

EAVA FM, Leicester

EAVA FM is a radio station that aims to develop, inform and entertain the diverse community of Leicester. It includes a combination of local news, enterprise, music, information, cultural and educational programmes - all supported by community members and volunteers, private organisations and the public sector.

Radio Waves

Ahmed Rafle, a 42 year-old Somalian civil engineer migrated to the UK in 2004. He noticed a huge gap between the local residents and the migrant community when he first arrived in Leicester and decided to address the issue.

Ahmed worked in partnership with other multi-cultural communities to pioneer a radio station through which immigrants living in Leicester could access key information anytime with ease and in their own language.

Ahmed say: “EAVA FM is a community empowerment service for new immigrants to provide a single point of contact for important information that is available in a number of languages including Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan Tamil, Caribbean, African, Chinese and Polish. We started the project in December 2008 without any funding or support from the local authorities and have since grown to have over 70,000 listeners, proving what vital service we provide.

“It helps migrants explore opportunities available to them and become integrated and proactive members of society. The radio station acts as a mouthpiece for hard-to-reach and deprived communities offering support and training for job seekers, educational facilities for children and young people in order to integrate them into mainstream society from a early age as well as providing general information like the location of doctors surgeries, hospitals or mosques.”

The broadcast and production staff at EAVA FM work entirely on a voluntary basis to keep the station running with many of whom holding down full-time jobs as well. Ahmed believes it is the team’s personal sacrifice combined with the determination to make a difference that has made EAVA FM the success it is today.

Issak Aw Abdi, one of the community leaders, comments: “We aim to provide a presence and a positive voice to as many nationalities in Leicester as possible with. Since starting EAVA I firmly believe we have managed to bridge the gap between the migrant community and established society.

“EAVA FM is about empowerment, opportunities and possibilities, raising aspirations, instilling confidence and creating a sense of belonging. We want to give people a better chance in life with better access to training and development as well as the provision of news, information and advice and we feel this is, and will continue to be achieved by EAVA FM.”

Results

- EAVA FM has over 70,000 listeners across Leicestershire
- Over 22 countries across the world tune into EAVA FM online
- People in over 61 cities across the UK log onto EAVA FM’s website every week.



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