

## **WUSB Underwriting Policy**

WUSB enjoys status as an FCC-licensed, non-commercial radio station. As a noncommercial station, WUSB may not engage in on-air advertising. This means that we may not accept money, goods or services in exchange for on-air promotion of a for-profit company.

However, the FCC allows non-commercial stations to air acknowledgements of contributions, provided that they meet certain requirements. These are called *underwriting announcements*. Underwriting announcements must serve identification purposes only and should not promote the contributor's products, services, or company. Accordingly, such announcements may not contain comparative or qualitative descriptions; price information; calls to action; inducements to buy, sell, rent or lease; or otherwise be promotional in nature.

WUSB's underwriting policy is shaped by the following three tenets:

- The FCC underwriting rules are vague in nature and rulings on violations by the FCC can be subjective and inconsistent.
- Fines for underwriting violations can be tens of thousands of dollars.
- Revenue derived from underwriting donations is quite small compared with other fundraising efforts at WUSB (and is quite small compared with the potential fines for rule violations).

For these reasons, WUSB adopts a *conservative* approach to underwriting policy.

### **The Underwriting Agreement:**

An underwriting agreement must be in place before WUSB may accept any underwriting contributions or before any underwriting announcements may be aired. This means:

**No DJ, host, announcer, producer, or station member may accept money, goods, or services in exchange for anything said or played on the air on WUSB without an underwriting agreement signed by a Designated WUSB Agent.**

The underwriting agreement will include the dates and times that the underwriting announcements will be made on the air, as well as the exact text of the announcements.

### **Term of Agreement:**

WUSB has three seasons of programming that coincide with the SUNY Stony Brook academic calendar. Programs are renewed each season by the WUSB Program director under advisement from the Assistant Director of Student Media who is the General Manager of the station. For that reason, the term of any underwriting agreement may only extend to the end of the current programming calendar.

### **Inappropriate Underwriting:**

All underwriting contracts and the language of the on-air announcements must conform to FCC rules, as interpreted by the WUSB General Manager.

In addition to careful adherence to FCC rules, WUSB does not wish to foster potential conflicts of interest, or the appearance of conflicts of interest with regards to the funder's influence on WUSB's programming or the sponsor's relationship with WUSB station personnel.

WUSB also does not allow underwriting announcements that promote a political candidate or positions on public policy.

Potential underwriting agreements may be rejected by the General Manager, the Student Director Board, or SUNY Stony Brook if, for any reason, those parties believe the agreement would be inappropriate for WUSB.

### **Cooperation of Program Producers:**

WUSB's obligations with regards to an underwriting agreement will rely on the cooperation of the producers of the shows on which the announcements will air. For this reason, all underwriting

agreements must also be posted in the studio and a written schedule shared with the hosts, DJs and producers of the radio program on which the announcement will air.

If the producers of a radio program are scheduled to air an underwriting announcement on their show, the funds, goods or services donated by the underwriter may be earmarked for the benefit of that show either directly or indirectly. For example, if a Chinese music show airs an underwriting announcement, part of the money from that agreement can be used to acquire Chinese music or equipment for that program or the show/host will get participation credit for airing underwriting when their show is reviewed.

**All funds, goods, or services acquired through underwriting agreements become the property of WUSB Radio** :No funds, goods, or services belong to individual station members. Because WUSB's schedule is subject to change at the start of each programming season, the specific term of underwriting contracts may not span more than one season.

#### **Guidelines for Underwriting Announcements:**

Underwriters of the programming on WUSB are legally required to be identified. Although contributors receive on-air acknowledgements, the Federal Communications Commission has unequivocally stated that such acknowledgements may be made **"for identification purposes only and should not promote the contributor's products, services, or company."**

**Accordingly, such announcements may not contain comparative or qualitative descriptions, price information, calls to action, or inducements to buy, sell, rent or lease. FCC guidelines specifically prohibit non-commercial stations from broadcasting announcements that promote the sale of goods and services of for-profit entities in exchange for consideration paid to the station.**

Underwriting announcements must be 1-3 sentences with a total of less than 50 words and can state business name, location and describe the product or service. A single phone number is permitted, with that number counting as one word. Websites are permitted, but are counted as the number of words it contains. Dot-com or dot-org, etc., count as one word. Announcements may be 15-45 second spots.

The company's name may appear only once in each announcement and the words "you" "your," "we" and "our" are not permitted.

Following an introductory phrase ("For their generous contribution, WUSB wishes to thank our sponsor..."), an announcement might read as in these examples:

- Metlife, providing financial, business, estate, tax and investment planning services to clients throughout the Northeast - on the web at Metlife.com.
- Port Jefferson Bike Shop, a showroom of biking solutions, located in Port Jefferson NY Phone 123-4567-1234, their website is Port Jefferson.com.
- Salsa Salsa, serving traditional and non-traditional Mexican fare for lunch and dinner, with locations in Port Jefferson and Smithtown - Salsa Salsa dot-com.
- Mothers Music , selling new and used records, CDs, comic books, T-shirts and toys in downtown Patchogue.

The text of all underwriting announcements must be approved by the WUSB General Manager in a written agreement.

#### **Underwriting Rates :**

One on-air announcement will be made for each \$35 donation.

One on-air announcement will be made for each \$35 donation in the form of donated goods or services.

**Other rates and packages are available for Radiothon and Special seasonal packages. Other agreements may be arranged based on the company's individual budget and our station needs. Contact : Questions about underwriting on WUSB may be directed to email [management@wusb.fm](mailto:management@wusb.fm), or by calling 631-632-6828 and leaving a message.**

