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**For more information:**

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### **PBS Wisconsin honored with national Public Media Award for innovation**

PBS Wisconsin has been recognized for its innovative approach to storytelling, collaboration and community building with an Overall Excellence in Innovation award from the National Educational Telecommunications Association (NETA) as part of the 57th Public Media Awards.

The award honors PBS Wisconsin's station-wide culture of innovation – from immersive storytelling and collaborative experimentation to cross-departmental strategies that reimagine how public media can serve, engage and evolve.

The award recognized a range of projects that have expanded the organization's reach, deepened its engagement and sparked new collaborations across platforms, including:

- [\*Illuminating Cana Island\*](#) – bringing Wisconsin history to life through a fully immersive virtual tour of a 19th-century lighthouse. Using photogrammetry and lidar technologies, PBS Wisconsin authentically recreated the site in 3D and built an interactive, web-based experience. With spatial audio, historically authentic music, archival content and mobile accessibility, this project offered meaningful access to a historic site that many physically cannot visit – demonstrating how innovation can deepen both inclusion and storytelling.
- Partnership with the University of Wisconsin-Madison Computer Sciences department. Over the past two years, PBS Wisconsin has partnered with student teams to prototype tools that enhance how it serves and engages audiences. These include a personalized recommendation engine, augmented reality experiences and an AI-assisted caption-to-transcript tool currently in development for public launch.
- [\*Mile of Music\*](#). A one-hour broadcast documentary accompanied by more than 45 short digital videos required new cross-departmental workflows and expanded digital infrastructure. The production helped forge deep local partnerships and invited participating artists to amplify content across platforms – creating a participatory model of distribution. Production teams also developed new

techniques to capture the intimacy of a live music experience across a fast-paced, 40-venue music festival.

PBS Wisconsin was also recognized for its 2024 annual report in the marketing and communications category. The Public Media Wards honor exceptional achievements of member stations in community engagement, content, education, and marketing and communications.

The National Educational Telecommunications Association (NETA) is a professional association representing 304 member stations in 49 states, the Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia. NETA provides leadership, general audience content, educational services, professional development, and trusted financial management services, including human resources and benefits administration, to individual public media licensees, their affinity groups, and public media as a whole. For more information, visit [netaonline.org](https://netaonline.org) and follow us on X @NETA\_Tweets, Facebook @NETAstations, Instagram and Threads @NETA\_grams, and LinkedIn @NETAbusiness.

PBS Wisconsin is a service of the Educational Communications Board and the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

PBS Wisconsin is a place to grow through learning on WHA-TV, Madison; WPNE-TV, Green Bay; WHRM-TV, Wausau; WLEF-TV, Park Falls; WHLA-TV, La Crosse; and WHWC-TV, Menomonie-Eau Claire.

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