SpokenWeb Podcast Creator Guide

out of the archives and into your ears

What is it?

SpokenWeb is the monthly podcast produced by the SpokenWeb team as part of distributing the audio collected from (and created using) Canadian literary archival recordings found at universities across Canada.

Episodes are snapshots of Canadian literary history and contemporary responses to it, including interviews, panel discussions, lectures, readings, and audio essays.

How does it work?

SpokenWeb collaborators can create a new episode & send it to the production team, who add an introduction & closing credits, provide additional editing support, and schedule the episode for public release.

When can I hear it?

New episodes are released on the first Monday of every month to Apple Podcasts, Soundcloud, Google Play, and Stitcher. Episodes vary from 20-55 minutes in length.

Introduction: Why Podcast?

A podcast is like a radio show that has been digitally recorded and distributed online. Typically, podcasts are available for free and listeners subscribe to the podcast feed for new episodes on a set schedule. The medium is considered accessible to creators and listeners alike, and it's enjoying increasing mainstream popularity.

As a part of the SpokenWeb project, literary sound archives and scholarly responses to them are being transformed into podcast episodes that can be shared beyond the academy. These podcasts will help share the research discoveries of SpokenWeb with the general public, rather than just topic-area experts.

The podcast targets a general audience of Canadians interested in literary topics, history, culture, and analysis, but who might not have studied it since high school. The podcast intends to bring Canadian literature into the lives of everyday citizens and engage new people in the literary conversation.

How to Make an Episode:

Each episode is a collaboration between SpokenWeb contributor(s) and the production team. Contact spokenwebpodcast@gmail.com for support in pitching and creating an episode.

Steps

1. Read this guide and listen to an episode of the podcast.

2. Pitch an episode to the production team, who will provide feedback, guidance, a template episode file, and access to relevant Google Drive files where work is stored.

Equipment & Software needed

• **Adequate recording space**

Where you record matters. When possible, record in a dedicated sound studio (see list on p. 5). Always limit background noise and echo by recording in small, quiet spaces that absorb sound. For example, your closet is better than your office.

• **Microphone & audio recorder**

Sound studios often provide their own recording equipment. When purchasing your own, consider choosing a dynamic microphone (Shure and Electrovoice are quality brands) and a Zoom sound recorder. Focus on flexibility and reliability.

• **Headphones**

Headphones are particularly critical when editing your episode, but may also be used when recording.

• **Hindenburg audio editor**

Recorded audio will need to be edited in Hindenburg software. The podcast production team will provide a template file to use. Both a trial version and an educator software license are available. Contact your SpokenWeb lead for license information.

• **Google Drive**

Files will be uploaded and stored to folders in Google Drive.

Pitches should include the **topic**, **format** (interview, panel, reading, lecture, audio essay), and expected **completion date** (See p. 4 for the pitch form). Email your pitch to spokenwebpodcast@gmail.com. You will receive a response within 7 days.

> **Note:** It is the contributor's responsibility to ensure they are on schedule and proactively notify the production team about any changes to the timeline to avoid causing delays in the podcast release schedule.

3. Secure adequate recording space, book equipment (if necessary), and schedule any guests you want to feature.

When planning a recording session, expect the process to take twice as long as the finished episode length to allow for errors and redos, technical hiccups, and getting comfortable with the microphone.

4. Prepare a script, interview questions, or otherwise draft your episode. Plan well to maximize recording time and minimize editing time.

5. Record your episode content. All original audio should be saved as **spokenweb_origin_yourname_date** and stored as .wav files in the *Original Audio* Google Drive folder.

6. Install Hindenburg audio editor software on your computer. Talk to the SpokenWeb lead at your institution about getting a Hindenburg license. For Hindenburg tutorials, visit https://hindenburg.com/support/tutorials

7. Open the template episode file in Hindenburg. You will see elements like the theme song are already in place.

8. Import your audio into the template and save the new file as **spokenweb_episode_yourname_date**. Working files should be saved as Hindenburg files and uploaded to the *Hindenburg Files* Google Drive folder.

9. Place your content in the appropriate order based on the structure provided and your own vision for the episode. Edit the file until you are satisfied. Expect editing to take at least three times as long as the length of the finished episode— longer if you're still learning.

10. Create a description of the episode, including notes regarding citations, credits, or acknowledgements, which will be posted alongside the episode (for an example, see p. 4). Save the file as **spokenweb_desc_yourname_date** and

Our Approach

SpokenWeb is an episodic podcast, where each instalment can stand alone, but episodes should share a similar sensibility and purpose. Each episode should be:

Thoughtful

Episodes are each carefully considered and planned out (and scripted when practical) to ensure listeners can follow along. Episodes will make listeners think, but creators prioritize being accessible, not just academic. Avoid jargon, pretension, and rants.

Friendly

Treat the listener like a friend you're explaining something to; don't condescend or talk down to them. Respect and kindness are important, even when explaining basic concepts. The ideal tone is professional but warm.

Dynamic

To create a sense of energy and life, voices should be expressive, interested, and varied. Treat the podcast as storytelling. This helps listeners follow along. Introduce additional voices or sound elements where beneficial.

upload it as a Word document (.doc, .docx) to the *Episode Description* Google Drive folder.

11. Notify spokenwebpodcast@gmail.com that you have completed steps 1-10 and include links to the uploaded files in the email.

12. The production team will add the introduction and closing, as well as conduct a final edit for both the episode content and description.

13. Finalized episodes will be uploaded as .mp3 files to the *Final Episodes* Google Drive folder. You will have 7 days to review the finalized podcast episode and description.

14. The production team will upload the finalized podcast episode to the podcast feed and you will be notified of the scheduled release date. A .wav of the final episode will also be submitted to Summit, SFU's institutional repository.

Structure & Timing

A template Hindenburg audio file will be provided to all contributors to help guide their structuring of an episode.

Each episode will open and close with the podcast host, who will provide an introduction and then finish with production credits. A small library of interstitial music will be provided for use to transition between parts or segments of your episode. Sound effects will also be available in the library.

A sample structure for an episode might be:

♪♪ theme
Host opening, introduction (2 minutes)
♪♪ theme
Contributor content
♪♪ interstitial music
Contributor content
♪♪ theme
Host closing, credits (2 minutes)
♪♪ theme

Format Type	Recommended Content Length
Interview, panel, reading, lecture	15-50 minutes
Audio essay	15-23 minutes

As a guideline, episodes with 1 **speaker** should be **15-23 minutes** and **2+ speakers** might be **15-50 minutes.** Longer projects can be a series.

Submit a Pitch

Complete the sections below and email the completed document to spokenwebpodcast@gmail.com with the subject line "Pitch for SpokenWeb podcast." You should receive a response within 7 days.

Episode

Format:
(interview, panel, reading, lecture, audio essay, other)

Topic:
(e.g. poetry readings in 1960s Montreal, a literary movement in the 1980s, interviewing Yann Martel about Life of Pi)

Suggested Title [optional]:

Episode production start date: Expected completion date:

Resources

Episode Team Lead: Team Members:
(name and email address)   *(names)*

Audio production experience:
(none, beginner, intermediate, expert)

Access to Hindenburg:
(software installed, need Hindenburg software license)

Email accounts that need to access to SpokenWeb Podcast Google Drive folders:
(up to 3 email addresses)

Sample Episode Description

Each episode requires a description to accompany it. Please provide an episode description in the style of the example below:

Episode **#** is a **FORMAT** (e.g. interview, panel, reading, lecture, audio essay) with/about **TOPIC** (e.g. poetry readings in 1960s Montreal, a literary movement in the 1980s, interviewing Yann Martel about Life of Pi). This episode was created by SpokenWeb contributors **NAME(S)** with additional audio courtesy of **ARCHIVE/ ORGANIZATION** and support from **NAME(S).** Special thanks to **NAME(S)**.

Citations: (e.g. Berry, Richard. "Part of the Establishment: Reflecting on 10 Years of Podcasting as an Audio Medium." *Convergence* 22, no. 6 (December 1, 2016): 661–71. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354856516632105.) – **Note**: Please use Chicago style citations

Further Resources: [optional]

Resources
Sound Studio Locations

Location	Organization	Resource Name	Contact	Address
Calgary, AB				
	University of Calgary	Digital Media Commons A/V Suites	Book online https://workrooms.ucalgary.ca/spaces?lid=1393	Taylor Family Digital Library 410 University Court NW Calgary, AB
Edmonton, AB				
	University of Alberta	Digital Scholarship Centre	UAlberta Libraries	(coming 2019)
	University of Alberta	Faculty of Arts recording booth	Electroacoustic Studios, music@ualberta.ca	Department of Music 3-82 Fine Arts Building University of Alberta Edmonton, Alberta
Kelowna, BC				
	University of British Columbia - Okanagan	The AMP Lab	amplab.ubco@gmail.com http://amplab.ok.ubc.ca/index.php/about-us/	Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies Okanagan Campus 1148 Research Road Kelowna, BC Canada
	University of British Columbia - Okanagan	UBC Okanagan Library	Mathew.Vis-Dunbar@ubc.ca http://library.ok.ubc.ca/about-us/contact/librarians/mathew-vis-dunbar/	Okanagan Library 3333 University Way Kelowna, BC
Montreal, QC				
	Concordia University	Centre for Oral History and Storytelling	cohds.chorn@concordia.ca	Library Building, 10th Floor, Room LB-1042 1400 de Maisonneuve Blvd W. Montreal, QC

Location	Organization	Resource Name	Contact	Address
	Concordia University	TAG Centre	tag.coordinator@concordia.ca	TAG Lab Concordia University 1455 De Maisonneuve Blvd. West, EV11.435 Montreal, QC
Vancouver, BC				
	Simon Fraser University	Digital Humanities Innovation Lab	dhil@sfu.ca	Room 724, W.A.C. Bennett Library Simon Fraser University 8888 University Drive Burnaby, BC
	Simon Fraser University	SFU Woodward recording studios		SFU Woodward 149 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC
	Vancouver Public Library	Inspiration Lab	http://www.vpl.ca/facilities/inspiration-lab/record	Second floor 350 West Georgia Street Vancouver, BC