

How to create a student podcast

with Aileen Finnegan,
award winning audio
producer and presenter
with *The Irish Times*



Introductions

Aideen Finnegan

- Audio Producer with The Irish Times & Presenter of *Better with Money* Podcast
- Former broadcast journalist with Newstalk

Lisa Buckley

Communications and Programmes Director, NewsBrands Ireland.

- Young Journalist Ireland news literacy programme
- Annual Irish Journalism Awards
- NewsBrands promotes the role journalism plays in democracy and society

Today's Workshop



Explore different podcast formats and how to find an audience



Examine interview and storytelling techniques

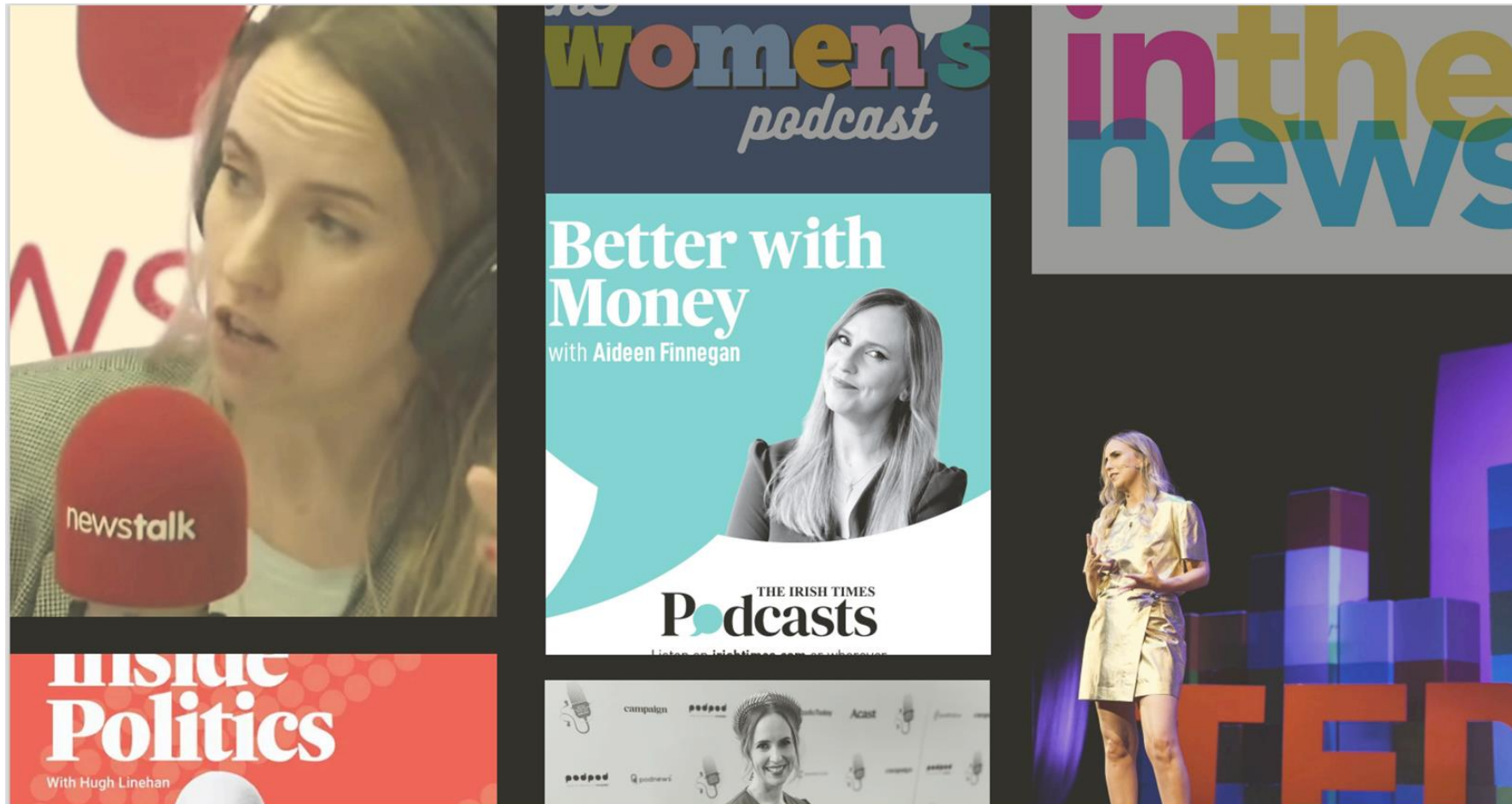


Learn how journalistic ethics apply to podcasting



Explore key technical skills such as recording, editing, and transcribing audio

Q&A with Aideen



School Podcast Competition Checklist-



Deadline 27th February
5 to 10 minutes in length



Focus on news or current affairs
Demonstrate journalistic integrity,
including research and fact-checking

Getting started: Choosing a format



CONTENT



GOALS



TARGET
AUDIENCE



WHO DOES IT
WELL?

Types of Podcasts

Explainer Interview

Single topic deep-dive

Documentary

Storytelling with narration and interviews

Investigative

Multi-episode arc on a single topic

Expert Q&A

Guest on specific issue- can be high profile or little-known

Conversational

Analysis, opinion, usually co-hosted

Hybrid formats

Combination of elements

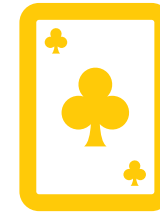
Who does it well? Do your research



Aim - Develop a critical ear for storytelling techniques, production values and journalistic structure



Observe - How does it draw you in, build narrative and distil information?



Analyse - Do you think this works? If so, why? What could you replicate?

Irish Podcast examples



Teen Podcast examples

New York Times School Podcast competition winners 2025

“Innocence, Interrupted: How Sephora Kids Are Redefining the Beauty Market” by Tara Khurana, 16, and Ayushi Wadhwa, 15

“Why Study Math?” by Eason Deng, 14

The foundations

- **SUBJECT** Topic or person of interest
- **NARRATIVE** Suitable format and a story well-told
- **CLARITY** A clear aim. Presented in a digestible way.
- **TIMING** Appropriate length for subject and audience

INTEGRITY Accurate, balanced reporting, editorially sound

TONE Well managed. Engaging and authentic host(s).

HIGH PRODUCTION VALUE
Premium audio, good sound design, well edited.

Episode Plan example - intro

This is In the News from The Irish Times. I'm Sorchá Pollak.

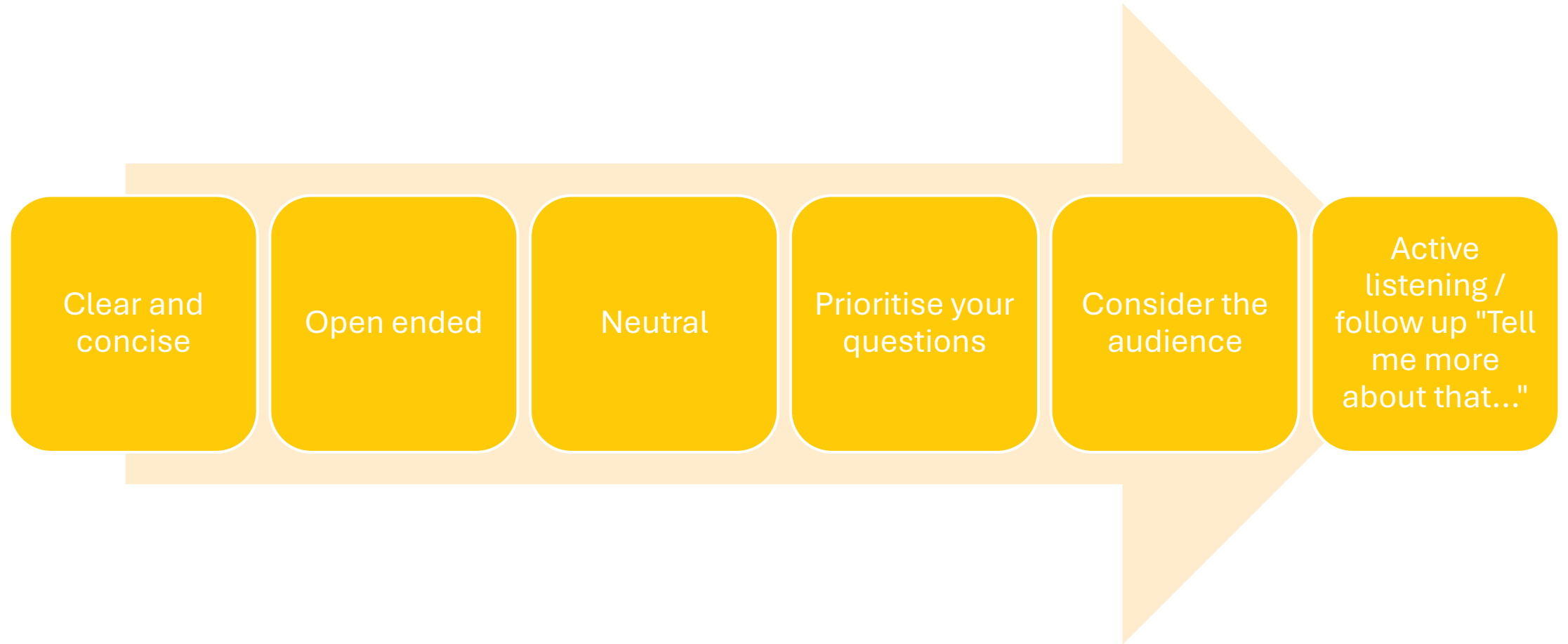
Today: Ireland's TikTok Thieves.

I talk to crime and security editor Conor Lally about a surprising new crime trend – and how you can protect yourself from becoming a victim.

Who Are the Lucky Dip Gang?

- Conor welcome back to the podcast.
- Let's start with Gary Cardiff. What happened to him, and why does he seem to be targeted again and again?
- *Background on Gary Cardiff's high-powered bike and multiple failed theft attempts.*
- *Describe his use of security cameras and how he's caught the same type of people – masked teenagers – trying and failing.*
- *Discuss how he once physically detained a thief in a past incident.*

Interview questions



Finding an audience

The niche is universal

Underserved subjects stand out

Be consistent

Try to keep a regular schedule

Leverage collaborations

Invite guests with established online communities

Impact over numbers

Community, emotional connection and social value

Technical Skills? All you need is your phone

Voice Memo (iPhone)



Voice Recorder (Android)



Editorial resources



RIVERSIDE



descript



Adobe
Audition



Audacity

Music & Sound

Choose

Choose appropriate intro and outro music

Use

Use royalty-free or approved music only

Make

Make sure music fits the mood of the podcast

Classroom exercise: Interview Practice

FIND A QUIET
SPACE

TAKE TURNS
INTERVIEWING
A PARTNER

A DIFFICULT
MOMENT YOU
OVERCAME

ACTIVE
LISTENING

TWO MINUTES
MAX

Classroom exercise #2

You are a podcast producer at a national news organisation and are tasked with publishing a podcast this week based on a news / lifestyle item of your choice



Your Podcast

- What organisation do you work for?
- Pick a topic
- What's your way 'in'?
- What's the line?
- Who are your host(s) and guest(s)?
- Explain your narrative arc





Questions?



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