

CURRICULUM

The Cassandra Project developed a curriculum aimed to build the capacity of new and emerging socially engaged storytellers and the platforms which support them. The process began as a pilot with young storytellers (The Cassandra Project) and became a practical methodology with training materials for the wider storytelling sector. An international team of trainers and mentors created the blended-course format and the curriculum.

What this methodology includes

- A practical training course
- Co-creation processes guided by mentors, including community-engaged work
- Performance development, rehearsals, and pilot try-outs
- Presentations and public shows for sharing work and gathering feedback

Below you will find an overview of objectives and learning outcomes for each phase of the process. The toolkit provides clear guidelines, background information, and practical examples in different formats to support your progression along this learning path toward socially engaged storytelling.

This Curriculum covers Phases 2, 3 and 4 of the Cassandra project model, as these phases deal with the learning and development of participants. Since phases 1 and 5 occur prior and post participant involvement, they have been omitted from the curriculum.

Phase 1: The Training Course (Immersive Residency)

Purpose of the Phase: To immerse storytellers in an intensive creative environment where they are introduced to storytelling, build foundational skills, develop artistic identity, bond as a cohort, and begin shaping work for performance.

Aims

- To introduce participants to Socially Engaged Storytelling as an art form and sector
- To build a foundation in the craft of performance storytelling
- To develop skills needed to engage with story research, development, and interpretation
- To strengthen the creative process through structured practice and experimentation
- To expand understanding of cultural, thematic, and narrative context

- To support the transition from story exploration to performance readiness

Outcomes

- Participants will have investigated and selected story themes with cultural and thematic awareness
- Gain knowledge about the history and importance of oral storytelling and its status as Intangible Cultural Heritage
- Learn and apply narrative techniques to shape and refine story structure
- Experiment with perspective, character, and emotional interpretation
- Develop physical and vocal approaches to storytelling
- Test work in progress through shared creative spaces and experience telling

Phase 2: Social Engagement and Research (Extended period of home-based and local practice)

Purpose of the Phase: To support new storytellers to actively research, interpret, and creatively engage with diverse stories with care and respect.

Aims

- To establish a strong ethical foundation for how research and storytelling are conducted, with a focus on respect and openness in all interactions.
- Employ a variety of methods to gather meaningful stories, encouraging critical examination of personal biases.
- Begin to identify narratives that resonate with authenticity and creativity while ensuring ethical considerations are considered.

Outcomes

- Apply ethical frameworks to research and storytelling, including obtaining informed consent and protecting privacy.
- Work with sensitive topics and communities respectfully to avoid harm.
- Build respectful connections and collaborate effectively with individuals, communities, organisations, peers, and mentors.
- Use interviews, workshops, observation, archives, and cultural immersion to gather stories and document findings in organised, reflective, and creative ways.
- Identify socially relevant, authentic, and personally compelling themes from research, while critically reflecting on bias and positionality.

- Transform research into layered, engaging narratives by applying storytelling techniques that balance artistic freedom with ethical responsibility.
- Continuously evaluate creative choices and the work's impact, and integrate insights into the ongoing storytelling process.

Phase 3: Going Public (Professional Public Performance)

Purpose of the Phase: To support participants in taking their Socially Engaged Storytelling to professional, public platforms.

Aims

- To develop and employ an understanding of rehearsal planning and production processes.
- To build confidence and experience in presenting professional standard socially engaged stories to audiences
- To introduce the practical frameworks of staging, promotion, and touring work

Outcomes

Participants will be able to:

- Plan and manage a structured rehearsal process with clear milestones and timescales.
- Refine performance material through try-outs, previews, and feedback
- Demonstrate stagecraft, presence, and audience awareness in live settings
- Prepare publicity materials to promote their work effectively
- Understand basic technical requirements, including staging, lighting, and sound
- Collaborate with producers, marketers, and technicians to realise performances



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