KnowledgeBase: **Audio Data Quality Standards for Editing and Storage**

It is important to keep audio data quality standards consistent when editing and storing your audio files. This habit will keep your recordings sounding similar and professional as well as make it easier to edit them when necessary. In this article, you will find suggestions for what settings should be configured when beginning to work on your recordings in Audacity. Standards may change depending on your community's needs, type of recording, and other factors. To learn more about Audacity and how to download the software, you can read about the steps here.

Editing Recordings

A master copy is close copy to the original audio recording or the original audio itself. This recording will be the basis for editing. A Master copy will be duplicated and have copies made of it to use for your FirstVoices site.

When you record and begin to work on your master copy, it is suggested to follow and make sure the audio is in these standards:

Standard	Setting	Notes
Project Rate or Sampling Rate	At least 44,100 Hertz / 44.1 kHz	Samples per second
Bit-depth	24-bit	How many bits in each sample
Snap-To	Nearest	Selects to the increment selected in settings (i.e. seconds)
Mono or Stereo	Mono is preferred	Mono means output is from both speakers; Stereo means output is from different signals from L & R. If you are recording someone close by to you, then recording in Stereo is not usually necessary.
File Type	WAV	WAV files are large lossless, uncompressed files that are better for editing.
Microphone	Recordings are ideally made with an external microphone. Each microphone should have a shock mount and pop filter	Ideally, you should record with a wide-diaphragm condenser microphone.

Audacity has many abilities including to segment and export labels and also segment raw audio based on labels. Segmented audio should contain only one repetition of the word in the language. Segmented audio also should not include English or long pauses. It is important to remember that compressed audio (MP3s) for web/mobile applications must not replace master copies (WAVs). Compressed audio will be copies of the master copy, so the master copy should be stored safely and in an organized system to be used throughout your project.

Audio filenames must follow a uniform naming convention (i.e. word_speaker_DD-MM-YYYY.wav), and must not have spaces or special characters (Latin alphabet only).

Storage/Archiving Recordings

Files should be archived on at least two external hard drives or USB thumb drives, stored in different physical locations, as well as band-owned servers (where possible).

For each recording, the following files should be present and organized together:

- Raw .wav file
- Audacity project file (.aup)
- Exported, segmented wav files

It is also recommended to keep a record or log of your recordings. This document should contain what you think is important information like filename, file type, contents, and more for each recording you log.

Additional Resources to Share

FirstVoices has provided two document that contain a summary of these audio standards. One copy is a visual graphic with arrows to indicate where to adjust the settings related to recording and editing in Audacity. Another copy is a one-pager that recorders can keep and print out for themselves that details the standards for recording and storing audio during your FirstVoices.