



CFRU Operations Department - 2021-22 Year in Review

As with many organizations, the last year has seen CFRU in a transition from closed studios, remote work, and very few in-person events, toward more IRL engagement and opportunities for students and community members alike. As students returned this autumn to a more complete in-person learning environment, it has been clear that they are excited to connect with the hands-on learning and creative opportunities we provide. Turnouts for our Orientation Sessions have been significantly large, and we have had students stopping by to ask about the station and tour the facilities on an almost daily basis. Our new Staff Structure has carried through successfully, wherein the role of Operations Coordinator now includes most of the administrative duties formerly assigned to the Station Manager, in addition to keeping the station running from a technical standpoint. I am deeply grateful for the ongoing contributions of all of the great volunteers in the Tech Department, especially Griffin Baird, Long Fei Chen, Kurt Hundek, Sammar Haggag, and our High School Co-op Student Jack Zamin, all of whom have helped maintain and advance the station's technical offerings throughout the last year and beyond.

The safety of our volunteers, staff and board has been a key concern as we have gradually reopened through three stages, to our current state. Because our station consists of small studio and office spaces with shared equipment such as microphones, computers, and mixing consoles, we have taken things slowly and cautiously. As we've moved through this process, we've continued to upgrade and reconfigure our spaces, greatly improving the facility in terms

of both safety and functionality. The glass-paint signage on our main entrance window has been recently updated to promote the station's reopening and new features. Beyond the day-to-day, week-to-week administrative duties and technical upkeep, here are some highlights from your Operations Department over the last year:



Social Media Lab:

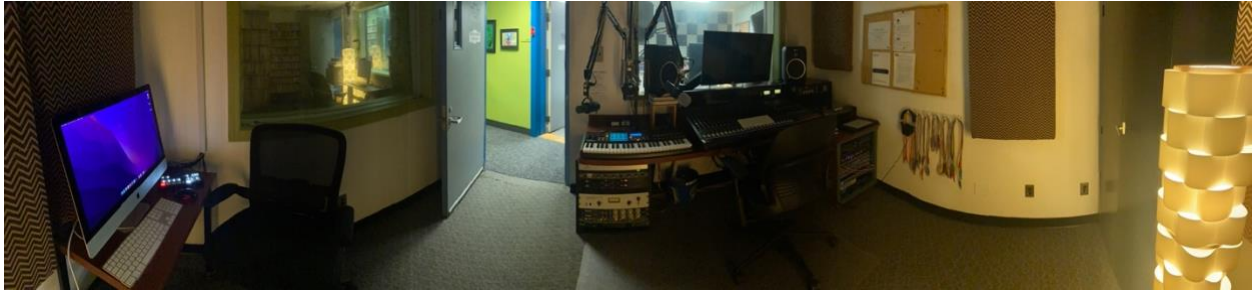
Perhaps the most noticeable new addition to CFRU's technical offerings is our new Social Media Lab, which inhabits the room formerly occupied by the Station Manager. The official launch and promotion of this space will happen in January 2023, with updated promotional videos running on screens across campus. We directed some of our budget this year, including a generous donation from long-time volunteer, Scotty Hertz, toward developing this space, which now offers a green-screen/chroma key wall, acoustic foam sound treatment, large flatscreen monitor, iMac video editing computer, ring light, lavalier and overhead shotgun mics, and more. Students and volunteers will soon be able to book out this room to make and experiment with anything from tiktok videos to short films.



Studios:

We have new chairs! In each of our studios, we have replaced the old office chairs with nicer new versions, including high-end ergonomic Leap chairs in each of the console/computer/producer positions. We've also added stylish and warm lighting options for those who prefer to avoid the overhead fluorescents. Come in and get comfortable!

Our On-Air Studio now has an optional 7-second delay device available to hosts who might like to offer call-in opportunities to listeners and guests. If hosts (and/or our Program Director) are at all concerned about language or content issues from guests, this "live editing" option will offer quick and relatively simple peace of mind.



As with last year, we've continued to invest some of our yearly budget in further upgrades to our Production Studio, which have resulted in a state-of-the-art mixing and producing room that new students in the Music Department have been excited to engage with. Much of Summer and fall 2022 were spent rewiring and organizing this room (see diagram), with its new 24-channel console, outboard processors, microphones, MIDI controllers, patchbays, and more. In addition, we also replaced the audio and video computers in this room with top-notch new Mac devices, featuring a wider variety of production software options than ever before (Ableton Live, ProTools, FL Studio, Garageband, Adobe Creative Cloud Suite, Traktion Waveform, and countless audio plugins for sound design and experimentation. The new video streaming iMac 5k also features an easier to use camera switcher, connected to the four new HD cameras installed in the Vinyl Library/Performance Space for a return to Live-In-Studio broadcasts and Youtube streaming.



Volunteers can also use the new turntable configuration in the Production Studio to sample music directly from our extensive vinyl collection. We will be reaching out to the Music Department, IISCI, and other media-focused programs in January to promote this facility to their faculty and students, in addition to updating the promotional videos running on screens across campus. This room will also be available to rent for producers making work external to the station (musicians, podcasters, audio books, voiceovers) for future station income.



We have also updated computers and a few other systems in the Vinyl Room, Training Studio, and Volunteer Room.



University Department Collaborations:

We have continued our work with IISCI as they return to more in-person work and complete their new facilities in MacKinnon, helping to record, promote and broadcast events such as the recent presentation of meLê yamomo in the newly renovated Arts Auditorium. I have been in conversation with several folks involved at IISCI about developing an arrangement wherein they could have access to our growing collection of microphones, recording devices, and studios, regularly.

We were delighted to welcome Campus Friends back for tours of the station this term, where they were excited to interact with new additions to the station (jumping in front of the paris skyline using the green screen in the Social Media Lab, making sounds with the MIDI controllers in the Production Studio, and posing in front of mics in the Training Studio. We will be resuming interactive work with this group in January, and their very much looking forward to making media with us again.

Just this week, I received a note that a project for which I had contributed a supporting letter this Spring has been awarded a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council grant. The project is overseen by Assistant Professor in the School of English and Theatre Studies, Kimberly McLeod, who we have collaborated with in the past. CFRU will receive \$2000 in the Winter Semester to provide studio space and technical support. Here's a brief quote on the project:

“The project is in collaboration with the City of Guelph's circular food economy initiative, Our Food Future (<https://foodfuture.ca/>). I'm developing an audio walking tour that will address how to develop a healthy, inclusive and sustainable food system in Guelph. I'll be developing the project over the summer and fall terms, with the hopes of recording material in Winter 2023. I'm working on a grant for the project and was wondering if you'd be willing to support this work through studio time as you did with the Haven Project.” -Kimberly McLeod

Website Accessibility:

As part of a new initiative to hire students for temporary, learning-based positions in various CFRU departments and offer mentoring opportunities in aspects of media, we hired the wonderful Computer Sciences student, Nicholas Coté in Spring/Summer 2022 as Website Accessibility Assistant. Nicholas did incredibly detailed work documenting any known issues with the accessibility of cfru.ca, addressing issues, and offering plans and guidance for continuing this work. He spoke highly of the experience and the knowledge gained in the process. We will be posting this position again this Winter, to continue the work where Nicholas left off. In posting the position, I connected with those who oversee the listserv of the CS department, who shared it with their students, resulting in a great bunch of candidates. This approach is highly recommended for future student positions.



Safety Systems:

In addition to building custom plexiglass “germ-guard” over the On-Air console and setting up a medical-grade air purifier, we have provided in-person volunteers with individual mic covers and over-ear headphones towards less possibility of COVID and other viruses spreading at the station. We have also recommended that masks be always worn in the station, given the size and nature of our studios and offices. Cubbies were custom built for CFRU and installed in the hallway to provide volunteers with a space to store this equipment, week-to-week.

To protect volunteers and staff at remote events such as festivals, we built custom folding plexiglass shielding that is easy to install and stands in front of the remote broadcasting equipment.



Festivals and Events:

It was great to return to more live events this year, including Hillside, Jazz Fest, Multicultural Fest, Fierce on the Farm, Move-In Day and OPIRG's Black Joy Jam. Our remote equipment has held up well. We also purchased a Jackery 2000 Pro Portable Power Station in Fall 2022, which will enable us to broadcast with reliable portable power from wherever we like. The power station can run all our remote gear, including large speakers for 12 hours or more, reliably. This could also be used to run pop-up performance events with our small PA and powered speakers.

Servers:

Hardware has been purchased and installed, and work has begun with Kurt Hundeck, Long Fei Chen, and Griffin Baird on building a new and more robust Archive Server, with greater storage capacity. We will continue building this out in the Winter term. The build has provided a great opportunity for Kurt, who built the original servers, to teach myself, Long Fei and Griffin how the system can be built and maintained.

Logsheet System:

Work is in progress with volunteer Griffin Baird and Simon Browning (of SeeThroughWeb, our site host and support) to move the logsheet system that Griffin built on Google Sheets, over to a database system housed within the website itself. This will make the logsheet system more stable and user friendly, easier for staff to maintain, and will include the option for programmers to automatically post their playlists (from the info in the logs) to individual program pages. Again, big thanks to Griffin for all his work on the logsheet system, ongoing.



Before and After the Flood:

Some volunteers and board may know that there was a flood on the second floor of the University Centre in Summer 2022, right outside CFRU's main doors. Though receiving this notification stopped my heart for at least a few seconds, the outcome was ultimately the best we might have asked for. About two inches of water managed to make it into the lower part of the station, covering the floors of the main hall, staff office, SM Lab, CD library and volunteer room. Big thanks to Odesia and Alex Green, who rushed to the station and got anything that could be damaged off of the floor very quickly, while Janitorial Services installed dehumidifiers and large fans. The water was removed and dried up quickly, and the only real damage was done to the bottom of the CD shelves and the ancient wool carpet in the CD Library. The UC Admin agreed to replace the carpet, clean all affected areas thoroughly, and have the shop room build and install new lower shelves in the CD library. All in all, this could have been far worse, and we now have new carpeting in all areas of the station. Thankfully the areas with most technical equipment are in the studios/raised section of the station.

Upcoming in 2023:

CFRU will continue to monitor and respond to regional health notifications and issues, though we hope we can continue to move forward in our phased reopening, as we have this year. A top priority is promoting all of the upgrades and new-additions to our facilities to students, faculty and community members, so we can continue to get more folks in and engaging with all we have to offer.

I've focused mainly on the Tech side of the Operations Department in this document, as these are the areas that our public will more directly connect with. On the administrative side of the Job, there is a change in financial reporting expectations to the University/Office of Student Affairs that folks should be aware of and know that the staff and Board are working to ensure we are fulfilling our responsibilities: Legacy organizations (such as CFRU and The Ontario) are, as of Winter 2023, required to strike a Student Fees Committee, who will review and be consulted on the way fees are used in our operations, to help ensure we are responding to student interests. The committee must be made up of at least four people, including at least one undergrad, and one graduate student. Each October, the committee will fill-out a form outlining their findings and recommendations, and submit this to the Office of Student Affairs.

We have confirmed that this can be a sub-committee of the Board of Directors, given that they will have the context and access to financial decision making processes necessary to draft an informed report. Because CFRU has robust systems of proposing, tracking, reviewing and auditing all budgetary decisions, including a Finance Committee, Tech Committee, BOD and external yearly auditor, we are confident that issues are unlikely to arise due to these new requirements.

As always, huge thanks to all our volunteers, staff, Board, listeners, campus and community partners, far and wide, for continuing to make CFRU Radio and Media Centre an incredible outlet. The calibre of our programming and engagement never ceases to bring a smile to my face.

Bryan Webb
CFRU Operations Coordinator
December 2, 2022



March 25, 2022



To Whom It May Concern:

CFRU 93.3fm, the Campus and Community Radio Station and Media Centre at the University of Guelph, is happy to have the opportunity to support this proposed multimedia project put forth as a collaboration with the department of Theatre Studies and the City of Guelph's circular food economy initiative, Our Food Future (<https://foodfuture.ca/>).

CFRU has had the pleasure of working with Kimberley McLeod on collaborative projects in the past, assisting with audio recording for other video work connected to her field of research, utilizing our professional recording studios and staff experience. As a campus and community resource, we are always interested in helping to facilitate new opportunities for individuals and groups to share their research, studies, and perspectives with the public through media engagement. We aim to offer experiential learning opportunities for students, faculty, and community members, which encourage participants towards hands-on learning in a variety of industry-standard media technologies.

This proposed project grant will allow us to develop a unique multimedia creation with Kimberley McLeod and the Theatre Studies students on the University of Guelph campus. In the development of the proposed audio walking tour which will address how to develop a healthy, inclusive, and sustainable food system in Guelph, CFRU will provide a wide range of technical and creative support. We will offer comprehensive training on audio production software and hardware to students and faculty, and help oversee the recording and editing of the audio tracks in our studios. Whilst calculating the exact value of this contribution is difficult, based on commercial rates for studio rental and training I estimate that the value of CFRU's in-kind support at approximately \$6,000.

This will be a great chance for students who may have no previous experience with audio technologies to engage actively and develop new marketable skills towards publicizing their studies and research. We hope you will also support this application and acknowledge the value of this unique collaborative proposal.

Please feel free to contact me for any further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Webb', is written above the typed name.

Bryan Webb
Operations Coordinator, CFRU 93.3 FM – Radio Gryphon
E: tech@cfru.ca
P: 519 362-7637
www.cfru.ca