

**VOICE Grant Report: *Hot Off The Pod – A Podcast from the Daily Nexus***  
**Harper Lambert and Melanie Ziment**  
**2019-2020**

**Were your project's objectives met?**

In our grant application, we established three main goals for our project: 1) to uplift the voices of our staff and op-ed writers; 2) to create a space for community members to engage with issues impacting our college community; and 3) to connect to a wide audience of civic-minded individuals. Overall, we met the majority of the objectives we remained committed to, while revising the rest following our attendance of the Speech Matters conference and the onset of the pandemic. Prior to the conference, our plan was to draw upon our experiences with Opinion writing and editing in order to facilitate debate-style exchanges between guests. While in D.C., we had some truly illuminating conversations with fellows and fellow grantees about current events, inspiring us to pivot towards a more focused, fact-driven approach. Rather than select guests from our student staff writers, we aimed to feature experts on a variety of topics who could speak to the issues directly affecting the college community.

As for Objective 2, we succeeded in highlighting these pressing issues by emphasizing diversity and variety in terms of guest selection and subject matter. From COVID-19 testing and local arts organizations to housing in Isla Vista and the Santa Barbara County Foodbank, we not only explored a breadth of topics but also emphasized their connection to UCSB and surrounding areas.

Reaching a wide audience (especially during COVID-19) was one of the most challenging aspects of the project, requiring a multi-pronged approach: we purchased targeted ads on social media platforms, partnered with our campus radio station, advertised episodes on social media and promoted the podcast through the *Nexus's* website and social media platforms. Growth was perhaps slower than anticipated, but we put mechanisms in place in order to ensure its continuance. In early January, we expanded our team to include two production assistants and a social media manager, all of whom are also members of the *Daily Nexus*. By linking the podcast into our student newspaper, we can reasonably guarantee that it will outlast our involvement and continue to serve the community, which was one of our original goals.

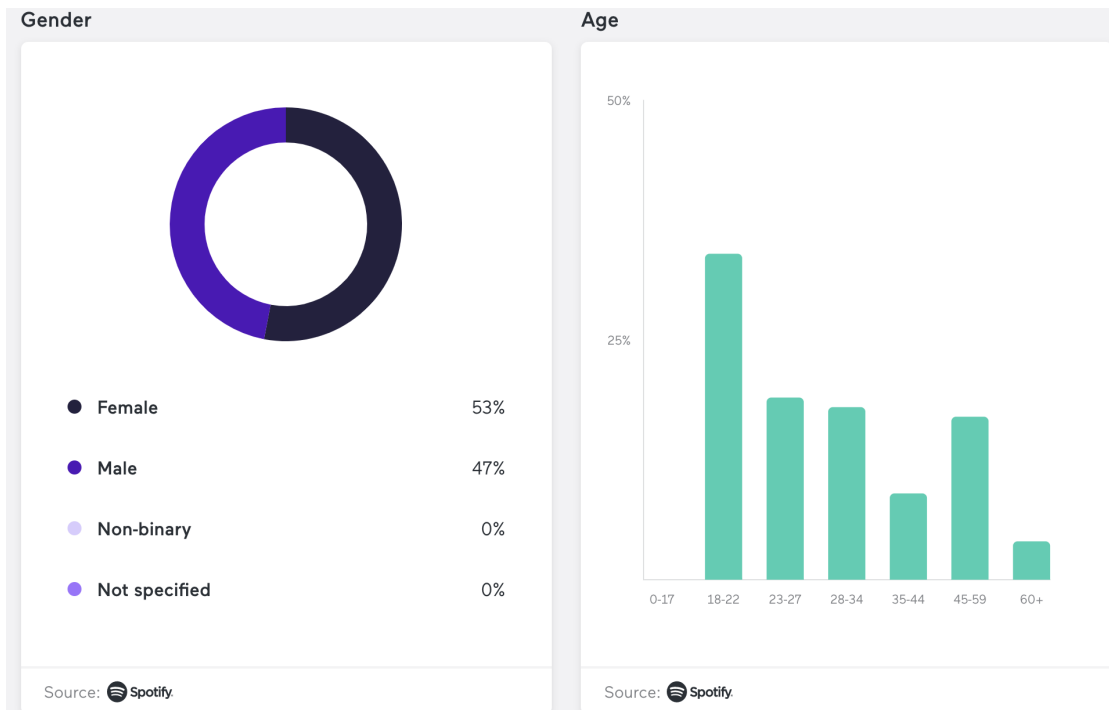
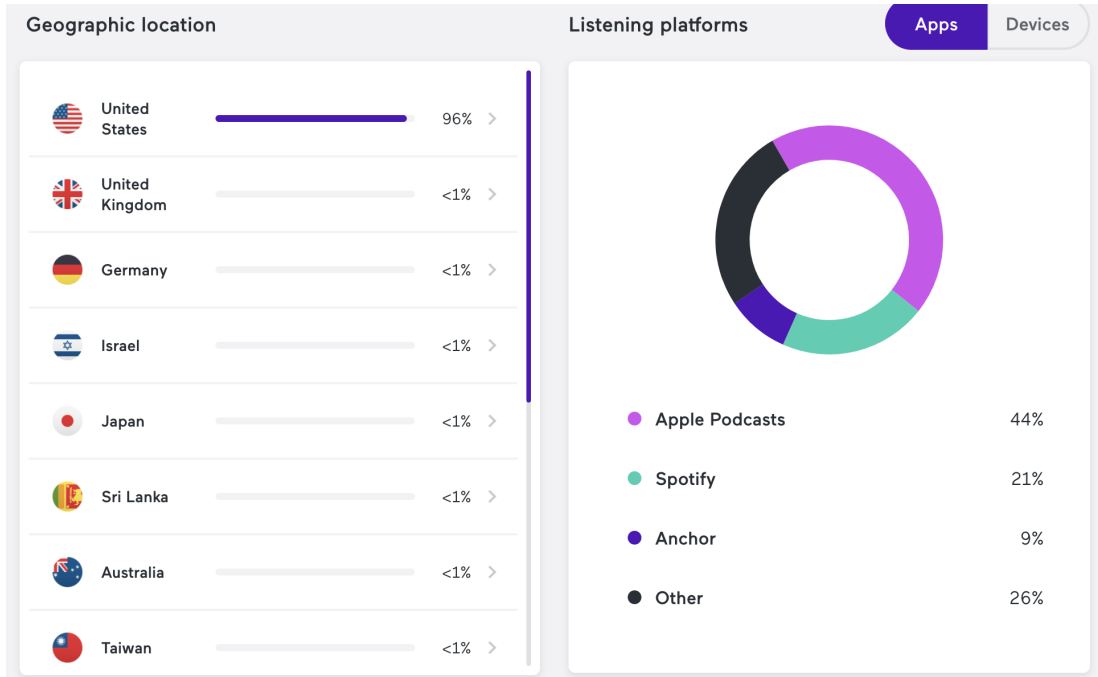
## Who attended, listened, etc. and how many?

### Episodes

Name	Length	Plays	Ads	Date	Status
Fueling Futures: Food Banks and the Fight Against Food Insecurity	30:41	0	0	Published on 4/30/21	...
Kids in a Candy Store: SBIFF's Haven for Santa Barbara Moviegoers	31:10	26	0	Published on 4/16/21	...
A Glimpse into the Past, Present and Future of Juvenile Justice	27:30	47	0	Published on 3/5/21	...
"Words Without Action is Just Lip Service": Students Against Sexual Assault	46:58	55	0	Published on 2/19/21	...
Homing In on Housing Issues in Isla Vista	27:25	61	0	Published on 2/5/21	...
"If We're Cutting the Arts, Then What Are We Fighting For?"	32:17	58	0	Published on 1/22/21	...
The Latest on COVID-19 and Case Tracking Tech with Dr. Ali Javanbakht	35:00	91	0	Published on 11/27/20	...
How Social Media is Mobilizing Activism	01:08:05	125	0	Published on 11/13/20	...
Election 2020: Breaking Down the Ballot with Campus Dems	34:43	77	0	Published on 10/30/20	...
UC Admissions Scandal Exposes an Unlevel Playing Field	29:57	130	0	Published on 10/16/20	...
The Billion-Dollar Battle to Build A Telescope on Sacred Land	33:30	161	0	Published on 10/2/20	...
Coming Soon: Hot Off The Pod	01:25	84	0	Published on 9/24/20	...

## What demographics did attendees represent (students, staff, etc.)?

The following charts are taken from our podcast hosting platform Anchor, which gives us insights into our audience demographics. Additionally, we have been able to get a few of our episodes aired on the UCSB campus radio station KCSB, which reaches a large student audience.



Source: Spotify

Source: Spotify

### What were your actual expenses?

ITEM	COST
Microphone w stands x3	\$99 each
Foam microphone covers	\$8
Zoom H5 recorder	\$280

TOTAL GRANT: \$800

TOTAL SPENT: \$585

LEFTOVER: \$215

Zoom H6 recorder	\$329
Promotion (Instagram Ads)	\$150

TOTAL 2nd GRANT: \$870

+ Leftover \$215

= \$1,085

TOTAL SPENT: \$479

LEFTOVER: \$606

Our plan is to spend the remainder of our funds before the end of this school year. We have planned for the following expenses:

- \$10 for a better microphone stand
- \$300 promotional materials and merchandise: stickers, mugs, t-shirts
- \$300 social media promotion posts

### What was challenging about completing your project?

Of course, COVID-19 has made aspects of our project especially challenging. It was our intention to record our episodes in-person so that our guests would be comfortable and the conversations would be more free flowing — COVID has not allowed that to happen.

Additionally, we have struggled with promoting our project to our campus community. Our original plan was reliant on having students in-person and on campus, which would have allowed us to pass out stickers and flyers and spread the word to friends, fellow students, and other members of the UCSB community through word of mouth. Since many students are scattered across the country now and we are unable to gather in-person, we have had to change our promotion to take place mostly through social media. Our hope is that we will be able to continue to grow our project next year through more in-person promotion.

**What impact do you think your work had on the campus community?**

*Hot Off The Pod* is the *Daily Nexus*' first-ever podcast. In launching it, we introduced a new form of media to a 100-year-old campus newspaper, opening the door for future audio journalism projects. We have received interest in joining the paper for the purpose of participating in the podcast, leading us to believe that our episodes have been successful with other students. Furthermore, it strengthened our connection with another major campus media presence, the KCSB radio station. KCSB broadcasted three of our episodes on its airwaves, exposing listeners of all ages in the area to our content. Through the podcast, we connected with people from all corners of the community – professors, organization leaders, graduate students, alumni – and in turn, brought together many different perspectives and voices. We believe that our podcast allows listeners to better understand just how multifaceted our community is, and inspires individuals to educate themselves further on important issues.

**How might the Center change the process moving forward to further support grant awardee's efforts?**

We have had a very wonderful experience working with the center since we received our grant. Getting to attend the Speech Matters conference in 2020 really changed the way we thought about approaching our project and allowed us to make a ton of great connections with fellows and others. Additionally, we have really appreciated that people from the center have made themselves available to be guests on our podcast.

COVID-19 really changed the way that we had to go about producing and promoting our project and so it was very helpful that we were able to apply for additional support from the center to assist us. We are very appreciative of the center and grateful for all the hard work they put into promoting free speech and supporting their grantees.