>> Eric Ascher: Hello everyone and welcome to today's RespectAbility webinar: Gaining Marketable Skills Through Podcasting. My name is Eric Ascher, and I am the Senior Communications Associate here at RespectAbility. I will be moderating today's webinar. To provide a brief visual description, I am a white man with short brown-blackish hair, a barely visible stubble, wearing glasses, an Apple Watch, and a gray polo shirt. And my pronouns are he/him/his. So what is a podcast? The easiest way to describe a podcast for someone who has never heard of one is that it's like an on demand talk radio show. Podcasts have been around for more than 20 years, starting back in the iPod era, which is where the name podcasting came from -- a mash up of iPod and broadcasting. Today, however, podcasts are easier to listen to than ever, and there are more options about what you can listen to than ever. In January 2023, there were more than 2.5 million podcasts in Apple's directory. These podcasts include panel conversations, interviews, narratives, news, and plenty of other formats -- too many for me to name here. Podcasting can be helpful for people to gain various skills that stand out to employers, so in today's webinar, we're going to introduce you to two RespectAbility National Leadership Fellows, Noa Porten and Hannah Roussel, who have both worked on a podcast. Their podcasting skills helped them receive their Fellowship offers, as our team was able to see their skills in action. I also will be joined by my colleague Ben Bond, who had a paid gig conducting interviews for a podcast while in college. We'll be talking about how they have created and worked on podcasts in various ways, including interview and narrative. This conversation will last approximately one hour, and we'll have plenty of time for participant Q&A at the end. If you'd like to view the ASL interpreter in a larger screen, we invite you to pin her video, which will spotlight her throughout the entire panel. We will be taking questions from you during the second half of the panel. And to preemptively answer the most commonly asked question that I get on the back end of these, yes, this webinar is being recorded, and it will be available on RespectAbility's website tomorrow or probably Friday after I add open captions to the video. Please add your questions to the Q&A box if you have any. And now I'd like to welcome my colleagues on to introduce themselves, give a brief visual description, their pronouns, and each of them could describe a little bit about why they started working on podcasts. We'll start with you, Ben.

>> Ben Bond: Hey everybody I'm so grateful to be here, and I'm so glad you can join us for this awesome conversation. I'm really excited to hear from my colleagues Hannah and Noa about their work as well. My name is Ben Bond. I use he and they pronouns. I am a white person with a brown beard, brown glasses, brown hair, and a blue polka dot shirt. I am the Faith Inclusion and Belonging Associate here at RespectAbility, and I am also ordained in the Disciples of Christ, which is a progressive mainline Protestant tradition. And what brought me into podcasting -- I was a student -- a graduate student at Yale University, and I was a part of the Institute of Sacred Music. And there was a really incredible opportunity for students to interview visiting scholars to the Institute. My background was -- what brought me to The Institute was work in ethnomusicology, and I got to interview some incredible scholars whose work spanned the globe and all sorts of different disciplines. So I'm excited to talk to you all about that today, and I think I will pass it to Dr Roussel.

>> Hannah Roussel: Hi, I'm Hannah -- I'm Dr. Hannah Roussel. My pronouns are she/her. I'm a white woman in my mid-30s with reddish brown hair today in a braid, green glasses, and a blue and white striped blouse. My background is mostly gray with the RespectAbility 10 year anniversary logo in the top right corner. I'm a Faith Inclusion and Belonging Fellow. My doctorate is in history with a focus in disability and madness in ancient Judaism. The podcast that I worked on was through my --through the University of Michigan it was the history podcast "Reverb Effect." For a year I was on the editorial board, and then for a year I was the season producer. I got into podcasting because as I was doing my doctoral studies, I became more and more aware of how inaccessible higher education can be and the knowledge produced in academia. And so I began searching for ways to -- break down the walls of the ivory tower, so to speak, and to make the knowledge being produced in academia not only more accessible, but a two-way street of conversation between the public and academics. I also just love podcasts. I listen to them a lot on my free time, both educational and entertainment. So that's what drew me into podcasting. And now I'll send it to Noa.

>> Noa Porten: Thanks Hannah. I'm Noa. I use she/her pronouns. I'm a white woman with long dark brown wavy hair. I'm wearing a black turtleneck sweater with a jean jacket on top, and I also have the same gray background with the RespectAbility 10th anniversary logo in the top right hand corner. And so I founded and hosted a podcast about dating relationships with chronic illness and disability. And I started it because I wanted to answer questions that I had and that I knew other folks in my community had -- many were thinking of, but perhaps there was too much kind of stigma or taboo around it to ask. And so ultimately I really wanted to shed light on story I felt were underrepresented. And so yeah, I got to kind of talk to members of the chronic illness and disability community about how they were navigating dating relationships and, like, stories of intimacy and love, and kind of stories that we don't often see authentically represented in the media. And that's kind of what drove my passion to and desire to work in entertainment. I also forgot to mention that I'm an Entertainment and News Media Fellow here at RespectAbility. So yeah.

>> Ben Bond: I can chime in and say they both have incredible podcasts and you all should check them out! Go ahead Eric.

>> Eric Ascher: Thank you very much! So my first question, which is for everyone, is -- so Ben, you mentioned that they all have remarkable podcasts, so what is your podcast about, each of you, and what drew you to the topic that you chose in particular? And why don't we start off with Noa this time, we'll go in reverse order.

>> Noa Porten: Yeah, I guess I accidentally kind of answered that question a bit in the intro --

>> Eric Ascher: I noticed, but it's fine. [laughs]

>> Noa Porten: But yeah, I guess one day I Googled "how to date with chronic illness" and the internet didn't have a good answer, so I was like, well, let me ask some folks in the community and just broadcast it publicly on the internet. And -- but through these conversations I realized that it wasn't, like, chronically ill people that needed to learn how to date, but it was the entertainment industry that needed to learn how to represent us in relationships authentically, because that was stories I hadn't seen often. And I think that's what drew me to want to kind of amplify and highlight those stories. So yeah, that answers the question. I'll pass it off to Hannah.

>> Hannah Roussel: Yeah, so the podcast I worked on was already a pre-established podcast, right, like I said, it was -- it's a public history podcast by the University of Michigan's History Department. And each episode is a different topic. A historian at the University of Michigan, be they graduate student, postdoctoral, or faculty member, will submit an episode proposal, and say there's a little bit of this -- of my research that I think would make a good podcast episode. If we accept the proposal, we help them turn that into an episode. And it's all about how the history of the past reverberates into the present, and so -- that's the title "Reverb Effect." I -- I guess I became interested in this topic -- I also shared a little bit about that, because it's just a way -- you know, I think a lot of times academics feel pressured to write in big words and complex sentences, but you don't have to, even when you're talking about complex ideas. And podcasting is a great avenue for scholars to learn how to present their work in a way that anyone, even non-experts in the field, can understand. And I just really enjoyed the creative process and collaborating with all of these different historians and helping them get their research out to a broader audience.

>> Ben Bond: I can piggyback off of that. My podcast was also in academia and it was Interview based -- Hannah's is narrative based -- and so a lot of these scholars are really working hard to live into their expertise and use those big words. So I do feel like there was a bit of a -- there was some barriers there -- of entry for folks listening. And I think that would be something I would have done differently, had I been directing the podcast. Anyway, we don't have to go too into changes yet, but it was a really cool opportunity where I got to interview scholars about their work at the intersection of religion and the arts. So it ranged from folks talking about music in Kenyan Christianity, sacred drumming practices in Haitian Voodoo and their relation to ecology, and indigenous worship practices in California Catholic spaces. And it was really meaningful to to kind of apply some of the expertise I had gained in my studies -- to have the opportunity to talk to these folks that think so deeply about these subjects that are pretty niche for the average person. And to be able to, like Hannah said, bring it to the larger public. But yeah, so that's a little bit what it was about and I'm happy for Eric to ask Hannah and Noa some questions.

>> Eric Ascher: I was happy to do so as well and then I realized that Noa and Hannah did the same thing again, which is awesome, which is that they sort of started to answer this question in their previous question answers, but we will ask it anyway. So what skills did you both gain from working on the podcast that you worked on? Like, I sort of picked up that Hannah -- learned a bit about, like, distilling information and public speaking a bit, but what are some other skills that you both gained? And I'll let you decide who wants to go first.

>> Hannah Roussel: I can start us off -- and maybe we can just keep going in reverse order. [laughs] We'll trade off.

>> Eric Ascher: We'll switch it every time, we'll make it confusing. [laughs]

>> Hannah Roussel: So I gained a lot of skills working on the podcast. I'm -- some of it was writing for diverse and non-expert audiences, since mine was a scripted podcast. Also, since I was editing other people's writing, that was experience in editing, providing constructive feedback, and then, you know, a lot of things that you might not think of off the top, but, you know, because my podcast was, I think, kind of unique in that it had an editorial board, there was a lot of business emails I had to write. So you get like the business writing skills in that sense. And managing a team, because I had to say, okay, can these two members of the editorial board review this episode, and can you have your review for it back by this date, you know? So there's also collaboration which I mentioned, project management and data management -- I had to track each episode's progress, because I was working on more than one episode at a time. So there's also the skill of multitasking, which you see a lot on job applications. And also creative problem solving -- there were times where there were conflicts where the episode producer, the historian whose episode it was, wanted to do something one way, and the editorial board disagreed, and I was the go between in between the two, so I had to come up with creative problem solving and sometimes even exercise a bit of conflict resolution skills [laughs]. So things you might not associate with podcasting, but definitely are skills you can gain from it.

>> Noa Porten: Am I next? [laughs]

>> Eric Ascher: Yes you are!

>> Noa Porten: Yeah similar to -- some similar skills that I gained to Hannah, but I think for me, I didn't set out originally when I made my podcast to, like, gain marketable skills. It wasn't a career thing for me. At the time I was actually, like, had been studying something completely different in school, but I was on medical leave. And so it was a passion project. But like, anyone who knows me knows I'm like not chill about anything, like, whenever I, you know, mention to someone like, oh yeah, I'll just -- I'll do this just for fun, they're like, okay, like, can't relate to people who have hobbies or things like that. So it quickly became, like, okay, well I'm really really gonna do this. And yeah because of that, like, I gained so many skills and it also kind of took me down a whole career path, because I decided to kind of switch careers and go into entertainment. But yeah, so I gained, you know, skills in, like, production, you know like, learned how to edit audio and worked on some video clips as well. Also I think Hannah mentioned collaboration -- that was a big thing for me because I did not do it by myself. I collaborated with also an audio editor on several episodes, and also a graphic designer for branding. And so I learned so much from them. And it was really cool to get to, like, work creatively on a project. Also, like, a lot of marketing, because I did, like, the social media for the podcast, and so I had, like, a content calendar and, you know, like, had things on -- did things on Canva. I also worked on, like, community partnerships, so I did a launch event series with, actually a RespectAbility alumni Fellow, Sneha, who has an organization now called Generation Patient, was called Health Advocacy Summit, so we did, like, a launch event series for my podcast. So a lot of, like, transferable skills for marketing stuff. And then also, like, content development, which I found is really helpful in entertainment for, you know, podcast development roles, but also, like, transferable to TV development or things like that, because, you know, understanding a target audience, researching topics, researching guests, you know, reaching out to guests and stuff. And those are also, like, really helpful skills for business. I think, like, just the basics of understanding who your audience is and kind of creating content for them. So yeah, pass it over -- oh, pass it back to Eric, I think.

>> Eric Ascher: Yep. Both fantastic answers. Lots and lots of skills to be gained from this -- type of thing you can do. So Ben, you interviewed individuals for the Institute of Sacred Music at Yale about the intersection of religion and art. Can you share some tips about how to create a list of questions and conduct an interview? And did you gain -- I mean, you've spoken so eloquently so far, so obviously the answer is yes -- but did you gain public speaking skills as part of doing this podcast?

>> Ben Bond: Yeah absolutely, and I'm happy to share, like, where I feel like I messed up. I feel like sometimes it's helpful as folks that are in, you know, professional spaces or creative spaces to have examples of, like, not everybody is just, like, doing this perfectly and knows exactly what's going on. I found out, you know, in my first couple episodes that these are really long convoluted questions that really, like, I felt -- you know, trying to demonstrate my own intellectual prowess and, like, that I had done all this research. And I found out that if I wanted to be a good interviewer, I really needed to, like, lean into humility and realize that, like, in order to, like, actually feature the work of the person that I'm talking to it can't -- you know -- the focus can't be on me, it needs to be about, you know, highlighting and bringing to life the work of the person that I'm talking to. So I learned how to really scale back in the question -- the type -- the way I was asking questions. I found that generally speaking -- sometimes the shorter the question, the more succinct, the more to the point the question can be, that, you know, brevity is really important -- the better answers I would get. I found that, like, when I asked a whole host of things all at once -- and again this, you know, applies in so many different arenas, right? My -- the person I was interviewing would get really confused and wouldn't know what to latch on to, and it just -- it became readily apparent to me quite quickly that this was not a strategy that was going to work. And if you're going to be, you know, doing an interview style podcast, as opposed to a narrative form, it's really important to think through how to craft your questions, you know, in a very considerate way. And I'd say a good rule of thumb -- these are just kind of tricks of the trade, and this goes for, you know, hosting a webinar -- is to have, you know, for an hour, you need like five questions, generally speaking, depending on the type of person that is going to be interviewed. But generally, folks know how to speak a lot. The challenge is helping folks learn how to speak concisely and effectively. And so helping kind of shepherd them in that experience is something that I find to be really helpful in your podcasting life, but also in just every day, you know, if you're organizing meetings, you know, having those agenda items and knowing how to help folks convey the information without having to go into a huge monologue about it. And I'll say academics are really good at filling time when they're speaking, so knowing the type of person you're interviewing and their style is really important. So yeah, that's my advice for how to conduct an interview, and the ways that I have failed, and so you can learn from them so you do not have to fail yourself.

>> Eric Ascher: And I will say we're learning from them as we go, because some of these questions are a little bit long as well. [laughs] But anyway, so building off of that, and I'm going to open it up to Noa and Hannah as well for this next one, but talk about -- can you talk a little bit about how important prep work is before you start recording a podcast episode? And again, this is open to all of you, but Ben, we'll start with you.

>> Ben Bond: Yeah, it's really essential. I -- it's really -- I think as you get more comfortable with the the podcasting process, you'll develop a bit more of a checklist of things you want to go through before having an interview with someone. I'm sure Noa can speak on this really well, because Noa's had a whole host of guests. And I found that it was really important for me to get to understand the scholars work. So you know, if they've written some articles, I definitely check that out. One thing I've also found to be really helpful is if they've been on other podcasts, listen to those podcasts. Because often, you know, folks who are going to be interviewed regularly kind of have a few talking points that -- they've really honed. And when they're encountering new audiences, they will go through those talking points, and they'll sound like the most brilliant person ever because they've said it a million times. And so if you are aware, if you're able to prompt that and kind of offer these soft balls to folks by doing that research ahead of time, it can make world a difference, so -- I'd love to hear Noa's perspective, because Noa's met with a whole host of really incredible guests from all over the professional and personal space.

>> Noa Porten: Well same to you Ben, and I really appreciate your perspective on, like, starting with reflecting on, you know, things that you could have improved on. I really liked that, and a ton was already coming to mind for me as well. But to answer that specific question, yeah I agree, prep is really essential. I think sometimes when people think of podcasting they're like, oh yeah, you just kind of like put your phone on the table like your, like, voice notes, and you just chat and you just post it, which -- definitely you can use that in terms of tech, but I think it's helpful to do some prep beforehand. And like you said Ben, like, really, I would always kind of research the guest. I would look at their work that they've done, their, like, social media. And yeah, I would try to kind of look at other podcasts and stuff. For me, I kind of wanted to get a different perspective than maybe what they had talked about on other podcasts or things like that, so I would kind of keep that in mind. And I did this at the beginning, but then towards the end, especially if it was like a busier guest -- guests didn't always have time for this, but sometimes I would have like a pre-meeting, just, like, 10, 15 minutes to get to know them. And I felt like that really helped with rapport and just to, like, brief them on everything. And then I would send them the questions beforehand to make sure that they were comfortable with everything, and -- but for me, like, and everybody's interview -- everybody's podcast is really different style, I really wanted my podcast to be very conversational, so that was something that was hard to balance of, like, kind of staying on topic and stuff, but also, like, having conversations, especially when you hadn't had that pre-meeting and you didn't know the person. So yeah, so I would send the list of questions and kind of some prep details, but say, you know, this is just kind of a general guide, but it's very conversational so feel free to ask me questions as well and we can just chat. And yeah, if I couldn't have a pre-meeting, I tried to just talk to them for a few minutes before the interview. But yeah definitely, like, knowing your guests, knowing what their work is, what's important to them, what they like talking about...

>> Eric Ascher: Anything to add, Hannah or --

>> Hannah Roussel: Yeah, so -- I mean, the prep work was very different for me because it was a scripted podcast or narrative style. And for me -- also though, you know, academics can also be very verbose in their writing [laughs] so one of -- I had a lot of meetings with the episode producer, the historian that was doing the episode. And one of the main things I always -- I learned to ask them is what is the main point you want to communicate in this episode, and ask them to pick one, normally they're going to add on a second one, and then that's okay [laughs]. And so, you know for example, one of the episodes I produced was titled "Laboring for the Puerto Rican Vote," and it was about Puerto Rican migrant workers in Connecticut in the 1950s fighting for the right to vote. And Elena Rosario, the historian who's research this was about, you know, her -- her main point was Puerto Ricans were wanting to be active citizens from the very beginning. And I was like, okay, so that's how we're going to craft this story around that message. And that really helped us find a focus, and it also helped us find a narrative arc. When you're preparing a script -- a scripted episode, even if it's an academic podcast or an educational one, it really helps to find a story that you can demonstrate your point through, because that's going to engage listenership more. There's also the technicalities of setting up your recording space, getting the right equipment. I was very fortunate that the University of Michigan had a recording booth with equipment that we could use, but I've also learned, you know, helpful tips and trick -- tips and tricks for, like, kind of DIYing your own recording space. If people want to hear about that, they can ask about it in the question session. Also, like, building in time to find your narrator voice. We -- every historian -- I would do -- the season producer is the host for the season, so I would do the intro and outro to the episode, but the historian would read their script. And so we needed time during the recording session for them to, like, get a feel for what -- how they wanted their voice to sound as they were reading the script, and, you know, we needed time to do a few takes.

>> Eric Ascher: Yep, some great advice all around. Yep, basically, the more you prepare ahead of time, the less -- the better it's going to be. So Noa and Hannah, as we said -- as I said in the intro, you're both Fellows with RespectAbility. And during the application process, my colleagues were impressed with the skills you each acquired from your experience with podcasting. So how do you talk about -- and, well, first of all, the question is do you talk about podcasting in job interviews and applications, and if so, how? And I'll -- I think Hannah went first last time, so Noah -- you're up.

>> Noa Porten: Okay, awesome. Yeah, so I do -- I do talk about it. And my podcast for me was a big reason why I decided to go back to school and study business and film and media studies and, like, why I wanted to work in the entertainment space. So I definitely use it to talk about, like, my why, and I used that in my RespectAbility interviews as well, like, why -- how it empowered me to want to develop and amplify authentic and impactful stories. And then I also use it like any other work experience to pull from for, like, behavioral questions. So, like, problem solving, like, tell me about a time when you problem solve -- for example, like, I could talk about, you know like, when I was trying to clean up my files in Audacity and then everything just got destroyed [laughs] because Audacity doesn't like it when you move files in any ways, and so how I problem solved that, or like you know, how I adapted, you know, talking about, like, an episode that I recorded with a chronic illness travel influencer, and when I reached out to her originally, it was like, very very beginning of the pandemic, back when we thought pandemic would be, like, two weeks. So I was like, oh yeah, let's talk about, like, traveling with a partner while chronically ill, and you know, then we released the episode, and it was -- there was still a pandemic, there still is one. But at the time, there was a travel ban. So I had to adapt and think about, like, how can I kind of market this episode? And so I ended up kind of creating content for social media about quote unquote "traveling in a COVID-cautious way." So like you know, going camping to, like, kind of a secluded campsite, although I'm realizing that might be very creepy, but -- having someone with you, or kind of, like, watching a travel show or things like that. So yeah, using it to talk about, you know, behavioral questions or skills, like I would -- like you would with any other job interview. And then -- and yeah, I think, like, when I first -- like, at first when I was kind of entering the job market and stuff, I didn't necessarily consider my podcast to be, like, as worthy as, like, an internship or a job or quote unquote, like people who had had that, like, traditional path in terms of, like, talking about it in interviews, but I realized that it is just as important and impressive, and I gained just as many skills. So yeah I'd encourage anyone, like, who has done their own thing, whether that's because they were trying to get skills specifically or because that was, like, a work experience that was most accessible to them and their health at the time, to be really proud of that and use that experience and talk about it, because you did gain skills from that -- I'm sure you did, so.

>> Eric Ascher: You're up, Hannah.

>> Hannah Roussel: Yeah so I, you know, piggybacking off of what Noa said and what I already said, you know, I said it earlier, but I think almost every job I've been -- I've applied to has either mentioned data management or project management in the job description. And no matter what type of podcast you're producing, you're doing both of those things. And so you can, like, go into detail in an interview and say, like you know, I created a Excel spreadsheet to track the progress of each episode. You know, I created these folders in Google Drive where I could share documents with the people I'm collaborating with. You know, and use that to demonstrate those, like, basic skills that a lot of jobs want you to have. Also, one thing that I forgot to mention earlier is I -- when I was working for Reverb Effect, I noticed that we needed to improve -- we needed to start using alt text on our websites for our images -- that's text that a screen reader reads in place of the image, so that if someone's using a screen reader, they still know what the images are on the website. And also that our transcripts were rather lacking in accessibility as well. There were things like "the intro to the episode plays." And so it was very easy for me to go in and transcribe the intro to the episode, and from then on, that could be copy and pasted into each episode transcript from here on out. I also built, you know, materials and guidelines for future season producers to use, because it's a new season producer each year. And so I can also bring those stories into my applications and interviews where I can show my commitment to DEI or my commitment to accessibility. I mean, even if it's that's something the job position isn't looking for, I can use that as a story of how I took initiative, which is something that jobs also like to learn a lot about in some cases. You know, you can say, "I was dedicated. I saw this need. I came up with a solution." And that's always very impressive in interviews as well. So, yeah, like Noa said, like, thinking about what are the stories that you can pull and use in your interviews, and what are those transferable skills that you can pull out and put in your resume?

>> Eric Ascher: I love -- I love the idea of incorporating accessibility into it. As a disability organization, that's obviously very important to all of us. So a reminder to our attendees -- you can put in any questions for any of our panelists into the Q&A box on Zoom. We are unfortunately not able to monitor the chat on Facebook at this time, but you can feel free to join us on Zoom -- there's still plenty of time, you can still register. And we will be happy to raise those questions to the panelists. But while we're waiting for any last -- any questions from our audience, I'd like to ask each of our panelists: there's so many pieces of advice that we've given throughout this, or at least alluded to. What -- if you had to pick one thing that you want a new podcaster to know about how to do a great job making a podcast, what would be the number one piece of advice you'd give? And I'll start with Ben on that one.

>> Ben Bond: That is a good question. I think the thing that I love just in general in my life, but what I think the medium of podcasting does really well is it allows you to follow your curiosity. And I think my one piece -- my number one piece of advice is really lean into your curiosity. I myself have, you know, sometimes it's a double-edged sword, I have such insatiable curiosity sometimes that I get so hung up on one thing I have to figure everything out about it. I'm sure the neurodivergent folks among us know that well, myself included. And so I think what -- give yourself permission to really dive deep, dive wide, and answer questions that you've always had, and let this format be a really great tool for exploring that within yourself. And when you're doing that, when you allow -- give yourself that permission, whatever sort of format of podcast you're going to approach or utilize, it's just going to enhance the experience of the folks that you're speaking with, the content that you're creating or crafting. And yeah, I think that you will also grow as a person, and at the end of the day, that's what this is all about. That's my -- my pastoral side speaking. You know, you don't get that time back, and using this opportunity to grow as a person and really learn to love the parts of yourself that are so curious is a really incredible experience. So yeah, that's my emotional end note for you all, and I can pass it to Hannah or Noa.

>> Eric Ascher: Let's go Noa this time.

>> Noa Porten: Ah, love that, Ben. So yeah, I think I -- my advice would be, like, the first thing to start with -- and this is what I started with when I started my podcast -- is to have a clear purpose slash goal of your podcast. Like, write it like a mission statement. At least that's kind of what I did and what worked for me. So like, why are you creating this podcast? Because, you know, it is a fairly -- especially if you're doing it yourself, it's going to be a fairly large time investment. I mean also -- you can put in as much or as little kind of effort or time as you want, but it likely will be a big production, so kind of knowing, like, what your purpose is, I think can help keep you on track. So like, is it to, kind of like Ben said, really kind of follow your curiosity and investigate a question or topic you feel hasn't been discussed publicly and needs to be brought light to. Maybe it's kind of a personal thing, like, to empower yourself and share your story, and that can be cathartic but -- or maybe, you know, you have a brand or you already have a business and you're trying to, like, increase brand awareness or attract more clients or position yourself as an expert in your industry. Maybe you're trying to share stories from underrepresented voices. So knowing that why and then kind of knowing who your audience is and what they need that your content can give them, that other content can't or hasn't. So yeah, keeping them in mind.

>> Hannah Roussel: Yeah I think building off of that, you know, I already talked about finding the narrative if you're going to be doing a scripted podcast. Another thing that is really important is keeping your audience in mind and trying to put yourself in their shoes. So if you think about when do you listen to podcasts, a lot of times it's when you're doing other tasks. You're doing dishes, going for a run, driving in your car, riding the bus, maybe it's a noisy bus and you're distracted because you've got to pay attention and notice when your bus stop is coming. And so you want to keep your language in your podcast, like, clear, your syntax -- your syntax simple, your sentence structure simple. And -- because, you know, it's also -- when you're reading a book, it's often easier to flip back a few pages and be like, oh okay, yeah, that's right, that's what they said. And it can be more difficult to do when you're listening. So for example, I was producing a podcast where we were talking about a historical figure who had multiple titles, and throughout the script the historian was, like, alternating which title he used for, like, flair. Well that might work in a written form because you can go back to the first page where that figure is introduced and be like, oh yeah, these are all the titles he has. But in an audio form, we said you need to pick how you're going to identify this historical figure and stick with it, because audio listeners -- it's going to be more confusing. So you know, just thinking - thinking about that. And not being afraid to repeat things, because people are going to get distracted, you know? They're going to reverse -- I don't know, my car, when I reverse, it like dampens the audio for a second. And so, you know, and sometimes I -- I'm able to like push the 10 minute or the 10 second rewind, and other times I got to start driving and I can't. So you know, keeping this in mind when you're creating your podcast content.

>> Eric Ascher: I am also going to take the liberty of answering that question from my own perspective, as moderator's privilege in this case. I think the number one -- all those pieces of advice are great -- my number one thing is that unless you care about the subject, you're not going to be able to do a good job making a podcast about it. So when you pick your topic, pick something you really really are passionate about, something that you that you love discussing with anybody, everybody. Find that thing and then you'll be able to make a good podcast about it. So we've got a couple questions from the audience. We got three very, I would say, hard to answer ones from a former Fellow, Alex Hilke, so I'm going to ask them in turn, because none of these questions really have defined answers, which is fun for conversation. So I'm gonna ask the last one first: what is the best podcast software? Does anyone have any recommendations? I know I have some potential options.

>> Noa Porten: I can -- I mean there's different, like, there's different tech for different, like, aspects of podcasting, but I can't speak to the best. I -- for editing, I used Audacity. I don't know if it's the best. It's definitely kind of I think maybe antiquated in some ways, but it's just what I happen to learn on. But I think a lot of the audio editing softwares are really similar. Like, there's GarageBand, there's Pro Tools, there's Adobe Audition. I think it's just, like, a matter of some are free, some are, you know, on Mac, some are not, or some are on Windows, so I don't know that that matters too much. But I will say one that really liked for recording remote interviews was Zencastr. They have -- I believe now they have a video feature as well. And what I liked about it is that you can -- at the time it was free, don't know if it still is -- but you could record and get two separate audio tracks. And I really liked that, because that allowed me to edit the audio and it be more clear, you know, if there was like a weird sound in one person's audio, I could kind of like mute that or cut that. So I really liked that. And then for hosting, I used Anchor, which is now Spotify for Podcasters, because it was free, and it was easy. So I don't know, I think you can keep it simple, and you could spend a lot of money if you wanted to, and I don't think it's necessarily necessary at first, so.

>> Hannah Roussel: Yeah I -- my experience is both in Audacity and Adobe Audition. Adobe Audition you do have to pay for. Because I -- the university provided it so I could use it. Were I to start podcasting on my own, I don't think I could afford Adobe Audition, but Audacity works too. One thing I would recommend is finding a software that lets you use, I think it's called non-destructive editing. It's where you can, like, trim your audio and it doesn't delete that data. So if you later decide, oh, I want to pull that back, it'll still be there for you to pull back. It's just like a fail safe, it's -- you're not going to accidentally -- it's harder to accidentally delete your audio. If you -- and Audacity and Audition both have that tool. Audacity didn't used to, but now it does. I can't really speak to the other things, because that wasn't -- I was only involved in the recording and editing step, and then the executive producer was the one who posted it. Yeah.

>> Eric Ascher: Ben [indistinct] because I have a lot of things. [laughs]

>> Ben Bond: Well you have -- I should also say for context for the audience Eric is a podcaster himself so, and I'll also agree with you on that, Eric, finding -- whatever you choose it has to be something you're really invested in. And I would also say the more niche the better. You -- don't worry about being, you know, it has to be super accessible. People love niche when it comes to podcasts. People love deep content, not necessarily wide. I mean, I've listened to podcasts on the best Detroit Pizza in Michigan, like, that -- you know, so it's really -- yeah -- follow your curiosity. I used Zencastr, and I think yeah, to Noa's point, like, it was fairly accessible -- not accessible necessarily in the disability sense, but in the, like, as a new podcaster. I've heard Riverside FM is really helpful for video audio stuff. And I know we have software that RespectAbility has access to that Eric can probably talk to us more about. But yeah, I definitely -- so -- I can also just say very briefly, if you are someone who's less comfortable with learning about software stuff, there are a lot of folks that are experts about it, there are a lot of courses on some LinkedIn learning and YouTube. I also for the first couple episodes, we had a script printed out of -- the podcast itself after we've -- I've conducted the interview, and I went through and edit it through just like a Word document, so that I can get kind of the gist of it before going through and doing the tech part. So there's a lot of ways to approach it that can make it simpler for you as someone who's getting into that space, so, and I can pass to Eric who has a lot of knowledge about this.

>> Eric Ascher: I'm going to go as quickly as I can so we can get time -- for the other two questions that Alex asked. So the first thing is, if you're on an iPad if you have an iPad, there's apparently a great app called Ferrite that I've heard a lot of great things about. It let you actually take the podcast -- it'll automatically do an autogenerated transcript, and then it'll. let you edit the audio as text, and it's apparently very very good. Heard nothing but good things about it. As far as recording interviews, I personally I'm a big fan of Rogue Amoeba. They're a Mac- only company -- software company, and they have a product called Audio Hijack, which lets you basically -- separate -- do the thing where you can separate audio into multiple different tracks. And as Noa I think alluded to, it's very helpful when you're editing a podcast to have different tracks for everyone -- every single person that's speaking. Audio Hijack recently added an auto transcribe feature as well, which is -- recently, which is, you know, a great way to get started on having a transcript for your podcast which is very important for making it accessible. And then the last thing I'll say is that Audacity is free and it's fantastic and it's available on all platforms, and I highly recommend anyone who wants to learn -- start -- get started with audio editing, Audacity is a great place to start. And then as far as hosting, I've -- there's so many different options but Spotify for Podcasters is free and it works on not just Spotify, but if you host your podcast there, you can get it on all the platforms, which is very helpful. So the next question which I think we'll get through pretty quickly is how long does it take to edit your podcast? And for this one I think the answer is -- unless anyone disagrees -- is that depends on the podcast [laughs]. Basically, depends how much time you want to put into it -- and depends on how much work there needs to be done, how many edits need to be made, there's no real answer for that, but I'll open it up to anyone else -- see if anyone has anything more definitive.

>> Ben Bond: I can say, also not super definitively, it'll probably take more time than the podcast took to actually like do the interview, if that's helpful.

>> Hannah Roussel: It takes more time than you think, and I was telling my sister who was interested in starting a podcast -- and this also builds off of what Eric says -- it really depends on what vibe you're going for in your podcast. Reverb Effect is a very, like, professional podcast, so I have to go through and silence all of the breaths people took. If there was a cough, you know, getting the music transition just right -- these sorts of things can really take a lot of time. Now, if you want a more casual feel, you want someone to feel like they're there in the conversation with you, maybe you leave in some of the coughs and some of the [gasps] before you start speaking, because that's going to create a more chill welcoming vibe in a sense. So I -- yeah, but either way you go, I think it's going to take you longer than you expect, but as you gain the skill, it's also going to go more quickly each time. Noa, anything to add on that one, or --

>> Noa Porten: I feel like y'all answered it well, but yeah, happy to take any of the other questions.

>> Eric Ascher: Yeah, I think we're going to go to the next one, which I think, unless we get something else in the next minute, will be our last question, which is about humor in your podcast, which is sort of a fun one. I'll just give my answer to that first, then I'll turn over to everyone else. My answer is feel free to inject humor in your podcast, but don't say anything unless you're comfortable saying it, basically. It depends on your comfort level basically. I personally -- on my podcast, which I'm not going to bring up here, because I do a little bit too much humor in it, I would argue, for a professional setting -- but yes, I think it's all about -- it's -- yeah, it's about your comfort level. But anyone have any thoughts on that?

>> Noa Porten: That's a hard one. Yeah, I wanted my -- I wanted my podcast to be kind of, like, fun and conversational, like, I wanted it to feel like you were chatting with, like, a best friend about, like, dating and relationships, so I definitely wanted that vibe. But yeah, it's hard. I think one thing that -- and this was, like, advice I read probably somewhere on the internet was, like, ask your guest to think of some specific stories and so, like, you can ask them, like, is there a funny story, like, for dating specifically, like, there were so many. [laughs] You know? And so, like, so you could ask them to kind of think about those beforehand and then kind of, like, talk about specific stories, because like Hannah mentioned, like, the storytelling aspect is really important in podcasts. And then you know, like, bring up your own funny stories, again, depending on the vibe of your podcast. But if it is like a conversational, you know kind of -- like, a podcast I really -- a podcast I really admire that does this is Armchair Expert. Dax and Monica, like, they often kind of tell their own kind of vulnerable funny silly stories, and then that makes the guests feel comfortable, and they kind of share their own. So yeah, but I don't know if I have any other better advice other than that.

>> Ben Bond: Yeah and I'd probably say to Hannah and ours, you know, if it's thematically appropriate. [laughs] I'm sure it's really hard to interject humor in a narrative podcast, but also is kind of difficult when you're talking about, like, heavy academic stuff, but, you know, it -- I think if you were trying to cultivate some humor for a podcast and its interview style or conversational style, I think going back to what Noa has said before, having an opportunity to speak to folks prior to the actual podcast and kind of establish sort of a comfort and a rapport with the person you're speaking with can be really helpful for carrying that over into the podcast itself. Sometimes the best conversations happen outside of the podcast unfortunately, which is meaningful for you as a person. But all that being said, even if it's a great conversation, establishing that kind of culture of being able to have a more comfortable and relaxed conversation can lead to a lot more opportunities to have, you know, humor interjected, because you've established that trust that allows for, you know, allows for that opportunity. So yeah, that's my thought.

>> Hannah Roussel: Yeah, I think my advice would be to find podcasts similar to the one you want to do and listen to them and see how do they inject humor. Reverb Effect, we didn't do a lot of humor, it wasn't the vibe. But I really love the podcast Material Girls. It's two women -- they call themselves "two lady scholars," but so they're already, like, having fun with it, right? They're two literature scholars who talk about material culture, and they're bringing in a lot of academic analysis. But they have a lot of fun with it and it's hilarious. Whenever they quote like a crusty old scholar, like they have like sound effects, like, they're like, oh, another old white man, and then they have a sound effect that's a man going "blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah." Right? It's hilarious. But then they're still, like, talking about really intellectual and, like, important concepts. Like, they did one on toxic masculinity, and the book "Spare" that Prince Harry just wrote, and different things like that. So yeah I would, like, Material Girls is one podcast that I think integrates humor with a serious topic very well, but I'm sure there are many others out there. Plenty that I could name, but the one thing -- the five words that come to my mind every time I hear about this are "save it for the show." [laughs] When people are having conversations like this before the podcast and you want -- you want to make sure you save it for the show. On that note, I think we've answered all the other questions that we have, but I wanted to say before we close that we have one more webinar for 2023. It is next Wednesday. It's about why sacred communities need to raise awareness to create a culture of belonging. As I said, next Wednesday, December 13th. You can register for it on our website at RespectAbility.org. And before we close out, I want to say a massive thank you to Noa, Hannah, and Ben, to our CART captioner, our interpreters, and to you for joining us. Have a fantastic rest of your day, and we will hopefully see you next week! Bye everybody.