

Lonnie "Ro" Wade

Audio Production Lead — Generative Audio Evaluation

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

I engineer sound for stories, build the systems production teams run on, and train the AI that now has to meet the same bar. Ambie- and Webby-recognized audio engineer with 10+ years across Spotify, Audible, and PBS — 50+ episodes and 2M+ cumulative plays. Built the production systems 15+ non-engineers could run independently; now apply that same calibration to AI-generated audio evaluation, speech annotation, and quality benchmarking for AI voice and audio models.

CORE SKILLS

Team Leadership	Quality standards development, SOP creation, calibration session facilitation, performance feedback, cross-functional collaboration, annotation workflow design
Speech & Audio Analysis	Dialogue editing, vocal optimization, emotional nuance detection, prosodic variation assessment, conversational dynamics, audio fidelity evaluation
Audio Engineering	Pro Tools (20+ years), iZotope RX, Logic Pro, Ableton Live, Ardour, EQ/compression, LUFS optimization, spectral cleanup
AI Audio Evaluation	ElevenLabs (voice cloning, synthesis evaluation), Descript (AI transcription assessment), HeyGen, AI model training & quality feedback, dataset annotation

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

AI Audio Evaluation & Quality Benchmarking Specialist

2025 – Present

- Evaluate AI-generated audio and video against source material for fidelity, motion continuity, and temporal accuracy for a confidential frontier AI client (*Micro1*)
- Lead speech annotation for AI voice models, benchmarking emotional range, prosodic accuracy, and conversational naturalness (*Turing*)
- Evaluate AI-generated audio and music-production content for accuracy and relevance to professional engineering workflows (*Handshake AI Solutions*)
- Develop annotation guidelines and quality standards adopted across evaluation workflows

Audio Production Lead (Freelance / Contract)

2023 – Present

Notable clients: Audible, KFF Health News, PBS, Best Case Studios, The Autry Museum
Managed production teams and directed speech quality initiatives for award-winning speech-driven podcasts, mentoring junior engineers and establishing quality standards.

KEY PROJECTS & LEADERSHIP

- **KFF Health News — Silence in Sikeston (2024):** Managed team workflows, set mixing/sound design standards, led calibration sessions, and provided ongoing performance feedback (*NABJ Best Podcast winner 2025, Ambies nominee*)
- **Audible — What Could Go Wrong (2025):** Coordinated production workflows and integrated AI voice synthesis (ElevenLabs) for documentary series (*Audible Best Podcasts 2025, Ambies & Podcast Academy nominee 2026*)
- **Additional projects:** Trained teams on asset management, remote workflows, and quality standards across *We Were All Rooting For You* (Webby nominee & honoree 2025), *Reel Talk* (2023), and *Black Cowboy* (The Autry Museum)

Engineered flagship shows including *How to Save a Planet*, *Science Versus*, and *Crime Show*. Delivered 25+ episodes to publication and contributed to cross-team production workflows.

- Specialized in dialogue editing, vocal optimization, and sound design, maintaining high-quality standards for speech clarity, emotional preservation, and tonal consistency across narrative content
- Supported remote recording workflows, ensuring quality control for distributed production and coaching external guests on vocal performance and recording technique
- Executive produced and hosted *Small Talk Is Dead*, managing team performance, developing production SOPs, and conducting regular feedback sessions to deliver broadcast-quality remote recordings while directing vocal performance standards
- Collaborated with producers and editors to deliver content meeting platform specifications on deadline

— AWARDS & RECOGNITION

WINNER	NABJ Best Podcast 2025 (<i>Silence in Sikeston</i>)
NOMINEE	The Ambies — Audible Best Documentary Podcast 2026 (<i>What Could Go Wrong</i>)
NOMINEE	The Podcast Academy — Audible Best Podcast 2026 (<i>What Could Go Wrong</i>)
SELECTION	Audible Best Podcasts of 2025 (<i>What Could Go Wrong</i>)
NOMINEE	The Ambies — Best Health Podcast 2025 (<i>Silence in Sikeston</i>)
NOMINEE	The Webby Awards — Best Arts & Culture Podcast 2025 (<i>We Were All Rooting For You</i>)
HONOREE	The Webby Awards — Best Host 2025 (<i>We Were All Rooting For You</i>)