A blueprint for planning audio projects

Names and roles
List each team member and each person’s role.

What are you making?
Complete the following statement for your project:
For [audience]
who [need or opportunity]
our project is a [format]
that [key benefit for the audience].
Unlike [alternatives]
our project [how it’s different]

Describe in detail a potential story/episode
Use these questions to guide your thinking and to help you figure out the identity of your project.

● What question are you trying to answer?
● What voices would we hear and why? [Who are the “characters” in your episode/segment?]
● What will make your audience care?
● What potential storytelling challenges would arise in the course of producing this story/episode? How might you solve them?
● What will this story/episode NOT do?
● After hearing this story/episode, what would a listener want to tell someone that they “heard on NPR”? What would stay with them?
Who are your listeners and what do they want?

Spend considerable time thinking about, discussing and researching the audiences you want to reach. Describe the audiences, what they need and how you’ll fill that need. List each audience in bullet form. Be as specific as possible (“everyone” isn’t an audience).

How will you engage them?

Once you’ve listed off your audiences, generate ideas to reach and engage them. This is where it pays off to be specific in the previous section.

What is your digital strategy?

Will you have a website? A Twitter account? A newsletter? Even though you’re producing audio stories, be sure to think through your project’s digital life.

How will you measure success?

Imagine it’s six months after you’ve launched your project – were you successful? How will you know?

What’s your project’s timeframe?

Is this a short-term series? Or something that you hope will run indefinitely?

Describe your project in one, memorable line

This is the first thing you’ll tell people when they ask about your project. It should include key elements such as format and name. Keep it simple and short.

Roadmap

Build a roadmap to keep you on task. Make your roadmap realistic and feasible (launching a podcast in two weeks probably isn’t going to happen). Make sure your roadmap reflects everything you’ve outlined above and schedule weekly check-ins/retrospectives to discuss how it’s going. Each week can include goals for that week, a list of action items and obstacles you need to overcome to reach the goals.