



Storytellers Manual

Being Part of Our Story

WEIU features the heritage and spirit of local communities from the perspective of the residents in the Our Story program. Grab your camera and take to the streets as you document the people, places, and happenings that make your area special.

This is your opportunity to share the unique features of your town. Profiles of organizations, arts, schools, attractions, people and local folklore make great stories and give viewers a sense of your area.

No experience is required, just enthusiasm!

Meet the WEIU Our Story team

Jeff Owens, General Manager/Underwriting

jdowens@eiu.edu

217-581-6954

Ke'an Armstrong, Project Manager

ksarmstrong@eiu.edu

217-581-7193

Rameen Karbassioon, Producer/Director

rkarbassioon@eiu.edu

217-581-8401

Lacey Spence, Producer/Director

lmspence@eiu.edu

217-581-7245

How it works

WEIU will ask you to pick one topic for a story to be featured in the show. Events, people, places, and happenings are all great stories to share! We want stories to highlight the great heart of your town. Every story needs visuals like photos, videos, newspaper articles, or memorabilia that you will need to collect. Make sure the images correspond to everything you want to tell in your feature story. You can also use archival media if needed.

What happens next?

Each story needs one spokesperson to be on camera. On the production day, WEIU will collect your images/media and we'll talk to you in a casual, on-camera interview. Your personality is what makes this show special!

After production day is complete, our team will take your images and interview back to WEIU where we will edit your story. Don't worry, we'll make you look and sound like a pro!

Once the editing process is done, we'll invite you to an exclusive premiere screening of the show and you'll also be invited to the WEIU studios for the night of the live broadcast. You won't want to miss this! You'll see how your community responds to the show as they phone in their support for your feature.

Want to know more?

You'll find this information such as helpful hints on creating your story, updates on the project, and contact information on our website:

<http://www.weiunet.com/ourstory>

Click on your town.

You can also call any time or send an email to the project team. Sharing local stories is part of the spirit of public television. Through viewership support, we are able to bring you all your favorite programs on WEIU. The Our Story program truly makes WEIU *your* local public broadcasting station as *you* help create material to broadcast! Thanks for joining the team and have fun!

Tips for Appearing on Camera

Studies show viewers' judge a person within the first 30 seconds of viewing a program. Here are a few tips to help you prepare for your on-camera interview and make that first impression favorable.

Clothing

- Whether dealing with television or personal appearances, your outfit is NOT what you want people to remember about you.
- Choose an outfit that looks good when standing and comfortable when sitting. Remember that cameras are sometimes placed at low levels. Slacks, knee length or longer skirts are recommended.
- Avoid clothing with logos, large patterns or geometric shapes, or small high contrast patterns or lines, like herringbone, bold checks or plaids. The audience will watch your clothes instead of you.
- Avoid pure white and black clothing, as they make skin tones appear harsh. White shirts reflect too much light. Consider wearing colors complimentary to your skin tone. Solid colors with a colorful scarf or tie look good.
- Refrain from wearing distracting trims like large bows or numerous ruffles.
- Remove pens and eyeglasses from pockets.

Accessories

- Choose solid-colored accessories or ones with simple patterns that do not appear too busy.
- Keep jewelry simple so it does not make noise when you move your head or body.
- Avoid dangling earrings, which can distract viewers.

Makeup

- Women - foundation and lipstick help to keep you from looking tired or washed out. Don't wear dark, heavy makeup colors; television tends to create its own natural shadows.

- Men - shave before your interview so you won't have "5 o'clock shadow" or use a powder close to your skin tone to lessen the appearance of your beard.

Body Language

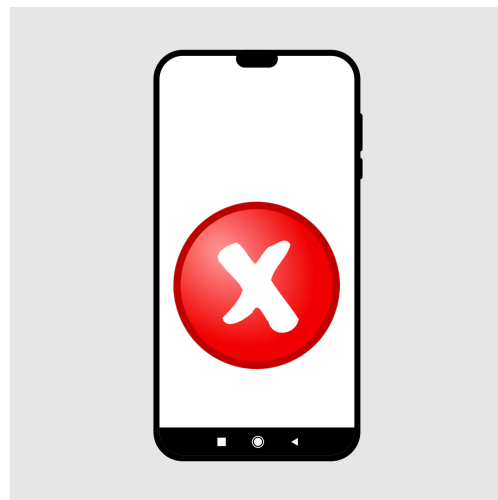
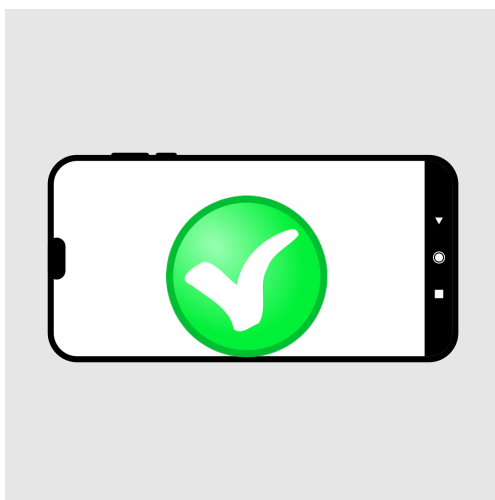
- SMILE - this makes you look confident and comfortable. Avoid nervous fidgeting with pens, glasses, change, etc.
- Know your subject content, bring notes, but don't read from a script (a side table will be provided to place your notes on for reference). You will be talking to the interviewer, not looking directly into the camera for the interview. Keep it conversational, like you're telling your story to a friend.
- Be aware of your posture. Keep shoulders relaxed and both feet on the floor. Try to maintain eye contact with your interviewer.
- Be YOURSELF and have fun!

Tips for Shooting Video

What better way to take pride in your community than by telling others why it's so special? This project relies on both your knowledge of the story itself, and making it shine with engaging visuals. To help your story stand out, our videographers at WEIU want to share some of their secrets and strategies for successful videotaping.

Video Tips

- Shoot Video/Pictures Horizontally not Vertically.



- If possible, change the aspect ratio setting on your video camera to Widescreen (16:9) instead of Full screen (4:3). Please DO NOT select “letterbox” or “pan-scan.”
- Scope out a scene before starting to record it. Then plan and see which vantage points provide the best views.
- All shots should be 10 seconds long or more. The more you can shoot from different angles and focal lengths like close up, medium wide and really wide. We need at least 20 different shots of a variety of people, places, items, etc. to piece together a 2-minute video story.
- Use a tripod, when possible, for stable video/pictures. When a tripod isn’t available, use other solid objects to stabilize the shot – e.g., lean against trees, set your camera on a tabletop, or even sit in a chair and use the armrest to help make the video steadier.
- Make sure your camera is level and the scene looks straight in the viewfinder.
- Resist the temptation to do a lot of “panning” and “zooming” with your camera. It’s best to physically move your camera from one place to another to get the shot you want. If action is happening in your shot, let things move inside the picture instead of moving the camera.
- When shooting inside, try to use well-lit areas. Don’t be afraid to bring more lighting into a dark room. If it’s hard to see details in a viewfinder, extra light will help reveal it.
- Avoid shooting a person with bright light (like a window) in the background. The camera will adjust for the bright light and make your subject darker.
- Detail shots are especially powerful when edited into a series. They provide the viewer with unique visual information, and they can have high emotional impact. Don’t be afraid to get close.
- Many cameras include a feature that imprints the date and time of a recording on the video. Please turn this feature off.

- If you're delivering video from a past event or program, please make sure the DVD has been "finalized." This allows DVD's to be played in machines other than the one it was created on. If we can't play it at WEIU, we can't use it.
- Make sure all video and/or photos are your creation. We cannot use copyrighted material without written permission from the rights holder. If needed, release forms are included in your storyteller packet.

Photo / Video Log Sheets

Important: Below is a sample of the media log sheet we need you to complete as you gather footage/images for your story. This log sheet helps our producer know where to place the images that correspond with your story during the editing process and prevents errors.

- Please number and title your videos, photographs, newspaper articles, and other memorabilia used for this project.
- Provide any important descriptions to identify the media (locations, people, dates, etc.)

Our Story Photo / Video Log Sheet

Story Name

Videographer

Subject	Shot Description	Shot Length
Main Street	Wide shot looking east	:15
Main Street	Close up, Main street sign	:10
Main Street	Medium Shot, shoppers walking down street	:30
Main Street	Medium Shot, people sitting at table eating lunch	:15