Podcasts
A powerful way to tell stories
Why are podcasts powerful?

• **Immersive**
  • No pictures - but relies on imagination

• **Intimate**
  • People listen alone
  • Often feels personal

• **Impactful**
  • Wide impact - podcasts are popular
  • People have long attention spans - allows for deep impact
  • Low barrier to entry - cheap/free tools & tech
Strategies for science podcasts

• Piggy-back on other content - e.g. Ri Science Podcast
  • Talks, lectures, webinars, panels...
  • + Doesn’t require extra editorial input, very easy to produce
  • - Not everything will be suitable, limited in scope

• Low-level production - e.g. The G Word (Genomics England)
  • 1-1 interviews
    • + Can be engaging, thoughtful, allows for depth and nuance
    • + Easy to produce, low cost, low input
    • - Can be boring, too niche, not sonically engaging
Strategies for science podcasts

• **Mid-level production - e.g. Diversity in Science (ISC)**
  • Multiple guests / stories / angles, use of music + sound
  • + More engaging, greater scope for narrative, more perspectives
  • - Requires more production work, greater editorial input

• **High-level production - e.g. CrowdScience (BBC World Service)**
  • In depth, exclusive access, locations, extensive use of sound
  • + Can be very engaging, immersive, can tell powerful stories
  • - Requires high budgets, a team of people, a successful platform
Practical tips

• Pre-production
  • Define and serve your audience
  • Find compelling stories / subjects / people
  • Why is this a podcast?

• Recording
  • Find a good host, even in-house
  • Capture good sound
    • Quiet spaces, duvets / pillows
    • USB mics, portable recorders, mobile devices
Tips for making a good podcast

• Editing
  • Be ruthless - cut what you don’t need
  • Software - Audacity (free), REAPER (cheap), Adobe Audition (part of CC)
  • Use sound effectively - esp. music

• Publishing
  • Decide on a realistic release schedule, stick to it
  • Do you really need to build your own platform from scratch?
  • Collaborate with other organisations