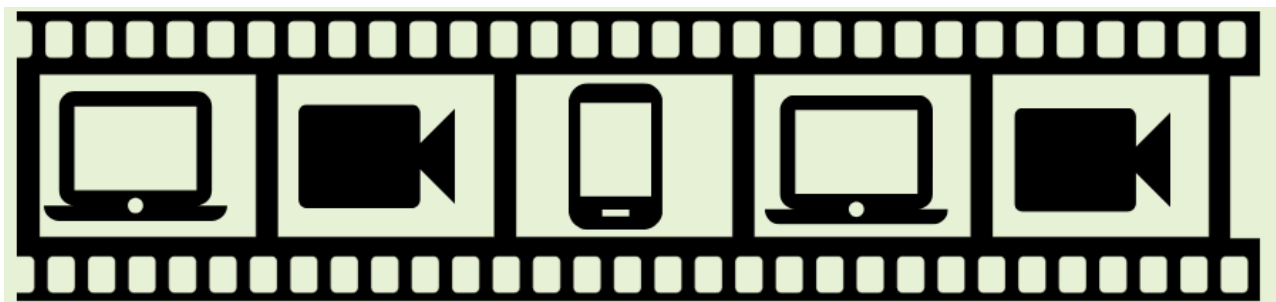


DIGITAL STORYTELLING PROGRAMME AND  
METHODOLOGY ADAPTED TO NEEDS AND  
CHARACTERISTICS OF INTELLECTUAL DISABLED



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# 1. GENERAL PART

## 1.1 Programme name

Digital Storytelling programme adapted to needs and characteristics of intellectual disabled

## 1.2 Groundedness

The Council of the European Union adopted the *Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning* in May 2018. The Recommendation identifies eight key competences essential to citizens for personal fulfilment, a healthy and sustainable lifestyle, employability, active citizenship and social inclusion (Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, 2019).

It is written that all Member States should *"support the right to quality and inclusive education, training and lifelong learning and ensure opportunities for all to develop key competences by making full use of the Key Competences for Lifelong Learning — A European Reference Framework ... and support and reinforce the development of key competences from an early age and throughout life, for all individuals, as part of national lifelong learning strategies; support all learners, including those facing disadvantages, or having special needs, to fulfil their potential; support the development of key competences ..."* (Council Recommendation, 2018).

The Reference Framework sets out eight key competences: literacy competence, multilingual competence, mathematical competence and competence in science, technology and engineering, digital competence, personal, social and learning to learn competence, citizenship competence, entrepreneurship competence, cultural awareness and expression competence.

In the process of Digital Storytelling, participants – people with intellectual disabilities – develop, upgrade and practise different skills, such as: social skills, communication skills, cooperation skills, listening skills, literacy skills, digital skills, life skills needed to participate fully in society and thus to increase their social inclusion. Participants practise self-reflection, emotional work and memory work. The empowerment, that the method enables is extremely important. Self-esteem, self-image and pride come along in the process.

The education of adults with intellectual disabilities has the following fundamental objectives: to enable them for lifelong learning, to help them integrate into the wider social environment, to strengthen adult learners' self-image and to support their understanding of being an adult person despite their disabilities.

Lifelong learning in different forms and in different ways is a constant process of every human being. It is especially important for people with intellectual disabilities, because the processes of forgetting the acquired knowledge and skills take place much faster than with the majority of the population. The Digital Storytelling programme for people with intellectual disabilities focuses on skills important for everyday life and enables the possibility for transferring these skills into other life contexts.

Digital Storytelling gives a platform for a marginalised group, like people with intellectual disabilities, to express themselves. It is a powerful form of media expression that enables individuals to bring forth their personal cultures and stories and to explore their creativity. Creative work is important as they can express themselves and their individuality. It humanises the individual and shows diversity, which is important, as

people with intellectual disabilities are often seen as one homogenous group. It can thus cherish and promote equality.

In the interviews with experts working with people with intellectual disabilities, conducted in the beginning of the DigiStorID project, the need for Digital Storytelling was confirmed for all the above-mentioned reasons, and furthermore as interviewees expressed that there is always a need to know more about their clients. They also expressed that other interested groups could be family members, friends, school mates, teachers, assistants at school and during free time, people in general who want to know more about disabilities, disability communities and associations as well as decision makers.

### **1.3 Target group**

The target group of the Digital Storytelling programme is people with intellectual disabilities who need to enhance, upskill and practise basic skills for enabling their participation in society, and thus increase their social inclusion. With this programme, participants have the opportunity to tell their stories and at the same time improve their basic skills.

Adults with moderate, severe and profound intellectual disabilities are never completely independent, so they need special care, help, guidance and support throughout their lives. Family members, personal assistants, people who know the participants very well, are close to them and offer them appropriate help and support according to their needs can help in the process of Digital Storytelling. The programme takes into account characteristics and abilities of participants with intellectual disabilities to be able to take as much advantage from the Digital Storytelling method as possible. The facilitator is a guide who takes the storyteller through the process of Digital Storytelling.

### **1.4 The goals of the educational programme**

The Digital storytelling programme enable participants:

- to develop or increase basic skills, empower them to function more easily in society and contribute to their social inclusion, thus raising their quality of life,
- to express themselves through stories and to be heard and understood by telling their personal stories,
- to bring forth their personal culture and stories and to explore their creativity by using Digital Storytelling as a powerful form of media expressions,
- to create a positive self-image,
- to develop and strengthen self-regulation and functionality,
- to support their own motivation to learn new skills,
- to strengthen self-reliance and self-esteem,
- to develop self-esteem and evaluation skills through active participation in the planning process of the activities and continuous reflection on performed activities,
- to increase empowerment as an individual process.

## **1.5 Programme duration**

The duration of the programme depends on the participants in the group, their characteristics and abilities, as well as the activities of the organization in which the method of Digital Storytelling is being implemented. Therefore, the programme consists of building bricks that can be adapted to the concentration span and the abilities of the participants, as well as the existing schedule of each organization.

Based on the experiences of facilitators within the DigiStorID project, it is advisable to run the programme in a two-week implementation time.

## **1.6 Conditions for enrolment, progression and completion of the programme**

There are no enrolment conditions. Persons with intellectual disabilities can participate according to their decision. The participation in the programme also requires the consent of their legal guardian, if the participant is under legal guardianship.

There are no progression conditions.

Completion of the programme: active participation in the programme with the help of facilitator.

## 2. SPECIAL PART

### 2.1 Organization of education and implementation of the programme

The organization implementing the Digital Storytelling programme must take into account the needs of the group and each individual and all other circumstances that may affect the course of the implementation, like their daily routine. The programme is carried out in short sets, consisting of building bricks that can be adapted to the concentration span and the abilities of the participants, and they can be used at the same time as other activities for participants within the services of the organization.

Therefore, the implementation of the programme takes place according to the individual building bricks that allow different possibilities of use – they consist of so-called “sub building bricks”, different ways of reaching the goal of the building brick, with which the greatest possible adaptation to the characteristics and needs of the participants is enabled. These “sub building bricks” enable participants to work as independently as possible.

The organization is advised to review current activities and prepare a framework plan for the implementation of the Digital Storytelling programme.

The Digital Storytelling method involves:

- Group activities
- Individual work
- Individualized work according to the needs and abilities of the participant
- Work in pairs

### 2.2 The Building Bricks

An overview of the building bricks and sub building bricks developed in the DigiStorID project is shown in the flow chart below. The following is a description of these building bricks and sub building bricks. However, a more detailed description of building bricks, sub building bricks and their practical implementation with tips for facilitators are included in the facilitator's manual.



## **BRICK 1: Getting to know each other/energizers**

### *Working with: social skills*

The first brick is important if the participants are unfamiliar with each other, or if the facilitator is not very familiar with them. It will help create a safe space when the participants slowly get to know each other and start sharing small bits and pieces about themselves. Brick 1 is similar to brick 2 (where the participants find their story), we use creative exercises and start sharing, and it might be that the participants already find the story they want to tell during brick 1.

### **Sub building bricks:**

#### ➤ **Brick 1a: The wrong name tag. Good outside.**

All participants get a name tag, but it is not theirs. Now it is their task to walk up to each other (at the same time) and ask for names until they find the person that the tag belongs to. Participants with illiteracy or low literacy can have a picture added on the tag, or the participants can have their own name written on the chest on another tag, which the other participants can compare to the tag they were given.

#### ➤ **Brick 1b: Draw a self portrait**

All participants get a blank paper and something to draw with. The facilitator asks them to draw themselves. Hereafter it is time to share if they want. They all show the portrait to the others, explaining about the drawing and why they drew it like that. The facilitator needs to be ready to ask questions about the drawing and try to get them to tell a bit about themselves through it. The drawings can later be used in the film if the storyteller wants to. The facilitator makes sure to keep them.

#### ➤ **Brick 1c: Circle of sharing**

A circle of sharing is a good way to start the morning and to exercise listening to each other. All participants and the facilitator(s) sit down in a circle. There must not be any empty chairs or big “holes” in the circle and everyone must sit close enough to hear each other.

The facilitator gives a question that everyone gets time to answer in turn. Many of the questions focus on the positive, but the facilitator can try to talk about topics that are more difficult. In this case, there should be time for emotional support if needed.

#### ➤ **Brick 1d: The present**

Everyone sits in a circle, and one person gives another an imaginary present from an imaginary pile of presents in the middle. The receiver says thank you, opens it, and then uses their imagination to decide what is in that parcel. They can show and explain it to the circle. The participant who got the present then gets up and finds another present to give to the person sitting next to them and so on.

#### ➤ **Brick 1e: I like...**

Everyone sits in a circle, and then takes turns to make a statement about themselves, for example “I like lions” and then mimes a lion. Then everyone else in the circle who likes lions also stands up and mimes the lion. The one who made the statement then chooses the next one to go on.

### ➤ **Brick 1f: Your favourite colour**

On the table or on the floor there are many different colours (coloured paper or similar). The participants pick up their favourite colour and try to find another person in the room with the same colour. When they find a person with the same colour, they can talk about it and why it is their favourite (for example “I like blue, because I like the sea...”). Sometimes it is easier for the participants to express what they like through colour.

## **BRICK 2: Finding the story**

*Working with: long-term memory, explicit memory recollection, self-reflection, emotional work, creativity, listening skills, sharing skills, literacy skills*

Brick 2 is where facilitators try to activate memory and self-reflection with the participants. Facilitators do this through a series of creative exercises and sharing in the group, and hope to spark some memories into life, which can be the basis of the story participants would like to tell. The exercises work on different levels, and it can be good to use as many as possible. Facilitators need to be aware, though, that it might also confuse some participants if they have found the story they want to tell, and facilitators then ask them to tell other stories (through the exercises). Facilitators need to try to read the participant and judge how many exercises will be beneficial. If the participant has found more stories, the facilitator can help them find the one story they want to tell after the group exercises when facilitating the individual story work.

The facilitator should try and observe the emotions of the participants when they tell the story for the first time. This might make it easier for the facilitator to help the participants rediscover and maybe describe those emotions when they write their script. The facilitator needs to be aware that the exercises can be very emotional for some participants and needs to allow for time for support if needed.

### **Sub building bricks:**

#### ➤ **Brick 2a: Drawing**

The facilitator gives the participants paper and (coloured) pens and asks them to draw their favourite place/their childhood home. Participants can then show and tell about their drawing to the rest of the group. The facilitator can ask about sensuous experiences, smells, sounds, colours, feelings, tastes.

#### ➤ **Brick 2b: Bring a photo**

The participants have beforehand been given time to choose one or more photos of their own. They now sit with the group and in turns share the photo, the story behind it and why they chose it. Through guided talk, the facilitator asks about what happened before the picture was taken, what happened after, what emotions they had etc.

#### ➤ **Brick 2c: The postcard**

The participants are given a blank postcard, it does not matter what is on the front. The facilitator asks them to write a postcard to a person who is special to them. They should start with Dear ... and then talk a bit about



what the person means to them. When they are done, they can read their postcards to the others in the group. In case of illiteracy or low literacy, participants still get a postcard, maybe they want to choose the one they like the best and do a small drawing on the back. When sharing, the facilitator then asks the participants about their drawing, to whom they would like to send the postcard, and what they would like to tell them.

### ➤ **Brick 2d: An object**

The participants are asked to bring an object of their own choice. In the group, they then share the story behind the object, and why they have chosen it. It is later possible to use photos of the object in the story, if relevant.

### ➤ **Brick 2e: Photo safari. Good outside**

If the Digital Storytelling workshop is in a place that is known to the participants, the facilitator asks them to go for a walk around the premises, find one of their favourite places and take photos of it, with an assistant if needed. They can then share the experience with each other by showing the group the place and telling the others why this is their favourite place and what they use it for. It is later possible to use the photos in the story, if relevant.

### ➤ **Brick 2f: Music**

The participants choose some music on their own to be played to the others. They then share what memories and maybe emotions it gives them. The facilitator can for example ask if they remember when they heard it the first time, who they heard it with or what it reminds them of.

### ➤ **Brick 2g: Individual facilitated story work**

The participants have all touched upon different memories and stories from their life. It is now the facilitator's job to work with the participants on finding what story they would like to tell. First the facilitator simply tries to ask what story they would like to tell, what story is the most important in this moment. The facilitator can use visual support, having the drawings, postcard, object, pictures etc. present.

Then the facilitator can try to ask about the different stories that have come up during the creative exercises, often it has been clear which ones meant a lot, and which ones a little less. Maybe the participant even touched upon the same story more times. Sometimes the participant wants to tell a totally different story than one that occurred during the creative exercises.

When the story subject has been selected, the task is to try and condense it. It is always a good idea to try and help the participant to find a beginning, a middle and an end. Often stories begin with an initial state of affairs, the middle is some kind of turning point, and the end is a new and changed situation. The facilitator tries to help find the turning point in the story and what this turning point has meant to the participant. This helps the audience to understand the story better, but in the end, and more importantly, it can also help the participant's self-reflection.

The facilitator tries to help the participant to find concrete situations, and to facilitate the emotional work that often comes with the storytelling. Many participants will start out by describing something or someone that they like. This type of descriptive film can also end up being very good for empowerment and self-recognition. The facilitator's task is to help the participant to step further to begin actual story work. It adds another dimension to the story and the participant's self-reflection and emotional work.

Working with people with ID, we have often seen that their stories are very positive, they are about the good things in their lives. However, Digital Storytelling is also a very good tool for talking about the more challenging or difficult things in participants' lives. When facilitating the finding of the story, the facilitator can try to ask questions, which leads the participant in the direction of reflecting on more difficult aspects. Whether they choose to tell their story about it, is their own decision. On this note, we always advise against participants telling a story that is still happening. That means that if the participant is still going through something difficult, the facilitator might encourage them to talk about something else. If there is no end, it might not be the right story to tell. The facilitator has to help the participant safely through the process. When working with very difficult stories, the facilitator has to consider whether there should be a therapist or another professional available at the workshop for emotional support (unless the facilitator is the therapist).

### **BRICK 3: Writing script**

#### ***Working with: literacy skills, structure and order of events, self-reflection, emotional work***

No matter how the story is put on paper, a lot of the story work from brick 2 will interact with brick 3. Brick 3 is the formation of the story, the setting up of the structure of the narrative. The participant must decide on how to express the story that they have chosen. What order it should be in, what language it should be expressed in, what style and so on. It is important to keep it simple. The language should be a spoken language, not written. It should rather be like telling the story to a good friend, short sentences and easy words. The facilitator invites all participants to tell their story in first person, as this will ensure the focus on the experience of the participant, even though the story could be about someone else.

The script should be no longer than 250-300 words, which will result in a film of around 3-5 minutes. If a storyteller speaks very slowly, the facilitator can consider reducing the word count.

#### **Sub building bricks:**

##### **➤ Brick 3a: Individual facilitated script work**

If the participant has a written language, it is the facilitator's job to be there as a support in the writing process. The focus is on the content, the story. Grammatical correctness or spelling does not matter too much, as the script has to be read out loud (unless, of course, that working with literacy skills is something that the facilitator is focusing on). Some participants find it easier to write in hand than on the computer, and that is of course their decision.

##### **➤ Brick 3b: Writing sentences or keywords**

If the participant has low literacy levels, it is a possibility to write the script in sentences or keywords, which can be a support for the voice recording. Some participants also enjoy coming up with the keywords first and then afterwards work with the facilitator on elaborating the script. When the script is done, it can also be of help to cut sentences out, so the participant can read them one at a time for the voice recording. Keywords can be helpful for the participant to tell the story more freely while their voice is recorded, as they will not be hindered by the reading of the script. There are great benefits in working with a script, so the facilitator should always aim to do that.

### ➤ **Brick 3c: Storyboarding with photos/story symbols**

When the participant is illiterate, it can be helpful to make a storyboard, like a classic storyboard with squares on a paper, where the participant can do small simple drawings of the storyline. On the other hand, it can be bigger, maybe one A4 for each drawing. It can also consist of photos or a mix, as long as it supports the storyteller to remember the course of the story when doing the voice recording or editing the film.

### ➤ **Brick 3d: Acting as the pen for the participant**

As much as we want the participants to do as much as possible themselves, it can be necessary for the facilitator to act as the pen for the participant. Especially if the participant has no language and the facilitator needs to help with the voice-over later on, it can be helpful to have a fuller script for the facilitator to read it out loud. The script should be written strictly based on what the storyteller communicates, be that through language, drawings, photos or other.

### ➤ **Brick 3e: Record the story without a script**

In some cases, it might be beneficial to ask the participant to record the story without a script or even record the participant during some of the exercises in brick 2. Without a script, it might come out more naturally and bring forth memories and stories that would not have come up otherwise. It often involves a lot of editing work afterwards, though, as it will typically be much longer than the recommended length, and more important, the participant will miss out on the beneficial story work that comes with working on the script.

## **BRICK 4: Story Circle**

*Working with: reading out loud, sharing skills, literacy skills, listening skills, giving feedback, social skills*

The story circle is an essential part in the process of Digital Storytelling. It is when the participants share their story with the others for the first time and receive feedback, which often leaves them proud and motivated to continue the work on their story. It might be difficult for some participants to give constructive feedback, but it is good practice, and also develops positive group dynamic. The facilitator makes sure to establish a safe space; to have a room where no one will be disturbed, to sit in a circle with no empty chairs or participants sitting a little outside, to agree on the “rules” for the story circle with the participants, so that they do not interrupt each other and that they listen and are respectful to each other if they give feedback.

### **Sub building bricks:**

#### ➤ **Brick 4a: Reading script out loud**

The participants read the draft of their script out loud in turn. They need to be given the opportunity to say something before or after if they want. Every participant should get approximately the same amount of time to share and get feedback, depending on their abilities to read. It can be emotional and difficult for some participants, so the facilitator makes sure that they have the right emotional support, also afterwards. The facilitator makes sure no one interrupts while a participant is sharing.

### ➤ **Brick 4b: Telling the story from memory**

If the storyteller does not have a script or is not able to read, they are welcome to tell the story from memory. The facilitator makes sure that they still stick to the appointed time, and also stick to the story they want to tell with support from the storyboard, visuals or the facilitator.

### ➤ **Brick 4c: Facilitator reads the script**

If the storyteller does not have a language or is not able to read, the facilitator can read the script out loud in the story circle. The facilitator makes sure that the storyteller is there in the circle, and that the feedback is directed to the storyteller, not the facilitator.

## **BRICK 5: Voice Recording**

### *Working with: reading out loud, literacy skills, technical skills*

The voice-over is a personal layer in the film, important to the understanding of the story. It can be frightening to hear your own voice recorded, but it is important to hear the storyteller, if in any way possible. The recording can be done with most smartphones with a very clear outcome, and if there are no recording apps, they are easy to find for free. The smartphone is easy to handle, it is often “safe” and familiar to the participants and therefore there is no need to invest in extra equipment. The facilitator can use a microphone, either with their phone or connected to a computer.

It is always a good idea to practise with the participant to read the script out loud before the voice recording, for it greatly increases the quality of the recording. Then the participant, maybe with the facilitator help, can make notes in the script about when to make breaks, when to talk more slowly, how to pronounce difficult words etc.

For the recording, it is important to find a comfortable, quiet place where the participant feels safe. It can be difficult in some venues, but the facilitator needs to think about this beforehand.

### **Sub building bricks:**

#### ➤ **Brick 5a: Recording the script**

The participant reads their script out loud. Preferably, have the script printed. It should be in letters big enough to be read without problems and in paragraphs to help the overview of the script. The facilitator helps the participant beforehand to write notes and/or highlight sentences in the script, to help them remember pauses, difficult words etc. It is also possible to divide the text into more pages or to cut out sentences, to make it easier for the participant to read.

#### ➤ **Brick 5b: Recording the story from memory**

If the participant has written the script as key words or in form of a visual storyboard/pictures they can record the story from memory supported by this. It is easy to cut in the recording afterwards, so if the participant needs a guiding word or support from the facilitator to remember, that is totally fine, as the facilitator’s voice is removed afterwards.

### ➤ **Brick 5c: Call and response**

It is also possible to do a call and response with the participant if they have a written script but are not able to read it. The facilitator can then read a sentence, which the participant repeats and so forth. The facilitator is afterwards cut out of the recording. The facilitator makes sure to try and have a breath's break between the facilitator and the participant talking, which will make it easier to edit.

### ➤ **Brick 5d: Facilitator/other person records script**

As much as we want the participants to do as much as possible themselves, it can be necessary for the facilitator or another person to act as the voice of the participant. However, even though the facilitator is the one being recorded, the storyteller always has to be in the room, and if they have any sounds or other alternative forms of communication, they need to be recorded as well. Again, to ensure the highest possible degree of participation and to keep the story personal.

## **BRICK 6: Creating Imagery**

### *Working with: creativity, technical skills, cooperation skills*

When creating imagery, it should fit to the story that is told. It does not always have to match exactly what the storyteller says in their story, it can also be symbols, ideas or emotions, which add another layer to the story. The facilitator needs to have as many creative materials as possible ready for this building brick, like colours, coloured paper, old magazines etc. The facilitator also needs to think about available time. If, for example, the facilitator brings water colours, the participants must have sufficient time to use them. The facilitator has to ensure that the participant has access to their old photo albums or online photos and that there is a camera (smartphones are very useful) which they can use.

### **Sub building bricks:**

#### ➤ **Brick 6a: Looking for pictures in the photo album or online**

Nothing prompts memory as old photos, and they have a wonderful effect in Digital Storytelling. They show time, they show development, they tell the story in another way, and they add a very personal touch to the story. The facilitator should always ask the participants to look in their old photo albums or through their photos online, to find some photos that mean something special to them. This single prompt is often more than enough to get participants telling stories, and thus gives a visual basis early in the process. Personal photos are not protected by copyright, and finding photos is a simple task which participants can often do on their own.

#### ➤ **Brick 6b: Taking pictures/videos**

Another creative and fairly simple task is that the participants take their own photos/videos. There are endless opportunities. It can be of themselves posing for the story, pictures of objects or places in the vicinity. There will always be something to photograph which can symbolise the content of the story on some level. They can ask other participants to be their "actors" or "models", or help them to take the pictures, and it is a very good task for the participants to cooperate.

### ➤ **Brick 6c: Drawing/paintings**

The visuals can also consist of drawings. A simple and creative task, when the participants are done with the drawing, they can take a photo of it and it is ready for the film. Many storytellers also choose to make their credits handwritten/drawn, and all this makes great visual material for the stories. It is personal and it does not matter the least if the storyteller is “good” at drawing. It comes from the same place (their minds) as their story and will thus convey the same message, no matter how abstract. If it is difficult for the participant to draw, maybe it can help to find a picture to copy, or the facilitator or another participant can help drawing it and then the participant can colour it.

### ➤ **Brick 6d: Storyboarding**

It can be helpful for some to make a storyboard to get an overview of where to put the different imagery. Either a classic storyboard with squares on a paper, where the participant can write key words and do small simple drawings of the storyline. On the other hand, it can be bigger, maybe one A4 for each drawing. It can also consist of photos or a mix, as long as it supports the storyteller to remember the course of the story and where to put which photos. It can also show where there might be missing imagery, which can then be created or found.

## **BRICK 7: Music and sounds**

### *Working with: creativity, technical skills*

Music or background sounds are not obligatory in Digital Storytelling, sometimes the story stands better with the voice-over alone, but music can underline emotions and the atmosphere, and it can also be a creative and reflective process to find it. An important thing to remember is that participants should always find music without lyrics, unless the music is playing while there is no voice-over (during credits or the like). To have music with lyrics in the background of the voice-over creates a very confusing soundscape, and is difficult to understand for the audience. The facilitator makes sure that the volume of any background music or sounds is low in the editing. We find that participants have a tendency to set it too high, which makes it hard to hear the voice-over. Another important aspect is the copyright. If the film is to be shared afterwards, for example on social media, it is important that the participants use copyright free music.

### **Sub building bricks:**

#### ➤ **Brick 7a: Looking for music online**

There are several places online where you can find music you can legally use in the films (one is [creativecommons.org](https://creativecommons.org/)) and if you use iMovie, it has its own library of music to use. The facilitator makes sure to write down the name of the artist and the name of the website whenever something is downloaded for use. That will prevent hours spent on trying to find it again when the artist is mentioned in the credits of the film. Finding music online is a task participants can often spend hours and hours on, as there are unlimited various music pieces out there. That can of course be positive, as it is a task that is fairly simple for the individual participant and might release time for the facilitator to use with other participants.

### ➤ **Brick 7b: Create own music or sounds**

The participants can create their own music or even sometimes create music for each other if there is enough time and facilities available. There will be no problems with copyright and it often becomes very personal and connected to the story. There are endless possibilities, it can be recording something as simple as humming, footsteps or bells, and it can also be music played with instruments, a simple guitar strumming, some notes on the piano etc.

### ➤ **Brick 7c: Facilitator suggests music**

If it is difficult for the participant to either search for or create music, it is always a possibility that the facilitator can find a few pieces of music that the participant can choose from. This can also be a good solution if you have limited time.

### ➤ **Brick 7d: Sound safari. Good outside**

The facilitator can go for a walk with the participant(s) and bring a phone or another microphone. The facilitator invites the participant(s) to listen for sounds. What sounds are there that could be relevant for the story. Either it can be in the surroundings of the workshop venue or if the story takes place in specific surroundings, and it is possible, it can also be great to go there or a similar place to find sounds.

## **BRICK 8: Editing story**

### ***Working with: technical skills, structure and order of events***

The editing process is where the participant puts all the layers of the story together in their editing program. The voice recording, the visuals and maybe the sounds and music. It is important that it is put together so that it makes sense to the story. If possible, participants should be let to work with the editing themselves. A big part of editing is to drag and drop pictures in the order that fits the voice over, and that is a fairly simple task, accessible to many. Many can also adjust the size and duration of the pictures, write text and add transitions. Some participants might need the facilitator to take over the mouse, but as always, we make sure the participant sits next to the facilitator and participates actively in the process, as it is their decision how the story should be edited. Many participants find it easier to use a tablet where they can touch the screen directly instead of using a mouse.

It is beneficial if the participant has the possibility to practice working with computers before the workshop. That, and plenty of time for this part of the process, seems to be the way to the highest degree of agency.

We always use simple and free software, but it is an ever-changing world, therefore we do not recommend any specific ones. There are many different options from extremely simple to very professional video editing programs. However, the aim of Digital Storytelling is not a professional film, so it is not important how good the facilitator or participants are at editing videos. It is better to use easy programs, because it will also limit the time the participants are spending on details.

This is also a part of the programme that many facilitators are afraid of, especially if they have not worked much with computers before. It is beneficial to have someone with technical skills on the team, but it is possible to achieve a lot with a basic knowledge of computers. Facilitators are advised to spend some time

with the program before facilitating this brick, to watch some tutorials online, to try making their own test film and then they will be able to facilitate most editing programs.

### ➤ **Brick 8.1: Final edit and export**

The facilitator always makes sure to have enough time for the participants to make the credits. These can be written in the program or the participant can write/draw them on paper, which is then photographed and imported into the program. If the participant is not able to write, the facilitator can help by writing it by hand, which the participant might be able to copy, much like copying a drawing.

The final export can take a long time depending on the programme and how heavy the files are. When the stories are exported as videofiles, the facilitator collects them all on a hard disk, so that they are ready for the screening.

## **BRICK 9: Screening and celebration**

### *Working with: social skills, sharing skills, listening skills, feedback skills*

First and foremost it is important to ask if the participants agree that their films are being shown at the screening. We mostly make the screenings for the group alone, but it is also possible to invite other interested parties, maybe family members, friends or other caretakers. In this case, the facilitator makes sure the participants know and are happy to show their film, otherwise we must not screen it. Most participants will be proud to, but some might not be interested in sharing it. If the participant is not able to be at the screening, their film is not shown. It is their personal story and they should be there when it is shown for the first time. It is about advocacy and participation.

The screening is not only a long row of films. The storytellers must be given a chance to say something about their story or the process if they want, and afterwards there should be room for the rest of the group to give feedback. This time only positive and only if the storyteller wants it. Plenty of breaks have to be arranged, so that no one needs to leave the room while a film is shown, and also the participants get a chance to digest the many impressions. The participants are invited to follow the story circle rules, as storytellers can be vulnerable and nervous when their story is shown on the big screen.

The life of the story after the showing is up to the storyteller. To share it online, the facilitator makes sure to get a sharing agreement, where the participants give consent to have their story published. In some cases, it is also necessary to involve a guardian and have their consent. The storyteller should always have the possibility to get their film removed regardless what they have agreed on. The story belongs to the storyteller and it should only be shared with their approval.

If it is difficult for the participants to give feedback, using big emoji cards is working very well. The facilitator needs to start out by explaining what each of them means. No angry or possibly insulting emojis should be used, but rather the positive, sad, surprised emojis and so on. They are handed out to everybody in the audience, and after a film is shown, they can be held up, using the one that best fits the audience's opinion of the story. If someone would like to give spoken feedback, the facilitator tries to make sure that the person giving feedback sticks to the story that was shared, and does not turn focus on their own story. It is important to give an equal amount of time and space to each participant and their story, no matter if they are the talkative or shy.



## **BRICK 10: Evaluation/reflections with the participant**

### *Working with: self-reflection, emotional work*

It is important to evaluate different exercises with the participant throughout the process, especially if the facilitator wants to use the method again and with other participants. The reflection also gives the facilitator an opportunity to check in with the participant and see how they are doing, because some parts of the process can be quite emotional, stressful or draining for the participant and the role of the facilitator is to give (or give access to) the emotional support that the participant needs.

The facilitators can use a guided talk with sub-questions and also emoji cards when evaluating or reflecting, and it might be easier for the participant to express their emotions through them. In that case, there should also be cards that express feelings like anger, sadness etc. These are the cards that would not be used as feedback cards.

The process chart, which follows the building bricks, is a very useful tool. The facilitator can draw it on a big poster and hang it on the wall or on the whiteboard. It should be visible for all. It helps the facilitator to monitor where the participants are in the process, but it also helps the participants keep track of where they are, how far they have to go and it helps them stay motivated in the process. It is a good idea to let the participants write their names on the process chart themselves, so that whenever they have completed a building brick, they can go to the chart and tick it off, or alternatively make a little drawing which symbolises this part of the process.

### **Sub building bricks:**

#### ➤ **Brick 10a: Evaluating after each exercise**

It is a good idea to evaluate after each exercise/brick, as it can be difficult for the individual to remember the exercises after the whole process. The facilitator can set aside some time at the end of each session and ask a few questions.

#### ➤ **Brick 10b: Evaluating with a picture of the exercise**

In combination with brick 10a, the facilitator can take photos during the exercise/brick and use them as support for the evaluation.

#### ➤ **Brick 10c: Reflection/check in**

During the Digital Storytelling process, it can be good to check in with the participants to see how they are feeling, if they think it is too much, if they are nervous, optimistic, etc. The facilitator can use emoji cards, draw a thermometer with different scales and the participants can tell where they are on that scale and why.

It can also be a good idea to exercise memory by starting the process every day with a reflection on what happened the other day, supported by pictures, the participant's manual and the process chart.

## 2.3 Knowledge and skills

In the process of Digital Storytelling, knowledge and skills cover the following areas of basic skills and other skills needed for everyday life, that enable participants to be as independent as possible and thus raise the quality of their life:

- literacy skills (writing, reading, speaking)
- communication skills
- cooperation skills
- listening skills
- social skills
- critical thinking
- self-reflection
- self-expression
- emotional work
- recognizing and expressing emotions
- creative skills
- digital skills
- information literacy
- visual and media literacy
- drama skills

## 2.4 Contents

Participants have the opportunity to tell their stories. They can speak for themselves. Therefore, we cannot determine the content, because each participant will choose the content of the story them self. We can assume that the participants will talk about important things to them in their stories. The facilitator guides and supports participants carefully through every step of the Digital Storytelling process.

## 2.5 Methods

- conversation
- explanation
- demonstration
- observation
- participant's own activity (story work, work with a computer and other technology, creativity of an individual)
- experiential learning

## 2.6 Material conditions, teaching materials and aids

Material conditions:

- A. Suitably arranged and equipped space with:
  - technical equipment for each participant: a device to work on (computer or laptop or tablet) with editing software and headphones, a split stick which connects two headphones
  - other technical equipment: projector, speakers, microphone, smartphone, web connection
- B. Quiet place to do the voice recording
- C. Quiet room for participants to relax
- D. Some activities can be carried out in nature and near surroundings

Teaching materials and aids:

- A. Manual for participants: How to create a digital story, guidelines for people with intellectual disabilities
- B. Manual for facilitators: Digital Storytelling for people with intellectual disabilities
- C. Creative materials prepared by the facilitator (natural materials, art materials, imagery...)
- D. Paper and pens
- E. Process chart
- F. Emoji cards

## 2.7 Evaluation/reflections

The evaluation includes the following aspects: achieving the objectives, the quality of the Digital Storytelling process and the general well-being of the participants.

Evaluation/reflections with the participant:

- A. Expectations of the participant before the start of the programme
- B. Evaluation after the completion of each building brick of the Digital Storytelling programme to check the participant's progress:
  - the facilitator's guided talk with sub-questions and
  - a process-chart following the building bricks, which contributes to raising participant motivation, because they can monitor their progress themselves. Participants can see what they have already done and what they still need to do. Participants get feedbacks on their progress during the programme, which represents a guide for further work.
- C. Reflections/check in during the Digital Storytelling process
  - Emoticon cards can be used as the participants may find it easier to express their feelings by using them. These cards can express feelings like anger, fear, sadness, tiredness, and happiness, surprise, excitement.
  - A drawing of a thermometer with different scales, maybe from happy to sad, and the participants can tell where and why they are on that scale.

Evaluation/reflections by the facilitator:

- Facilitators need to reflect on their own work and record important observations from the perspective of their further work with participants and facilitating new groups.

- Facilitators` evaluation meetings (it is advisable not to facilitate the Digital Storytelling process alone) at the end of the day of the implementation of a part of the Digital Storytelling programme offer an opportunity to review the activities/building bricks carried out with the participants, because they enable the exchange of experiences and ideas for their further work.

## **2.8 Certificate of attendance**

At the end of the programme, each participant should receive a certificate of attendance. The appendix to the certificate can be an inventory of skills that an individual participant has developed or upgraded in the Digital Storytelling process. The latter can be used in further planning and work with the participant.

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## Project information

**DigiStorID - Digital Storytelling for up-skilling and empowerment of learners with intellectual disabilities**

**This programme and methodology was developed by the DigiStorID partnership.**

### Partner organizations

Upstream Stories - Denmark

Keski-Pohjanmaan koulutusyhtymä (KPEDU) - Finland

Reykjavíkur Akademían - Iceland

A.N.F.F.A.S. Onlus di Pordenone - Italy

Vsi Tarptautinis darbo kontaktu tinklas - Lithuania

Center za izobraževanje in kulturo (CIK) Trebnje - Slovenia

### Associated partners

Ás Styrktarfélag - Iceland

European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA)

Varstveno delovni center (VDC) Novo mesto, Enota Trebnje - Slovenia

**Program:** Erasmus+, KA2 Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices

**Project number:** 2018-1-SI01-KA204-046998

**DigiStorID project website:** <https://digistorid.eu/>



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.