

So, you want to be a WXPR *We Live Up Here* Features Contributor? Here is how the process works.

1. Pitch me a *We Live Up Here* story via email: mackenzie@wxpr.org. In a few sentences, say what the story is and who you would talk to and why it's important. (Find example stories at www.wxpr.org/weliveuphere.)

These are the elements of a *We Live Up Here* story:

- a. It should be a story that can be told well in 4-5 min. Usually one good interview with a very interesting person or a few interviews around one event or specific topic work well.
 - b. It should be a story you're excited about and that you find personally compelling.
 - c. The topic of the story should have some tie to the humanities, whether it relates back to the culture or people of the Northwoods, history, art, etc.
 - d. The story should resonate with more than one community. We have a huge listening area that involves Oneida, Forest, Lincoln, Vilas, Langlade, Gogebic, and Iron Counties. The goal of this project is to better connect our various communities and to identify aspects of living up here that are unique to this region. The story can focus on one town or one person, but it should be a story that other towns might find interesting, too.
 - e. It should be more complicated than a 2 min. news story. We do a lot of stories about events coming up, etc. in our daily newscasts. Ideally a *We Live Up Here* story is sound-rich with interesting person(s) and a strong sense of place.
2. Once your story pitch has been accepted, set up a time to get recording gear from WXPR and set up the interview(s) wherever works for your subject.
 3. Record the interview(s) (see recorder **QUICK-START GUIDE**).

Here are some general recording tips:

- a. Wear headphones throughout your interview to monitor sound quality.
- b. Feel free to rest your elbow on a table, but try and hold the recorder in your hand to avoid table bumping noises. Also, don't be afraid to get in close to your subject! Holding the internal microphone of the recorder towards the corner of their mouth is the best way to get good sound quality.
- c. Once you start rolling, have your interview subject say a few things that start with the letter "P." This is a good way to test for "P pops." If you hear popping in your headphones, adjust the mic more towards the corner of their mouth until it goes away.

- d. Check your levels. If your input level is too high, you will distort the quality of your audio. Your subject's voice should be peaking where you see the triangle on the recorder. You can adjust the input on the side of the recorder.
 - e. Make sure you're actually recording! If you're not seeing time going by second by second, you're not recording.
4. Write the script (see **SAMPLE SCRIPT**). The final story should be about 5 min. long.

Listen to the interview by taking the SD card out of the recorder and copying the file to your computer (make sure you leave the original file on the SD card for safe keeping.) If you'd like me to mix the story for you, make sure you include the time stamps of the quotes in the script.

Writing for radio is different than writing for other mediums. For tips: training.npr.org

General radio writing tips:

- a. Try and make a case for how interesting the story is early on. Don't save everything good for the end.
 - b. Keep sentences short and easy to comprehend. Listeners can't go back if they didn't understand something and they're listening live. You also don't want them to be confused about who is talking when.
 - c. Write for your voice. If you're not a newscaster, you don't have to sound like one.
 - d. Keep in mind that 5 min. goes by really fast.
 - e. Make sure you give your interview subject(s) good meaty quotes, but also keep in mind that sometimes quotes don't look like much written out, but the way someone said something makes it worth including.
5. Send me the script and I'll take a look and send corrections until we feel confident about it. Once the script is finalized, you can mix the story yourself or have me mix it for you. Either way, you're welcome to record your narration here at the studio.

If you'd like me to mix the final story for you, bring the script and raw interview file and then I'll take it from there.

6. Once the final story is mixed, I'll schedule it for broadcast and the web and I'll pay you! It's great to have photos and a script for the web if possible.

This is the pay scale:

- a. A radio story mixed by you: \$250
- b. A radio story mixed by me: \$225