GUIDE TO RECORDING YOUR PODCAST

1. Planning

Format

Before recording the audio for your podcast, consider what format would be best for the topic within the constraints of the recording situation. Possible formats include:

Monologue
- One person talking, similar to giving talk.
- Easy to record and edit under current conditions.

Interview
- Discussion with structured questions, defined ‘interviewer’ and ‘interviewee’ roles.
- Recording under current conditions is trickier - requires both participants to record their audio separately while conversing via recorded video call (the video call recording will be used as a guide to match up the separate audio recordings).

Conversation / co-host
- More informal conversational-style with both speakers contributing to the discussion.
- Recording under current conditions is trickier - requires both participants to record their audio separately while conversing via recorded video call (the video call recording will be used as a guide to match up the separate audio recordings).

Narrative / storytelling
- One person telling a story.
- Easy to record and edit under current conditions, but requires more preparation (i.e. script).

Performance
- One person or multiple people giving an audio performance, e.g. radio play.
- Easy to record and edit under current conditions if it involves just one person, but requires more preparation (i.e. script, rehearsal).

Panel discussion
- Similar to an interview but with multiple contributors.
- Recording under current conditions is difficult - requires all participants to record their audio separately while conversing via recorded video call (the video call recording will be used as a guide to match up the separate audio recordings).

Outline

Create an outline for your podcast, including the points you want to cover and details of any additional content (i.e. existing recordings, sounds, music) you want to include. Using planning templates may help - see the Production Documentation available from the Creative Media Services Learning Hub.
Your podcast should be no longer than 45 minutes in total (ideally around the 30 minute mark) so consider how much you can realistically cover in that time.

2. Recording

Under current pandemic conditions, recordings for podcasts will have to be made in people’s own homes using an audio-recorder supplied by the University’s Creative Media Team. Recorders (with instructions) will be sent to the homes of speakers / contributors via courier.

Multiple contributors

In cases where the podcast has multiple contributors, audio-recorders will be sent to each person and discussions / conversations will take place over video call while being separately recorded on each of the audio-recorders.

Additional content

If you have additional audio content (e.g. sounds, interview clips etc) that you would like to be included in the podcast, leave verbal cues in the recording so that the editor can easily find the point where you would like it to be included.

Equipment instructions

Full instructions for making your recordings will be provided with the equipment. However, if you need further instruction / guidance we can arrange for a member of the team to talk you through using the audio-recorder over video call.

Top Tips for Performance

- Important to feel comfortable and relaxed - have something to drink to hand, make sure you’ve eaten and that you’re not hungry.
- Try to wear loose-fitting, comfortable clothing, things that don’t make a noise when they move (jackets, loose jewelry for example).
- Try not to touch or move the table, or any surface that the equipment is set up on, as it will likely pick up on the recording.
- Rehearse.
- Take your time! Invariably people speak too fast, especially if they’re anxious/nervous.
- Pausing is good - if you stumble over a word or phrase, simply pause, re-group and have another go.
- Notes / prompts - great! Try to make sure they’re on one sheet of paper (or a tablet, something that won’t make noise), are in a place in your eyeline, easy to see.
- In a remote situation - try and pick a small, quiet space where you’re not likely to be disturbed. Preferably with carpet/rugs/soft-furnishings, and ideally with other furniture/items in the room that will help soak up reflections.
• Also in a remote situation - if you make several recordings, try and repeat the conditions in which you record - same room, sit in the same place, same set-up.

3. Uploading your recordings

Once you have finished recording, you will need to upload the audio files to a designated Google Drive folder (a link will be sent to you by email). A member of the team will then check the file(s) and if everything is in order, they will arrange for the collection of the audio recording equipment. The file(s) you upload to the folder should be considered final - there will not be an opportunity to replace these once they have been checked.

Additional content

Any additional audio content that you want to be included in your podcast will need to be uploaded to this folder as well, along with written instructions on where / how to include it. Before doing this, please ensure that you have the necessary permissions / copyright to use the audio content. Where possible, please provide these additional audio files in .WAV format.

File names

Recordings and other audio files for your podcast should be named using the following convention:

RecordDate<yyyymmdd>-ProjectTitle-FileNumber.FileType

So, the first audio recording for Beware the Cat, recorded on 1 July 2020 would look like this:

20200701-BewareTheCat-01.wav

Festival of the Mind project information and FAQs:
www.sheffield.ac.uk/pre/public-engagement/fotm2020-faqs