WEP∃D

WePod Guide to Audio Storytelling

This booklet accompanies our podcast of the same title

ND

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WEPOD

What is WePod?

WePod is an innovative multi-partner, cross-border project to support the growth and sustainability of the European podcasting ecosystem.

Developed in response to the changing European news media sector, WePod are creating a collaborative framework for the production, distribution, promotion, and monetization of journalistic podcasts.

Find out more about the partners involved and the projects we've created on the WePod Website

What have WePod produced?

WePod have produced a number of cross-border investigative journalism podcasts across several European countries and in several languages.

You can find these on the WePod Podcast page.:

Why is this new?

Most podcasts are produced in a single given language, by a single media outlet. At WePod teams worked across borders in Belgium, Hungary, France, Italy, Poland, Serbia and Spain to produce a series of investigative journalism podcasts, each one

following the same general structure and released in several European languages.

This innovative, cross-border, collaborative effort has journalists and media professionals working together to offer the listeners a podcasting experience tailored to their listening preferences and needs.

WePod Releases

AI & You (English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Polish)
Mar de Rabia | Mare di Rabbia | Sea of Rage) (English, Italian and Spanish)
Truck Drivers | Vie de Routier-e-s | Camioneros) (English, French and Spanish)
A Grain of Power | Grain de Pouvoir | Zboże władzy (English, French and Polish)
More productions are underway.

Visit the WePod Podcast page for all of the latest productions.

ND NEWS DECODER

News Decoder is an educational non-profit based in France. We promote media literacy, global citizenship and critical thinking skills in schools. We do so through the lens of journalism.

Our involvement in the WePod project is twofold:

(1) Communications: disseminate internal and external WePod communications.

(2) Education: organise and implement workshops in secondary and higher-level educational institutions.

As part of the WePod project, News Decoder organised and ran a series of podcasting workshops in schools and universities across Europe.

The workshops were designed to promote the WePod project and WePod releases, to introduce young people to podcasting, podcasting professionals and show them how podcasts are made. Participants then scripted and recorded ther own pocast ideas to get hands on experience of the production process

The workshops gave the WePod team an insight into how young people across Europe engage with podcasts, what they listen to, what interests them and what doesn't, and gace young people an understanding of the realities of podcast creation.
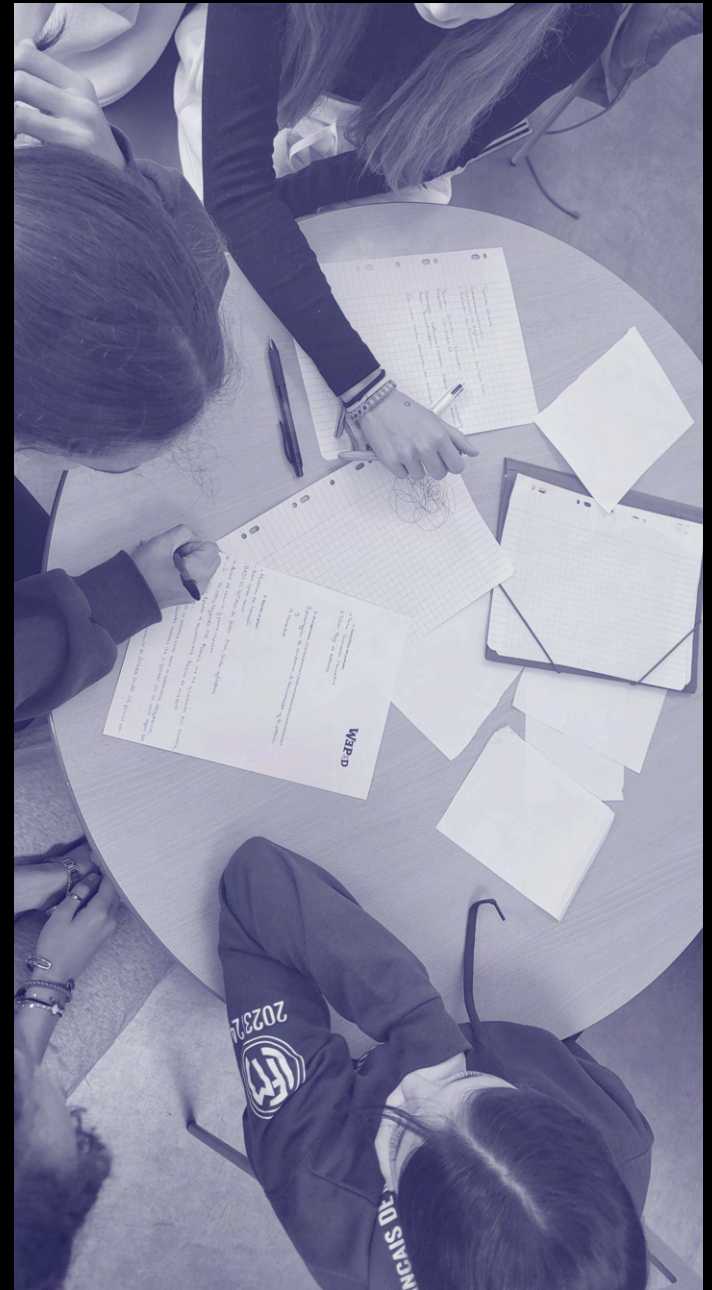
Workshop Design

Target audience

Young people
14-25 years old

Aims

Promote WePod project.
Introduce podcasting to youth across Europe.
Gauge youth perspectives on podcasting.
Understand current listening trends.
Educate European youth on
podcast creation, promotion and dissemination.
Inspire the podcasters of the future.

Workshop Locations

Brussels, Belgium
Paris, France
Ljubljana, Slovenia
Munich, Germany
Madrid, Spain
Rome, Italy

CONTENT

The workshops covered the basics of what the
WePod project is by introducing participants
to a series of WePod podcasts.

News Decoder then peeled back the layers of
professional podcasting to show participants
how a podcast is made.

The practical element of the podcast was for
students to create their own plan for a
podcast, script it and recod the introductory
section or trailer. Where possible, students
edited and presented a podcast trailer.

The Workshops

Introduce WePod

Tell students about the WePod European Podcasting Project.

Learn about podcasting

Strip back the layers of podcasts.
How do you make a podcast?
Who works on them?
Go behind the scenes.

Develop a podcast idea

Come up with a podcast idea.
Think about a theme, a name, your audience and the atmosphere you'd like to create.

Record

Script a podcast introduction or trailer with your group.

Edit

Add music, sound effects and edit your audio.

"I enjoyed this workshop a lot. It was fun working in teams and making up ideas together. I also liked the fact that we listened to other people's work (podcasts)."

**Workshop Participant
Ljubljana, Slovenia**

"I liked seeing how you edit a podcast, the effects and the sounds that we can make. It was a great experience to discover how they're made and put together."

**Workshop Participant
Madrid, Spain**

Guide to Audio Storytelling

CONCEPT & RATIONALE

News Decoder identified a knowledge gap in students' awareness of the realities of podcast creation from concept to production and delivery.

To address this gap in understanding and best aid future podcasters News Decoder led the development of the WePod Guide to Audio Storytelling..

This guide is a resource for students, journalists, educators and media professionals which takes listeners through the storytelling process and gives practical tips on how to craft and create a podcast.

This booklet accompanies the podcast audio guide to storytelling.

It is structured to follow each podcast episodes. This guide takes the main points made in each episode and highlights them to aid storytellers structure and plan their stories.
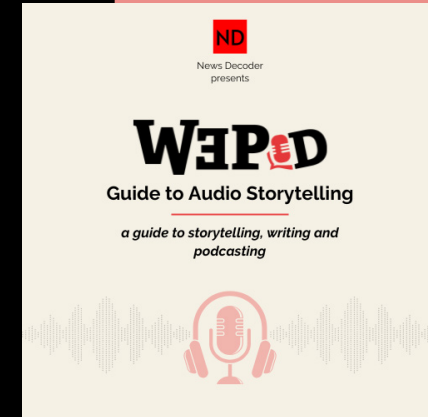
EPISODE 0 -
Introduction to the WePod
Project and Partners

An introduction to the podcast and the WePod European Podcasting project.

We introduce the WePod partners and find out more about what this project is all about.

WePod European Podcasting Partners:

PRISA Media (Spain)

Europod (Belgium)

Chora Media (Italy)

Magyari Jeti (Hungary)

Outriders (Poland)

News Decoder (France)

Press Freedom Foundation (Serbia)

Hiberus (Spain)

EPISODE 1
Finding a story.

What makes a good story?
What makes something worth listening to?
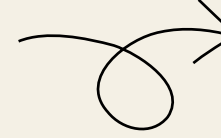What are the big things you should be thinking about?

FIND A LOCAL ISSUE → **WITH GLOBAL REPERCUSSIONS** **OR** **FIND A GLOBAL ISSUE** → **WITH LOCAL REPERCUSSIONS**

Look for people it affects.

Speak to them.

Why?

Human stories matter.
Human stories connect with people.

Are you interested in the topic?
It's easier to tell a story that you're interested in.

Speak to people at the heart of the story.
Reach out to individuals affected, local community representatives, local organisations, academics and researchers studying phenomena from a structural perspective, speak to the general public.

Think about your story format from the get-go.

Example 1
Sea of Rage.

Global issue: Drug trafficking and smuggling
Local issue: How the illegal drugs trade affects the towns of Barbate, Spain & Gioia Tauro, Italy.
Individual Stories: Teams of journalists followed local stories: mothers and fathers in the affected communities, town council representatives, teachers, fishermen, young people at the heart of the communities.

Example 2:
Truck Drivers

European Issue: A shortage of Truck Drivers
This shortage affects the European economy, international logistics chains at a European level and affects consumers directly.
Local Issue: National logistics chains affected
Individual stories: job insecurity, driver safety, worker's rights,
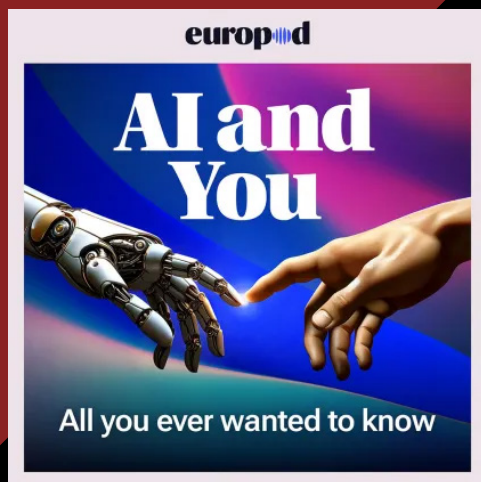Identify a story locally.
How does it play out at the individual, local, regional, national, international and global scales?

Example 3
AI & You

Global issue: Artificial Intelligence & its impact
Local issue: How can society harness the power of AI and deal with its challenges.
Individual Stories: How does AI help you in your everyday live? WePod look at worries about how AI might impact job security, explore how AI can help in education and connect AI regulation and security policy decisions to individual realities.

Sounds Like Europe

Sounds Like Europe goes behind the scenes of the WePod European Podcasting project.

Javi Caminero speaks to the WePod team about how they worked together to produced these podcasts.

What were the challenges and successes?
Who are the people working behind the scenes?
How did the teamcollaborate across borders and produce podcast series in multiple languages?

Further releases

Example 4
Grain of Power
As the war in Ukraine marks its third year, "Grain de Pouvoir" takes you on a journey through six episodes. From the heart of Ukraine, through Romania, Italy, and Brussels, all the way to the markets of Egypt, this documentary podcast reveals how essential commodities like seeds, wheat, and bread have become weapons of power, playing a crucial role in both the North and the South. Discover how these resources shape conflicts, nourish nations, and influence global alliances.

Keep an eye out on the WePod website for more future releases!

Listen to the WePod Guide to Audio Storytelling

EPISODE 2
Who's the story about?

Tell a Human Story.

Work out how it connects to your wider national, international and global themes.

Plan your story to best tell this.

TRADITIONAL STORY STRUCTURE

Hook your audience with a lead.

Follow with a quote: this adds a character and a personal touch.

Now add the body. Address these questions:
Who, what, where, when, how and why?

Bring story to a close — go full circle and connect the quote or people introduced at the beginning. Has your story raised new questions? Did you come to a conclusion?

EPISODE 3
Interviewing

Who should you interview?

Who you interview is dictated by your story topic and your research.

In a story on illegal migration, you'll want to talk to illegal migrants, people in the community they come from, the community they travel to, local NGOs, lawyers, organisations working in migration policy, support or politics.

Sources for interviews

Reports on the topic.

Personal Connections

Expert groups

Social Media

The General Public

Academic papers will give names.
Run a search and academics working at universities will have contact information on their research or university website.

Contact companies and organizations working in the spaces your theme covers. These could lead to interesting interviews.

Target forums and online groups on social media. to find participants.

If you've read an interesting report, run searches on the people who wrote it..
Interesting quotes throughout? Look into the interviewees.

You don't want to recreate the same story, but speaking to these people will offer leads to organisations, individuals and spark new ideas for leads.

Sourcing Tips

News Reports:

News reports will give you background information on the topic, places to look for stats, organisations and further leads.

Social Media

Use social media to find organizations, target groups, individuals and to put out calls for interviewees.

The General Public:

Speaking to people in the street or in public spaces can give you a general overview of what the genreal public's perception of your topic is. Try to get a range of people and opinions.

Expert Groups:

Speaking to experts will give you insight into the issues you're exploring. Rembember that experts might be academics or industry professionals but they may also be individuals at the heart of your topic — everyday people affected by the issue. People that know more about the topic than professionals.

Personal Connections:

Direct contact can be made through personal contacts.
Having an 'in' may ease the interviewee in terms of trust.

*Be careful with personal contacts, the lines between personal and professional connections should not be blurred.

Interview Tips

In the interview itself:

Ask open-ended questions.
Rather than: "Do you think X is good?"
Ask: "What do you think of X? How does X affect you?""

Look at them.
React.
Use body language to show you're engaged.

Approaching your interview:

Research your interviewee:
Who are they? What space do they work in or live in? Why are they interested for your story?

Plan your Questions

Plan your interview questions to get relevant quotes from your interviewee.

Introduce yourself.

Who are you? Who do you work for? Why do you want to interview them?

Be open and honest with your interviewee.
Explain how you'll use the interview.

DO NOT STARE AT YOUR RECORDING EQUIPMENT AND LEVELS THROUGHOUT.

You should have checked any equipment previously.
If you have a colleague with you, they can take care of the sound.
Your job is to connect with the interviewee, gain their trust and allow them to tell you their story.

Make notes on what the interviewee looks like.
What is the space you're in like?
Describe the details for your audience. This creates an atmosphere and engages your audience.

EPISODE 4
Approaches to Recording

Phases

— Planning

— Recording

— Editing

— Finishing

In a podcast:

Your audience is blind.
Plan for this.

Paint pictures:
Using words:
Set the scene with descriptive passages.
Where are they? What are they wearing?

Use Sound:
Record the atmosphere of the place you're in.
Use sonic queues.
The doorbell you ring when visiting a home, market sounds, the atmosphere in the bar you met in.

You can add these sounds to the background to create atmosphere and engage listeners.

> "You have to pay great attention to the audio side. I work as a journalist. I normally just write articles, so if the interview that I record is not good in terms of audio quality it's not a problem.

Futura D'Aprile
Europod

If you're using sound effects:
Use royalty free sounds (you can use these freely).
Purchase sounds from sound banks.

Background music:
— Does a particular music bring you to the place you're visiting?
— Add them
— Think about the tempo (speed), rhythm and beat of the piece.

EPISODE 5
Technical Tips for Recording

Microphones

Not every microphone is the same. They don't pick up the same sounds or frequencies so think about what type of microphone you'll be using and how best to use it.

Condenser Microphones

Mostly used in studios.
Need to be powered by phantom power.
Sensitive, will pick up a lot of sound.

Dynamic Microphones

Often seen in live stage situations.
More directional, pick up sound near them.

Lavalier (or 'Lav') Microphones

The clip on mics you see on people's shirts.
Small, great for recording voices.

Handheld Recorders

Versatile and portable. A great option for working 'on the go'.

Mobile Phones

An interview recording device in your pocket. It will do the job well for voice but limited in what it picks up.

Always test your microphone BEFORE going to your interview.

Test it in a similar situation to the one you'll be in. If you're recording in a noisy bar, go to one first and check the audio file that you record.

If you can't hear a voice over the background noise, make changes for your interview.

You could change microphone or record the interview in a quiet place. Then you could go to the bar, record the atmosphere of the bar with no interviewee, and later, layer your wo audio files to recreate the atmosphere you're looking for.

Useful Tools and Effects for Editing

Cut / Paste

You'll need to chop your audio up and move sections of it.
Cut and paste are essential to this.

Move

Grabbing and moving your audio files is also essential.

Fade in / Fade out

After cutting and pasting sections, make sure to add a 'fade in' and 'fade out' as this will avoid your files 'clipping' and clicking.

Compression

A compressor will make your voice sound more present and bring it forward in the mix.

EQ or Equalisation

Equalisation allows you to tweak the bass, middle and treble frequencies.
Cutting low frequencies an get rid of rumble and background noise.
Cutting high frequencies can get rid of 'hiss' and high pitched noises.

Pitch shifting

Lower the pitch to disguise a voice

Heighten the pitch to make something sound more comical.

Think of your podcast editing as a film storyboard.

Map out where you'd like intros and outros, music, interview sections and background noises

Play with volume levels, effects and plug-ins.

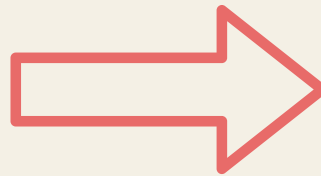Experiment and don't be afraid to try new things.

Listen to EP 5

Your audience could dictate the shape and tone of your story..

Who is your audience?

How old are they?

What gender are they?

Are they subject experts?

Is your story new to them?

Answers to these will shape your story.

A story aimed at South East Asian women aged 50+ will take a different approach to one aimed at Colombian men in their 20s.

What language does your audience speak?

If they are not native speakers of the language you choose, should you adapt your language to their needs?

User content

How will they intereact with your content?
What plaforms will you release on?

In this final episode, we get tips from industry experts we spoke to at the London Podcast Show.

The biggest take-home from their advice::

Be yourself.

Authenticity is key:
Don't play a role.
Be honest and upfront with your listeners.
Don't worry about your voice, accent or speech impediments. These are part of who you are and we want to hear from you.

Follow your interests.

If you're interested in your topic, listeners will pick up on your passion.

Break the rules.

Podcasting is a creative space.
Old broadcasting and radio rules don't apply.
Be creative.

Have fun.

Enjoy the process and this will translate to your listeners

The WePod European Podcasting Project is
a collaborative project involving partners
from across Europe:

PRISA Media (Spain)
Europod (Belgium)
Chora Media (Italy)
Magyari Jeti (Hungary)
Outriders (Poland)
News Decoder (France)
Press Freedom Foundation (Serbia)
Hiberus (Spain)

For more infomation on WePod visit:
wepodproject.eu