MANJULA VARGHESE

VIDEO STRATEGY & CONTENT LEAD | DIGITAL PRODUCER/EDITOR | BRAND STORYTELLER

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Multi - Emmy Award-winning content strategist, series developer and documentary filmmaker with 20+ years building editorial video programs across public media, newsrooms, independent film and, most recently, a women's health Youtube channel. I develop original series from strategy and treatment through scripting, production, distribution and audience analysis. I make complex subjects clear , human and worth sharing, with my strongest work centered on real people: patients, caregivers, communities and the experts who serve them. 11 Emmy nominations, 5 wins, including two for health stories.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Video and content strategy: series and format development, editorial calendars, treatments, pitches and funded proposals

Social media strategy and governance: brand voice and editorial standards across multi-channel ecosystems, social-first packaging for Y ouT ube, Instagram and TikTok

Character and customer storytelling: finding and shaping real people's stories, from patients and caregivers to founders and the communities they serve

Health and complex subject matter: translating medical, scientific and policy topics into accessible narratives that hold up to editorial and legal review

Production leadership: creative briefs, directing internal teams and outside production partners, budgets, timelines, crews and on-set direction

Audience insight: using views, engagement and retention data with audience and marketing teams to shape formats and upcoming episodes

Team development: mentoring producers and editors, training newsroom staff, teaching graduate students, building templates so teams can sustain a format on their own

T ools: Adobe Premiere Pro (Adobe certified, 2025), Basic motion graphics, Descript, CapCut, Airtable, Google Workspace, Sony and Canon camera systems

Languages: English (native), Malayalam (conversational), Spanish (basic)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Freelance Content Editor and Writer | Women's Health Content | 2026 to Present

Edit and write scripts for short-form video on an independent women's health Youtube channel, shaping storytelling, pacing and platform-native packaging to grow audience engagement.

Integrate AI-enhanced production tools, including Descript and CapCut, into active editing workflows.

Digital Producer/Editor , Content Development Team | PBS Bay Area, KQED | 2023 to 2025

Developed and led original digital series from concept through launch, writing the treatments, pitches and scripts: *Beyond the Menu* (food history series; Regional Emmy nomination, SPJ Award) and *Big Ideas* (science series; launched 2026). Both series were created for *Youtube* and *PBS Media*.

Created *Throwback*, a vertical, social-only series built from KQED's archives for *TikTok* and *Instagram*, drawing millions of views and iterating on format based on audience response.

Launched the *Forum video podcast* with KQED's flagship radio program: selected which segments worked best for video, prepped hosts and guests for camera, set up shoot, edited episodes and built social packaging for distribution.

Digital Producer/Editor , Content Development Team | PBS Bay Area, KQED | 2023 to 2025

Wrote creative briefs and aligned internal production partners on editorial goals, timing and budgets, with oversight from pre-production through final approval.

Directed studio and field productions, leading DPs, camera, sound and lighting crews across simultaneous projects on compressed timelines.
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Partnered with audience engagement, communications and marketing teams to turn views, engagement and retention data into decisions on formats, titles, thumbnails and pacing.

Built editorial templates, workflows and production guidelines so other producers could sustain series formats on their own, and mentored junior producers and editors.

Senior Producer , California's Road to Reparations | PBS Bay Area, KQED | 2022 to 2023

Led editorial vision and story selection for a five-part, animation-forward series on the history of enslavement and the fight for reparations in California (Regional Emmy nomination, 2024).

Vetted scripts and treatments and gave notes to producers and editors on structure, tone and visual execution.

Worked with reporters, legal and standards, and community stakeholders on a politically sensitive project, and programmed the rollout across YouTube, PBS and social.

Digital Producer/Editor | PBS Bay Area, KQED | 2021 to 2023

Produced and directed episodes for seasons 4 and 5 of the national series *If Cities Could Dance* (Regional Emmy, Webby, SP J Award), working with remote crews and on-camera talent across the country.

Managed production logistics, budgets, field crews and shoot schedules across multi-location productions.

Adjunct Faculty , Graduate School of Journalism | UC Berkeley | 2022 to 2024

Designed and taught Storytelling for the Web (2022) and Introduction to Video Journalism (2023, 2024), coaching graduate students on structure, voice and audience.

Video Producer and Journalist | San Francisco Chronicle | 2017 to 2021

Joined the visuals team to train reporters and editors in video-first storytelling, helping build the newsroom's video capacity and its first platform-native storytelling frameworks.

Produced 100+ short-form videos for YouTube, Instagram and Facebook and native website across beats from investigative to food, including two Emmy-winning health stories: *Be My Voice* (ALS) and *Before It Was Them, Now It's Us* (COVID).

Wrote and produced The Regulars, a hybrid print and video human interest column profiling Bay Area residents.

Video Journalist | The New Y ork Times | 2016

Produced 10 video pieces for the *Metro* and *Science* desks, including fast-turn around breaking news.

Founder , Producer and Director | Mirrorlake Films, LL C | 2006 to 2015

Founded and ran a social-impact documentary company for nearly 10 years, managing multiple projects at once for broadcasters, funders and nonprofit clients.

Wrote the funded proposal for and produced Reserved to Fight (ITVS Open Call, $250K; PBS broadcast in 9 countries).

Founder , Producer and Director | Mirrorlake Films, LL C | 2006 to 2015

Won the bid to revive *The Generations Project (BYUtv)* and served as Executive and Senior producer; our season earned the series its first Regional Emmy.

Producer on *Elder: A Love Story* (Tribeca Film Festival 2014; NYT Op-Docs).

Told mission-driven stories for nonprofit clients including *Head Start* and *Choice Humanitarian (Mexico, Bolivia)*, for both internal communications and fundraising campaigns.

Education and Recognition

Master of Journalism, University of California, Graduate School of Journalism
B.A., Film and Media Arts, Brigham Young University

Emmy Awards (5 wins, 11 nominations)

2023 Northern California Regional Emmy , Lifestyle: Indigenous Dance Takes Pow Wow to the Stage (K QED , If Cities Could Dance)

2021 Northern California Regional Emmy , Health and Science: Before It Was Them, Now It's Us, how COVID impacted a community (San Francisco Chronicle)

2019 Northern California Regional Emmy , Human Interest: Be My Voice, an ALS story (San Francisco Chronicle)

2018 Northern California Regional Emmy , Live Interview: Mending the Heart

2012 Rocky Mountain Regional Emmy , Human Interest: The Generations Project (BYUtv)

Recent nominations: Beyond the Menu (Lifestyle, 2025) and California's Road to Reparations (Historical/Cultural, 2024)

Other honors: SP J Awards (If Cities Could Dance, Beyond the Menu); Susan Rasky Award for Political Reporting (2017); Tribeca Film Festival and NYT Op-Docs (Elder: A Love Story, 2014)

Grants: ITVS Open Call ($250K, Reserved to Fight); California Library Grant ($125K, 2023, California's Road to Reparations); San Francisco Individual Artist Grant ($20K, 2020)