who communicate with record labels/distributors and evaluate new music as it arrives, a *Reviewing Coordinator* who oversees music reviewers to ensure quality and reliability, and at least one *Librarian* who refiles CDs and keeps the library organized.

The Music Department will also include *CD Reviewers* who listen to and evaluate new music before it is played on the air.

Under the Music Department, there shall be a **Live Music Department** that works to allow musicians to play live music both in the studio and over the phone lines.

Publicity

The Publicity Department, which shall cultivate station identity and promote awareness of BSR's presence through various means including public events, media coverage, and advertising.

The Publicity Department will include an *Events Calendar Coordinator* who updates the list of events that DJs may announce on air, a *Giveaways Coordinator* who cultivates relationships with local establishments that might provide materials to give away on air, and a *Webmaster* who maintains the bsrlive.com website.

The Publicity Department will also include *Designers* who create visual representations of the station, a *Streeteem* that distributes printed publicity, and a *Party Crew* that plans and promotes various events including parties and concerts,

Tech

The Tech. Department, which shall purchase, install, maintain, and repair all audio equipment and computers at BSR.

D. Meetings

General meetings for all staff and volunteers shall be held three times per semester.

The first meeting will focus on welcoming new volunteers, reintroducing station leaders, updating attendees on happenings at the station, and reminding volunteers of station policies.

The second meeting will be run by a station member not on E-Board and will focus on the concerns of volunteers.

The final meeting will focus on unveiling the next season's schedule, introducing new station leaders, and recognizing the achievements of the station and its members during the season.

A fourth meeting dealing with station policies and administrative concerns shall be held mid-semester for station members only.

One day-long retreat shall be held yearly. It will be open to all interested parties and will focus on long-term planning.

Additionally, the Executive Board shall meet monthly, the Programming Board shall meet bi-weekly, department leaders shall meet bi-weekly, and individual departments shall meet on their own schedules.

E. Voting and Elections, Appointing Directors

Programming Board- As explained in Section C, the content of BSR is overseen by a programming board, hereafter known as the P-Board. To be a candidate for any positions on P-Board, one must be an approved programmer (although not necessarily a currently scheduled programmer) and a station member. The P-Board has 6 positions, in addition to the Programming Director (PD, see below for the process of becoming PD). Two of these positions are reserved for one representative from the Music Department and one representative from the Features Department. The remaining four P-Board positions are decided by instant runoff elections. The terms, as for all P-Board positions, last one year. The terms are staggered so that two positions will be open for election at each general meeting at the end of each semester.

During the meeting, each candidate gets a five minute period during which to make a speech. After all candidates have made their speeches, all attendees of the meeting, regardless of their level of station involvement, receive a ballot. The voter is to mark down each of the candidates in order of preference. The most preferred candidate should have a 1 next to their name, the second most preferred a 2, and so on. For a ballot to be valid, **all** candidates must be numbered. Any incomplete ballots will not be counted at all. After the meeting, the ballots will be tallied. The two candidates with the most votes, i.e. the highest aggregate number of votes, will sit on the P-Board for the next year.

Executive Board- Most Executive Board positions are not elected. For directorships (all E-Board positions except for the general and station managers), a search committee of station members will be formed. The search committee will interview potential candidates, eventually deciding on one first choice candidate. This committee will choose this candidate to be presented to the E-Board. The E-Board must confirm the committee's decision with a 2/3 vote. The search committees are comprised of station members elected by instant runoff voting at the station member meeting prior to the end of the term of the position to be filled. (That is, if the current director's term ends in May, the search committee will be formed at the December meeting.)

When the General Manager position must be filled, a search committee of station members interviews and evaluates candidates and makes a hiring recommendation to the Advisory Board. The Board then interviews the recommended candidates and makes the hiring decision by 2/3 majority. This search committee is formed in the same way as the E-Board position search committees are.

The Station Manager is elected annually by the station membership. The election will take place during the final station member meeting of the year, again using instant runoff voting.

F. Finances

The Undergraduate Finance Board (UFB) of Brown University provides most of BSR's funding, particularly with regards to broadcasting expenses. Staffing and general operating costs will be supported by alumni and listener donations, grants, underwriting, and other fundraising efforts. Some funds from these sources shall also be saved for major expenses in the future.

The General Manager and Station member shall propose the initial version of the annual budget. On March 30 of every year, a budget-planning meeting shall be held so that interested parties may review and revise the initial budget. By April 7, the revised budget shall be presented for further review to the Advisory Board, E-Board, and all station members. The UFB portion of the budget shall be submitted by mid-April of every year.

G. Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws

All station members and E-Board members may propose amendments to the BSR Constitution. These amendments must be presented in writing to the E-Board at least one week before the station meeting at which they are to be discussed. Amendments shall be voted on by station members, 2/3 of whom must approve in order for the amendment to pass.