

**HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT APPLYING FOR A NON-COMMERCIAL RADIO STATION?
GET READY -- NOW IS THE TIME!**

FULL THROTTLE! BIGGEST OPPORTUNITY FOR FULL POWER RADIO STATIONS IN YEARS!

The FCC is getting ready to open a FULL POWER NON-COMMERCIAL/EDUCATIONAL licensing window for new public radio stations. Non-Commercial Educational (NCE) full power radio licensing has been frozen since 2000, and this will be the first opportunity to apply for more than five years. Groups all over the country have been waiting a long time, so there will be a tremendous number of applications that will be filed.

NOW IS THE TIME FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION TO APPLY, TOO! GO FOR IT!

Here are some basic facts to help you get started!

- **Early in 2007, the FCC will open a window to apply for new, full power non-commercial educational (NCE) radio frequencies.**
- **We don't know yet exactly when, but there will be some warning -- The FCC will give notice announcing when the window will be open, typically 30 to 60 days in advance.**
- **The window itself will likely be open only five days. (It could last longer, but don't count on it,) You *must* file your application during this 5-day window, so everything needs to be ready to go.**
- **If you do not apply now, there is no telling when there will be another chance.**
- **The eligible channels that will be allocated in this window are designated as *non-commercial educational (NCE)* stations. Most are located between 88.1 MHz and 91.9 MHz on the FM dial. But there are also a few commercial channels specifically reserved for NCE use, and you can apply for these as well.**
- **Full power stations can be any power, between 100 watts up to the 100,000 watts, depending on your location!** The actual power level will depend on the geographic coordinates where you propose to put your transmitter and antenna.
- **You cannot apply as an individual -- the applicant must be an organization with an educational mission.** It can be an incorporated group, an Indian tribe, or some other form of nonprofit entity. You do *not* need 501(c)3 (tax exempt) status to qualify.
- **Applications will be processed through an on-line electronic filing system, and you will need an FCC Registration Number (FRN).** It's easy to get one, but you need a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) from the IRS for your non-profit entity. Best to get this all in shape now.
- **The NCE window will probably open early in 2007 -- so start preparing *now*.** You can not apply before this window of opportunity, and you can not apply after -- you can only apply while the window is open.
- **There is no application fee at the FCC, since the service is non-commercial.**

If you want to apply for a full power non-commercial radio station, this is the one chance for the foreseeable future.



Most Important -- You must have an available frequency!

- **You can only apply for a frequency (spot on the radio dial) that does not conflict with any existing stations in your geographic region.** Finding a frequency will follow current FCC interference rules.
- **You must have a specific geographic place to put your transmitter and antenna -- your power and frequency allocation will be based on these geographic coordinates.** The location should be as high an elevation as possible, and it needs access to electrical power and a place to put a shed for the transmitter if a building is not already there.
- **Once you have a transmitter site, you will need an engineer to help you do a ‘frequency search’ using the most up-to-date database from the FCC.** This will determine your spot on the radio dial.

This will cost some money. A preliminary check for frequency availability generally costs about \$100, a more detailed search is around \$250, and the full engineering exhibit you would be required to submit to the FCC can cost \$2000 -- \$3000 to prepare. [Note – there may be some low-cost services available to assist. There will also be many engineers ready to help out.]

There are already some maps showing where available frequencies will be most likely. Unfortunately, open space is primarily in rural areas -- there is almost no likelihood of finding a frequency if you are within 20 miles of the 50 largest cities in the United States, and very little chance if you are within 30 miles of the largest 100 cities. But you can still try if you want.

- **You will probably need an FCC attorney.** You may think you are out in the sticks, but you may be in for a surprise when you file your application-- there is no limit or geographic restrictions on how many stations any single entity can own or where, so if you are in an area with any population, there will almost certainly be competition for the frequency.

You may find yourself up against a school, the local community college, the Opera Society, a network of church stations, and another public radio station that is already on the air, and you will need good legal advice from someone knowledgeable about the workings of the FCC. [Note - This will cost some money, but there are a number of attorneys with long experience working as advocates for community radio stations who will be ready to help.]

- **You will need to demonstrate that you have access to enough funds to construct the station and operate it without revenue for 3 months.** Depending on the size of the transmitter and other factors, you may need between \$50,000 - \$250,000 to actually build your station and get it going.

But there is room for many different financing schemes, and if the past is any indication, it could take the FCC several years to process your application, giving you quite a lot of time to build. So in reality you will probably have plenty of time to raise the cash or organize appropriate financing.



Groups that can help you find an engineer and prepare an application:

Prometheus Radio Project (<http://prometheusradio.org>) – has been helping build low-power radio stations all around the country.

National Federation of Community Broadcasters (<http://www.nfcb.org>) – provides services and advice to community radio stations, production groups and others.

Public Radio Capital (<http://www.pubcap.org/>) -- is a consultancy that helps groups find financing for new frequencies.

Preparing an application will be demanding, requiring an investment in time, effort, and money. But there is nothing mysterious about it, and the prize is -- a radio voice for your community! Go for it!!!

