

HOW TO MAKE AN INCLUSIVE PODCAST ?



By Elan interculturel, Sergina and Louise.



1. Talking about oneself first : "The personal is political".

Which person's reality and trajectory is the most accessible to you ? Which individuality can you better explore, question and understand ? It's yours. There is no better subject than yourself, and no better expert on your sufferings, joys and struggles. Your experiences are deeply political. Think about it ! Think about what revolts you, about what you live with, about what you go through every day. Talk about it with your friends, your relatives, your colleagues. See if they also have something to say on the matter. Do you agree ? Do you disagree ? Are you more neutral in your views ? More assertive ? What is it about your experience that seems so particular and yet resonates with others ? You will find an element of answer below.

"The division between public and private spheres is false; [...] this division itself is a social construction, and an ideology. The world we live in is not divided into a public sphere of socially constructed relations of work and power and a private sphere of relations existing outside the field of work and power, and 'natural'. Family, sexual and love relations are all socially constructed and they all involve gendered power relations."

L'exploration domestique, Christine Delphy, Diana Leonard, 2019.

A second element would be to consider and view your life through different and complementary prisms. Analysing your experiences using a varied spectrum of tools and references will allow you to best mediatise the subject that is particularly important to you.



2. Amplifying existing voices.

If you want to make a podcast that focuses on the experiences of a minority group experiencing systemic discrimination and oppression that you do not encounter in your daily life. If you are going to address social or political issues that are far from your reality, it seems important to question your motivation for wanting to express yourself in the media on the subject. You can ask yourself three questions and try to understand your motivations through them. Indeed, any search for inclusivity starts with self-introspection.

- How will the content I want to create contribute to the struggles involved ?
- Why do I want to express myself in the media on this subject, and what use will this undertaking be for me and for others ?
- Am I the most legitimate person to deal with this issue that does not concern me directly? These questions can be related to standpoint theory. You will find elements of this theory below.

“The notion of standpoint, born from excluded experiences, is central to Harding’s elaboration of the notion of ‘strong objectivity’ which involves ‘taking into account the position of those who are not ‘at home’ in dominant positions and valuing the position of the Other, in order to examine our own situations more critically.”

**LE FÉMINISME DU POSITIONNEMENT.
HÉRITAGES ET PERSPECTIVES CONTEMPORAINES,
LES CAHIERS DU GENRE, 2013.**

In other words, objectivity can only be achieved through a meticulous and critical examination of our individuality and, even more so, of our position in the social sphere.

This process also involves amplifying the voices, stories and experiences of those who struggle with these issues. For this reason, it is recommended to research the content already available on the subject you are interested in. In order to find out whether the angle you wish to tackle is new or whether it has already been dealt with by journalists, authors or podcasters who may have a more vivid grasp of the reality you are interested in portraying. Wouldn’t it then be enough to amplify, share and highlight these contents by using your own platform?

It is also good to remember that the history and experiences of many minority groups have been largely told by outsiders, often in a position of power or strength, who have made oppressive and sometimes diminution of value on the productions.



Not being able to tell one's own story, having one's story constantly distorted by people with more power and therefore more visibility and credibility, adds to the process of marginalization, dehumanization and stigmatization of the group in question.

And their historical short-sightedness prevents them from understanding that by portraying the black man as a rapist, they are openly inviting the white man to use the black woman's body. This fiction of the Black rapist has always reinforced its complement: the alleged shamelessness of Black women. Once it is accepted that Black people have a bestial sexuality and irrepressible needs, the whole race is invested with the same bestiality.

Women, Race and Class, Angela Davis, 1983.

PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS IF YOU STILL WANT TO PRODUCE A PODCAST ON A SUBJECT THAT DOES NOT DIRECTLY CONCERN THE GROUP YOU BELONG TO :

- At the beginning of the podcast it might be interesting to describe your social position (social class, race, gender...) and how it will impact what you will create. Indeed, everyone has biases, it is important to recognise them before tackling a subject that is not your reality. It would be more appropriate for your audience to know from which perspective you are speaking;
- Include in your podcast people who have experienced this oppression, not only witnesses but also experts from the same group;
- Collaborate with associations specialized in the subject. If possible organizations created by and based in the communities you are targeting. If you want to include testimonies, we advise you to go through these associations. Do not approach just any concerned person, they may not be willing to share their story;
- Have your podcast listened to by people who are concerned by the issues and experts to ensure that your podcast does not have a stigmatizing bias. Pay them if you can. Quote these people, organizations, groups and associations in your podcast;
- Always remember to offer plural, complex and diverse representations of reality. Avoid miserabilism.



3. Describing your social position

I have been trying to change the way I speak and write, to incorporate into my way of saying a sense of place, of who I am not just in the present but where I come from, the multiple voices that are inside me.

Choosing the margin as a space of radical openness, bell hooks, 1989.

Some journalists decide to describe their social position in terms of gender, class, race, etc. in the introduction to their podcasts, i.e. they tell the audience the social position from which they are speaking. State your gender, class, race and/or whatever else you feel is necessary. This will help your listeners to understand your thinking, who you are talking to and what expectations they should have.

WHY SHOULD YOU GO THROUGH THIS PROCESS ?

The way we grow up, the way we are educated and socialized define and condition in part our way of seeing and understanding the world. Our place in society and the way we are perceived greatly influences the vision we have of it in return. We are never truly neutral, we express ourselves from a so-called situated point of view. Situating yourself lets your audience hear the subjectivity that is inevitably present in your podcast.

⚠ Not being discriminated against is no guarantee of neutrality. Not being confronted with any form of LGBTQphobia, racism, validity or anything else is a privilege. It is therefore all the more important to be clear about your position in the social space as you will approach any issue through the prism of one or more of these advantages.

Practical recommendations on this approach :

- Situate yourself only if it helps to understand your podcast and what you are presenting. Especially if you add elements of analysis or questioning.
- The main disadvantage of this exercise is that it can feel too "formal". Think of it as an introduction, a set-up for what comes next. Talk about your intimate relationship with the subject, the reasons that led you to it, your background and how it has influenced the person you are today.

We advise you to ask your guests about their social identities only when it is useful and if the person has been warned in advance. It is important that they knowingly agree to share things that could potentially put them at risk. The risk here is that a person may be outed without their consent. Indeed, describing one's origins or socio-professional category does not have the same implications as being asked about one's sexual orientation and/or gender when one is an LGBTQI+ person. Your guest may not be out. It is important not to assume that every person you perceive as LGBTQI+ or who informs you that they are LGBTQI+ is necessarily out to their peers, in their professional life etc.

Does this approach question you, shock you or even revolt you? Be aware of the fact that it is often people in a dominating or powerful position (e.g. white people) who are reluctant to do it or who do not see the point. It is then interesting to question and deconstruct the stereotypes that exist behind this reluctance.



4. Accents

People whose accents are considered foreign or non-neutral tend to be discriminated against when it comes to choosing guests for a podcast. Even if the podcasts are not subtitled, don't miss the opportunity to tell an important story because you are worried that the audience will not understand all the words spoken. It is important to learn to listen to other ways of speaking, other intonations, other accents, even if you do not understand all the words (other people will !). Otherwise, you risk limiting your podcast to people from upper classes and often from your country's richest area.



5. Diversity of backgrounds and social groups

Think about who you include in your podcast, whether it is the people giving testimonies or the experts. Try to offer representations of different social groups even if the topic does not directly concern them. For example, if your topic is "couples", consider including LGBTQA+ people, people with disabilities, older people, etc.

We advise you to offer plural representations of minorities and not only to include their voices when talking about discrimination. Even if your podcast is about seemingly simple or trivial topics, such as cooking or hobbies, it is important to include the diversity of cultural practices that make up our society.



6. Name's pronunciation

Make sure you know the first and last names of the interviewee. Do not hesitate to check beforehand if your pronunciation is correct.



7. Inclusive vocabulary

WHY SHOULD YOU USE IT ?

- If your interviewee or the person you are talking about is queer, gender fluid, or non-binary, speaking with inclusive language helps to respect their identity.
- If your interviewee is an LGBTQ+ person, they may not feel the need to go into detail about their sexual or romantic orientation. Using gender-neutral terms to refer to their partner therefore respects their privacy.
- If your interviewee or the person whose story you are telling is in a queer relationship but has a cis heterosexual background, a gender neutral term allows you to not label them or their partner.

TIPS FOR USING INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE IN YOUR PODCAST :

Pronouns :

“They” should be preferred over “she” or “he”. Other people choose different pronouns. There are as many pronouns as there are people. Keep an open mind. In an interview, you can introduce yourself and say the pronoun you want to be referred to and ask your guest the question so that you don't embarrass them. Make sure beforehand that the person agrees with you asking the question.

Epicene formulas :

Some formulations can be changed to epicene formulations, i.e. expressions that allow you to address everyone without gender labels.

Here are some examples:

- Man/woman = person.
- Husband/wife = partner.
- Father/mother = parent.
- Girl/boy = child.