

Fairfax Public Access Underwriting documentation

Underwriting is a means by which an individual, corporation, business or foundation helps support a program or series of programs. Whether financial or in-kind, this support helps producers defray the cost of producing the program. PBS defines an “underwriter” as a third party that has voluntarily contributed cash to finance, in whole or in part, the production of a program. FPA agrees with that definition.

You must identify all the program underwriters in the credits of your program. FPA permits producers to thank underwriters with a brief acknowledgment at the beginning and/or end of the program.

FPA allows producers to seek underwriting within the bounds of our policy and procedures guidelines. FPA also reserves the right to seek underwriting for its own behalf to support the general broadcasting activities of the station. The following rules are meant to ensure FPA’s production resources are not to be used for any form of commercial or financial gain.

A. FPA’s Rules & Policies Regarding Underwriting:

1. General underwriting Rules:

- a. Producers using FPA production facilities may seek outside funding to defray the costs of expenses directly related to the production of programs, but may not be used for the financial benefit of the producer. **Funding raised must be coordinated with FPA’s Office Manager and the underwriting payments must be made by check payable to FPA. This applies even for producers who may qualify or have their own non-profit 501(c)(3) status.**
- b. Funding raised using FPA’s non-profit 501(c)(3) status shall be remitted to and approved by FPA.
- c. “In-Kind” donations
“In-kind” services or materials must be reported to FPA. If the donor of “in kind” material wishes to take a tax deduction for the contribution, then the item must be donated to FPA (rather than to the producer). **FPA holds the rights to accept or deny such donations to the station. If approved such items will become the property of the station and available for general use.**

2. FPA’s Accounting Principals:

- a. In order for an underwriter to take a tax deduction for their cash or “in-kind” gift, the check and/or donation must be made to FPA and producers have to complete our “Underwriting Approval Form”. Please submit a separate underwriting approval form for each underwriting check (payment) submitted to our Office Manager.
- b. Monetary donations from underwriters must be made directly to FPA. FPA will hold the funds in a temporarily restricted account under the producer’s name and program title. FPA will also provide the underwriter with a letter confirming the receipt of the donation and a copy of FPA’s IRS letter for tax deduction purposes.

- c. FPA charges a 15% fiscal agent conduit fee to handle the accounting, write and mail the paperwork to the underwriter and to process the reimbursement checks. The fee will be deducted from each underwriting donation when it is placed into the account. This means that 15% of all underwriting that comes to FPA through our producers immediately gets subtracted from the total to cover the cost of the following:
 - Administrative time for meetings with the producer
 - Setting up and maintaining the restricted account
 - Writing and issuing support letters
 - Writing and mailing thank you letters to underwriters
 - Processing producer receipts and administering refunds
 - Printing and processing the refund checks
- d. Producers must determine their own underwriting budgets, costs, and create their own invoice when soliciting donations from their underwriters.
- e. Programs which air at FPA, but which do not use FPA facilities for program production, are exempt from creating an underwriting account with our Office Manager, but must still follow the underwriting airing permissions and restriction policies.
- f. For producers using FPA facilities, upon receipt of a valid expense voucher from the producer, FPA will reimburse the producer from his/her restricted account for the expenses.
- g. Allowable expenses which producers can be refunded for the show include, but are not limited to:
 - Electronic Media: only tapes, DVDs, etc. used in and for the production (including post-production editing) of the program that received the underwriting.
 - Set and prop materials used for the program including things like furniture, paint, backdrop materials, artwork, and carpeting.
 - Equipment rental: any additional equipment that is necessary for the production of the program. Equipment that FPA does not have may include BETA tape transfers, S-VHS dubbing, certain microphones, dollies, camera units, light kits etc.
 - Using a dubbing house to make multiple copies of the program.
 - Promotional materials, mailing costs (postage) or the cost of making flyers.
 - Refreshments or food for program guests and crew.
 - Payment for freelance work or Staff Production. If you use staff productions, underwriting can cover the cost of Staff Productions. If you wish to compensate freelance work done for your show (such as editing work) in some way, underwriting can pay for that as well, but the producer is responsible for 1099's and all tax implications regarding payment of their freelance crew support. However, per our policies a freelance worker cannot get paid if they are using FPA equipment.

B. Underwriting Credits Policy: What you can and cannot say or do

- a. Television programs may acknowledge underwriters visually and orally at the beginning and end of the program with a "thank-you-spot". Announcements are limited to 30-seconds. All underwriters acknowledgements must fit within a single 30-second spot.
- b. Television programs may air two announcements for a ½-hour program and three announcements for a 1-hour program, provided one of the announcements is at the end of the program.

- c. Radio programs may air three announcements for a 1-hour program and four announcements for a 2-hour program, provided one of the announcements is at the end of the program.
- d. All on-air underwriting thank-you-spots must conform to FCC and Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) requirements for underwriting announcements.
- e. Underwriting announcements shall be used as a means to identify underwriters and not to commercially promote underwriters.
- f. FPA follows PBS guidelines (a.k.a the "Redbook") for underwriting and promotions.
- g. Reference to the Redbook guidelines can be viewed on the Internet at <https://www.pbs.org/producers/redbook/specs/underwriting.html>.
- h. **Permissible content:**
 - Name of underwriter.
 - Location/address/website of the underwriter's business.
 - A phone number to call for more information.
 - A brief, value-neutral description of a service or product line, e.g., "ABC Company, specializing in imported foods at its three area locations."
 - Slogans that identify, but do not promote the underwriter, its service or its product line.
 - Brand name or trade names and underwriting logos can be used.
 - Musical backing.
- i. **Restrictions:**
 - Underwriting announcements shall not include advertising, calls to action, ad blocks, or any other material that contains any commercial messages.
 - Underwriting announcements shall not include price or sales information and qualitative statements such as "The good people at" or "The fine services of".

C. Samples

- This program is brought to you with the generous support of ABC Corporation
- Thanks to Mr. Pizza for underwriting this show. Mr. Pizza specializes in hand-tossed pizza.
- XYZ Fine Art of Reston, the answer to your framing needs in Northern Virginia, funded the following presentation.
- Funding for this program was made possible in part by a grant from The Widget Company, located at the corner of Oak and Pine Street in the heart of Falls Church. The Widget Company has been making silver widgets for 25 years and are proud supporters of local programming. For more information: (703) 000-0000 or www.widget.com.

Fairfax Public Access
Underwriting Approval Form

Producers must provide the following information for each underwriting spot that will appear in their show(s). Furthermore, please make sure you submit a separate underwriting approval form for each underwriting check (payment) submitted to our Office Manager.

1. For details regarding our underwriting guidelines please review our FPA underwriting documentation and our policies and procedures manual.
2. Submit Form to FPA's Office Manager, Jay Erasquin (571.749.1102 / jerausquin@fcac.org)

Date: _____

Producer Name: _____

Program Title: _____

Episode Name or #:

Producer Signature: _____

Sponsor / Underwriting Name: _____

Sponsor / Underwriting Address:

Sponsor / Underwriting Phone: _____ Email: _____

For office use only: Approved by: _____ Date of Approval: _____