



Down the Scope Editorial Guidelines

Updated Jan. 8, 2026

Down the Scope is a podcast that takes a deeper look at the universe around us and is produced by B-SCI. It aims to present curiosity-driven stories that are usually not presented to Black and underrepresented audiences. To maintain consistency across its episodes the following guidelines have been set:

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1. Voice and Tone
 - a. Tone and voice: Friendly, curious, and serious we needed for older audiences (18+). Avoid jargon and complex terms. If unfamiliar terms or concepts are used, they should be explained
2. Structure
 - a. Script length: 3200–4000 words to aim for 20-25 minutes of audio
 - b. Hook: 80 words
 - c. Body: Generally three to four acts
 - i. Three act breakdown
 1. Act 1, Introduction: approximately 800 words
 2. Act 2, Body: approximately 1600 words
 3. Act 3, Conclusion: approximately 800 words
 - ii. Four act breakdown
 1. Act 1, Introduction: 800 words
 2. Act 2, Development: 800 words
 3. Act 3, Twist: 800 words
 4. Act 4, Conclusion: 800 words
3. Reporting data
 - a. Always spell out measurements, no abbreviations (meters, kilometers, milliliter, miles)
 - b. Write out SI units followed by imperial units. For example: 100 kilometers (62.1 miles)
 - c. For temperature, write out “degrees” and then units. For example, “34 degrees Celsius (93.2 degrees Fahrenheit)
 - d. For percentages, use a numeral and then % sign. For example, “the average decomposition rate rose by 1%). For smaller than 1%, precede with a zero. For example, “the average decomposition rate rose by 0.7%).
 - e. Spell out numbers (0-9) and numerics for 10+
 - f. For more specific cases, ask the assigned editor.
4. Evaluating scientific claims and fact-checking
 - a. For superlatives, evaluate if something is “first”, “last”, “best”, “worst”. Verify these claims and do not use without context or evidence



- b. For numbers, measurements, units, and calculations, do the math and double check, then ask someone else to check.
 - c. Ensure all quotes or sources are attributed properly
 - d. All claims and evidence must be backed by reputable sources (peer reviewed, governmental data, reputable institutions, expert interviews)
 - i. B-SCI reserves the right to ask for a source document
5. Copyediting
 - a. During copyediting, text, audio, and video scripts undergo major edits for clarity and accuracy. This includes rearranging sentences, reorganizing paragraphs and entire sections, and potentially major structural changes. This also includes getting editor feedback and comments. This prevents mistakes being overlooked
6. Proofreading
 - a. This is the final step in the editing process. Ensure all spelling, grammar, and punctuations are correct. Consult the style guide one more time. Once these steps are completed the assigned editor will give final approval.