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## ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME, KEY ACTION 2

### CAPACITY BUILDING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

#### **Furthering International Relations Capacities and Intercultural Engagement to Nurture Campus Diversity and to Support Internationalisation at Home (FRIENDS)**

### DIGITAL STORYTELLING

#### A HOW-TO MANUAL

#### **1. Introduction**

The FRIENDS project is funded under the European Union's Erasmus+ Programme for Capacity Building in Higher Education. The project's primary goal is to strengthen the twelve involved Asian universities' internationalisation capabilities and to develop their students' global skills and intercultural competence through the purposeful integration of intercultural dimensions into the universities' formal and informal curriculum. This project is led by Varna University of Management, Bulgaria and combines the efforts of four Programme Country Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) from Europe (Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, and Turkey) and twelve Partner Country HEIs from Asia namely, two from Bhutan, two from Cambodia, two from Malaysia, three from the Philippines, and three from Thailand.

Staging a Digital Storytelling Contest is a significant part of the FRIENDS project to integrate an intercultural awareness and cultural diversity (IACD) sensitivity programme on campus. In FRIENDS, digital storytelling is a way of sharing students' IACD stories publicly through various multimedia and channels. Digital storytelling is an engaging platform to reach a broad audience that can creatively showcase a mixture of mediums such as audio, video, and images. Storytelling is an amazing way to connect with people. It is through stories that we learn to appreciate, recognize, and understand the experiences and opportunities that we have encountered. Digital storytelling makes an ordinary story more potent with the use of multimedia. Using this popular medium may help to challenge long-standing beliefs and how individuals view themselves and the world around them.

Sharing digital stories in FRIENDS is expected to raise awareness on the higher education internationalisation agenda across the consortium. A story can be from a lived-in experience or scripted from an imagination that is based on reality. This story can provide wisdom from an experience that otherwise may have been forgotten or yet to unfold. The story can

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enlighten viewers who may never have given importance to IACD concerns at all. Sharing an intercultural and/or international experience through the means of digital storytelling can be a powerful tool to help guide students' future direction and goals.

Crafting and submitting a digital story along with completing the IACD Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) designed and delivered in the FRIENDS project entitles the bearer to get an International Passport. The IACD MOOC provides, inter alia, an online internationalisation at home and a virtual mobility experience. As stated, complying with these two requirements (Digital Storytelling and IACD MOOC) will lead to the award of an International Passport certificate, which means that the student is expected to have acquired global skills that are considered an asset not just by the Intercultural Passport awardee but more importantly by his/her prospective employers. Getting an International Passport is deemed a student's global skills trusted and reliable seal of approval. The Intercultural Passport award to a student is seen as a metaphorical supplement to the official international passport that a person should have when traveling. Interestingly, similar initiatives for the provision of an intercultural competence certificate are offered by a good number of highly internationalised universities across the world, which aim to develop and assess students' global competence.

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## 2. Digital Storytelling Guidelines and Entry Rules

As a student involved in the FRIENDS project, you can plan, organize, and make your own digital story on IACD and or international experience by using this how-to-guide built for old-time and newbie participants alike.

### Eligibility

All enrolled students both in the undergraduate or graduate levels of the twelve Asian universities in FRIENDS are eligible to join this contest. For each call of interest to join this contest, the top three winners shall be announced.

### Number of submissions

Only one (1) submission per student is allowed. No entry from a pair or group/team shall be entertained.

### Where to submit

Entries should be submitted in person through a flash drive at the International Relations Office (IRO) of your home University or can be emailed to the same office. A release letter in which a template is available at the IRO must be filled out upon submission of the entry. This release letter provides consent for the University, care of IRO to use/disseminate the video to a broader audience for the exploitation of the internationalisation objectives in line with the Erasmus+ FRIENDS project's mandate.

### Contest timeline

<b>Open call for digital storytelling contest</b>	Every 1 <sup>st</sup> month of a regular semester
<b>Consultation &amp; production of students' digital stories</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> to 3 <sup>rd</sup> months of a regular semester
<b>Entries submission deadline</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> month of a regular semester
<b>Digital storytelling assessment and judging</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> month of a regular semester
<b>Digital storytelling contest results announcement</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> month of a regular semester

The provided tentative timeline is subject to internal adjustment and revision at the twelve Asian HEIs in FRIENDS depending on their academic calendar and agenda.

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### 3. Mechanics of Digital Storytelling

#### Content and duration

The length of the production should be two to three (2 to 3) minutes. The topic content of digital storytelling can be but is not limited to international or intercultural experience, global experience, cross-cultural experience, intercultural journey; the importance of cross-cultural experience, cross-cultural communication; cultural diversity, etc.

All submissions must be original work by the eligible student and have full copyright to the submitted material, including sound effects and music if used. This means that all submissions should not use copyrighted material without any permission from any sources. Also, all submissions must not include any endorsements of products or services. Further, all submissions must be appropriate for viewing by the general public and by the multi-cultural international community with the content restrictions as below:

- Nudity, profanity or vulgar behavior
- Promote illegal behavior
- Support racial, religious, sexual or other invidious prejudice
- Advocate sexual or violent exploitation
- Graphic violence or inappropriate materials of the scene/s in their sole discretion, dangerous stunts, real weapons of any kind, drug use, content that use hate, torture or slander
- Material that promotes prejudice, hatred or harm against any group or individual or promotes discrimination or exploitation based on race, sex, religion, disability, age or any other basis protected by law
- Materials that are likely to cause offense to any person or to injure the name, reputation or standing of any person in any way directly or indirectly
- Violate rights established by law or agreement
- Invade the privacy of any person

#### Copyright

If someone else's images, music, video, research, and ideas are used, permission has to be secured from the author/owner to use their work. In other words, any material that is not the digital storyteller's original work needs to have references/citations or prior permission for usage of work. A digital story that contains another's work without reference and consent shall be disqualified.

For more information on how to get permission and copyright-related law in Europe, please check here:

[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/625126/EPRS\\_STU\(2018\)625126\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/625126/EPRS_STU(2018)625126_EN.pdf)

For more information on how to get approval for copyright check here:

<https://fairuse.stanford.edu/overview/introduction/getting-permission/>

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### Language of the story

Submission of a digital story can be in English or any local language with English subtitles. English subtitles are encouraged even if the medium of the video is in English.

### Digital storytelling format

The digital storytelling format can be in the form of horizontal stories, short and vertical videos, full motion videos with sound; and or animation or still images. While in particular for the video format, it must be in the form of visual video, a story with swipeable slides, AMP stories, listicles, and or virtual reality. Video resolution needs to be HDTV resolution, 1080p (1920x1080 pixels, 16:9 aspect ratio). The video must be in one of the following formats AVI, WMB, MOV, or MP4 format (MP4 and MOV format preferred).

### Credits

An Erasmus+ project requires that a reference to the logo of the Erasmus+ Programme as well as to the project's logo must be part of the credits/acknowledgments. In other words, the Erasmus+ logo, followed by the logo of the FRIENDS project and subsequently by the logo of the University where the applicant is from, should be cited in the video. A sample is shown below:

#### Erasmus+ Programme logo:



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#### FRIENDS project logo:



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The following disclaimer, which is displayed as the footer of this Manual should also be included in the video, namely:

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#### 4. Creating a Digital Story

For initial guidance on how-to develop a digital story, the students engaged in the FRIENDS project may refer to content that was developed by another Erasmus+ project for Capacity Building in Higher Education, namely the Common Good First: Digital Storytelling for Social Innovation project, project number: 574065-EPP-1-2016-1-UK-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP (<https://commongoodfirst.com/how-to-tell-your-story>).

Furthermore, all students to craft a digital story in FRIENDS are invited to get inspiration from the succeeding steps designed for their reference and presented below.

#### Steps in making a digital story:

1. Develop an idea
2. Plan
3. Outline/script
4. Storyboard
5. Film and record
6. Finish and submit

#### 4.1. Developing an idea

To create a captivating digital story, you should be passionate about what you want to tell. It is easier to work on a project that has a meaning to you, than to feign interest in something you think will impress others. Here are a few key ideas that will help you frame your thoughts and begin your project.

#### Some questions to help activate your creativity:

- What do you want to tell the audience?
- What creative ways can you express your experiences with intercultural and international experiences, communication, and internationalisation?
- Do you have something unique to say based on your experiences, awkward encounters, or fond memories?
- What is a story that only you can tell?
- Is there a particular object that ties you to another part of the world?
- Can you tell the backstory of a picture? Please share it creatively with us!

#### 4.2. Plan

Once you have an idea, you will also need to have a plan for your storytelling. Making and having a plan will help you organize your thoughts and help you figure out how best to use the resources you have.

#### State the purpose of your storytelling:

- Why do people share a personal story?
- Think about a time you heard someone's personal story that inspired you.

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- How did you feel? What was the message?
- What is your story and what is your message?
- How do you want your audience to feel while watching your story?

### **Audience**

Firstly, identify who you are making the story for. This will give you an idea about the language level, the background of those viewing your work, and how much introductory information you must provide within your topic.

### **Materials**

Digital storytelling can combine unique aspects of multiple mediums. You may need to gather backdrops for interviews or a physical object to display for a shot. You may need to work with lights to set the scene. You may need to create props to emphasize points in your story.

### **Equipment**

Depending on how you visualize your project, you will need different equipment. You may be able to create your entire project on your phone if you can record decent audio and have a camera. You may want to use external recorders or microphones for the sound. You may have access to a stand-alone camera or a video camera that you will want to use. You could have excellent editing equipment on your phone or computer that you will use.

## **4.3. Outline/Script**

### **Frame your story**

Think about why your story is unique. Since it is going to be only two to three minutes, you need to consider what details should be included so that you do not lose your plot.

### **Script**

Once you have formulated your idea and gathered materials, you will likely have to come up with an enticing text to lead your viewers through your project. You will want some sort of story arc to give a proper beginning, problem, conflict, solution, and closure that is full of authenticity. How will you "hook" us and draw us in? Does your story have emotion? All of these things will have to be captured in no more than 5 minutes while maintaining proper tone and tempo.

Here are a few things to keep in mind while scripting:

1. Remember honest, and real stories are always powerful
2. Don't forget to add a few lines on lessons learned that others can relate to
3. What is your plot of the story?
4. What will your viewer take back from watching your story?
5. Presentation and storyline are equally essential to engage and attract your audience.

## **4.4. Storyboard**

Storyboarding refer to a way of planning for all the things that will appear in the digital story, such as music, pictures, words, text, photos, and video. Storyboards help storytellers to

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picture the entire story from start to finish. Storyboarding is a visual that you make to show each scene of your digital story. This is a way to get all your thoughts onto a piece of paper so you can put in visual and audio ideas in the order you envision your final project. You might have identified captions, thought bubbles, labels, animation, or other cues that lead picture, video, or animation from scene to scene.

### **Tips**

Try to draw your story visually, what will be your first shot and why?

## **4.5. Film and record**

### **Digitize**

Using your storyboard, you are going to combine all the elements for the visual portion of your story. This should give you an idea of how your finished project will look. Once you are satisfied with watching your storyboard come alive, you will add the final touches to your project.

### **Voice over**

The voice-over narrates the visual story for us. The script is an integral part of moving the audience from scene to scene. This is how we know what the representation of the visuals is. You will want to be particularly careful of background noise, static, and buzzes that will distract your audience from your story. You may want to be creative in fading the voicing in or out or creating your sound effects.

### **Music**

Another aspect you may want to utilize is music to set your mood and tone for the video. However, you will have to be careful with copyright and intellectual property on music. Make sure you have permission to use the music. Another note is to ensure that the music doesn't overpower your voice over and compete for the audience's attention.

## **4.6. Finish and submit**

### **Edit**

The editing phase is where the planning and recording come together. This is where you combine visual and audio parts to create a final product.

Make sure you keep more time than you think you need to edit. Editing is the longest portion of the process. You may want to utilize peers or lecturers to watch your project with fresh eyes and give you feedback. You will be so engrossed in creating the perfect project that you may not notice distracting visual elements in your work and have to reshoot. You will want to ensure your sound aligns with the scene changes. You may have to shorten your audio or visuals to fit into the time limit. You may need to re-time your subtitles or animation to better suit the flow of the project. You may need to create your credits or acknowledge those who helped you.

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## 5. Judging Process and Criteria

### Judging process

All the eligible entries will be subjected to the judging criteria leading to the announcement of the top three (3) winners.

### Judges

Four experts in the fields of intercultural engagement, communication and international cooperation and in filmmaking and or digital storytelling shall serve as the members of the jury for this contest.

### Judging criteria

#### 1. Creativity and Originality of the design (30%)

Creativity is the original, fresh, and external expression of the imagination of the maker by using the medium to convey an idea, message, or thought. Compelling essay evokes laughter, sadness, anger, pride, wonder, or another intense emotion. The use and control of light to create dimension, shape, and roundness in an image or the way the creator uses words to express thoughts and feelings can be considered.

#### 2. Impact and Content of the Storytelling (30%)

The Storytelling refers to the essay's ability to evoke imagination, create a feeling, tell a story, or visually illustrate an idea. Message clarity is strong and able to motivate as well as giving inspiration to the audience

#### 3. Editing & Cinematography (20%)

Videography/Audio includes technical excellence, composition, lighting, style, color, sound, music, editing, and Storytelling. The images, sound, and content should provide variety, interesting angles, imagination, and properly convey the story being told that enhances the story.

#### 4. Structure and Navigation (20%)

Structure and Navigation include the comprehensive organization of the content, proper technique and mechanics, prioritization of information and manner in which users navigate through the story. The story should evoke the emotion and wonder of the audience, leaving them to want more by the time they reach the end. On camera, subjects are presented in a manner consistent and supportive of the story.

### Results and award

Apart from the Intercultural Passport, the top three winners will receive FRIENDS swags giveaways. A special prize will also be given to a digital story that can provide evidence that it has been widely disseminated to a broad audience through social media accounts like YouTube, Facebook, and or Instagram. However, this does not guarantee or provide eeway for winning the contest.

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