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STORYLIGHT

Handbook for Local Learning Centers

Empowering migrant women through storytelling, inclusion, and digital upskilling

Your story matters, and so do you!

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Introduction

Dear Reader,

Welcome, and thank you for taking the time to explore this handbook, which was developed to support educators, community workers, non-profits, libraries, cultural institutions, and anyone interested in creating inclusive learning spaces through digital storytelling.

It draws on the experiences and lessons learned from the STORYLIGHT project, which aims to empower migrant women by strengthening their digital skills, encouraging self-expression, and creating opportunities for participation and connection within local communities.

At the heart of STORYLIGHT lies a simple belief: every person has a story worth telling, and digital storytelling provides a powerful way for individuals to share experiences, build confidence, develop new skills, and connect with others. Through Local Learning Centres, these stories become a bridge between learning, inclusion, and community engagement.

Before we begin, we would like to offer an important reflection. This manual is not intended to be a definitive guide or a fixed recipe for success. Every community is different, and every group of participants brings unique experiences, needs, and aspirations. What works well in one context may require adaptation in another.

We therefore encourage you to use this handbook as a flexible resource rather than a strict set of instructions. Feel free to adapt activities, methods, and approaches to fit your local reality. Be open to experimentation, listen carefully to participants, and allow the learning process to evolve organically.

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Most importantly, remember that digital storytelling is not about technology alone. It is about creating safe and supportive spaces where people can discover their voice, share their experiences, and feel that their stories matter.

We hope this handbook inspires you to create learning environments that are inclusive, creative, and empowering for all.

The STORYLIGHT Consortium

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1. The Vision of STORYLIGHT

Migration is rarely a single event; it is a prolonged process of adaptation, negotiation, and, frequently, of silence. Migrant women in particular are often positioned at the margins of this process, present within host communities, yet underrepresented in the narratives that shape how those communities understand migration itself. STORYLIGHT was conceived to address this imbalance directly, using digital storytelling as both a pedagogical tool and a means of civic participation.

The project's title, *Stories that Matter*, reflects its central premise: that the personal accounts of migrant women constitute a legitimate and valuable form of knowledge, one that has been consistently underused within adult education provision. Digital storytelling, understood as the practice of combining narrative with audio, visual, and interactive digital content (Lambert & Hessler, 2018), offers a structured means of transforming individual experience into a resource that can inform, educate, and build understanding across a wider public. Its value lies not only in the finished narrative but in the process of its creation, which is typically organised around a turning point or defining experience and the narrator's own interpretation of it (Jamissen, 2008).

STORYLIGHT positions this practice within a broader participatory action research framework. Rather than treating migrant women as subjects of study or passive recipients of educational content, the project's methodology requires their active involvement in identifying needs, shaping content, and determining how their experiences are represented. This approach reflects a deliberate choice: inclusion cannot be produced through content designed *about* migrant women, but only through processes designed *with* them.

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1.1. A Dual Focus: Migrant Women and Adult Educators.

The project's vision rests on two interconnected areas of work. The first addresses migrant women directly, particularly those whose circumstances have been shaped by the COVID-19 pandemic and by ongoing conflict, both of which have disproportionately affected their access to employment, education, and stable routines. STORYLIGHT provides these women with structured opportunities to develop digital storytelling skills, positioning digital competence not as an abstract requirement of modern life, but as a practical means of self-expression, employability, and civic visibility.

The second addresses the adult educators, migrant support workers, and non-formal trainers who work alongside this population daily. Adult education has historically received less consistent investment in continuing professional development than more formal sectors of education, and this gap is more pronounced still for those working in community-based, informal settings. STORYLIGHT responds to this gap by equipping educators with the strategies, resources, and digital competencies required to design and deliver inclusive learning opportunities, including, but not limited to, the local learning centres described in this handbook.

These two areas of focus are not sequential but interdependent. The quality of support available to migrant women is a direct function of the competencies held by those who work with them; equally, the relevance and authenticity of educator training depends on genuine engagement with the lived experience of the women it is intended to serve.

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1.2. Why Local Learning Centers?

The local learning centre model reflects STORYLIGHT's broader conviction that meaningful inclusion is built at the local level, through sustained relationships between adult education providers, cultural institutions, civil society organisations, and the communities they serve. Formal education systems alone are rarely sufficient to reach populations who face language barriers, limited institutional trust, or geographic and social distance from urban education infrastructure.

Local learning centres address this by situating learning within spaces the community already recognises and, where possible, already trusts, such as libraries, community halls, and existing cultural venues, rather than requiring migrant women to enter unfamiliar institutional settings. The vision behind Local Learning Centres (LLCs) is rooted in the belief that learning should be accessible to everyone, regardless of age, background, language, or previous educational experience.

For many migrant women, access to education and digital technologies can be limited by social, economic, or cultural barriers. LLCs then seek to reduce these barriers by bringing learning opportunities closer to communities and adapting them to participants' realities. At the heart of this vision lies a learner-centred approach, where participants are not viewed as passive recipients of knowledge, but as active contributors whose experiences, skills, and stories enrich the learning process, encouraged to express themselves, build confidence, and strengthen their participation in society.

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1.3. An Underlying Commitment

Across its activities, STORYLIGHT is guided by the conviction that digital and civic inclusion are not separable goals. A migrant woman equipped with digital storytelling skills gains not only marketable competence, but also a means of articulating her own experience on her own terms, within a public conversation about migration that has too often proceeded without her. Correspondingly, an adult educator equipped with the tools developed through this project is better positioned to support that process authentically, rather than symbolically.

This handbook, and the local learning centre model it describes, is one expression of that broader vision: adult education as a space not only for the transmission of skills, but for the recognition of experience, and for the kind of local, sustained collaboration through which genuine inclusion is built.



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2. Adapting your Local Learning Center

The effectiveness of a Local Learning Centre (LLC) is determined less by the size or formality of its venue than by the strength of the relationships underpinning it and the consistency of support offered to participants.

2.1. Mapping the scope

The first step is to develop an accurate understanding of the community to be served. This involves engaging with local voices, meeting with community organisations, and identifying both the opportunities and the barriers that shape people's access to learning. The following questions can guide this initial mapping process:

What are the learning needs of migrant women in your area?

What barriers prevent participation?

Which local resources already exist?

These conversations will help shape a centre that responds to real needs rather than assumptions, and once you have a clearer picture of the local context, identify potential partners.

2.2. Build Partnerships

A functioning LLC depends on sustained collaborative relationships with organisations, institutions, and community members. No LLC can thrive in isolation, because lasting impact is the result of strong, collaborative relationships with organizations, institutions, and community members.

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We recommend reaching out to the members of your center as well as other organizations already working with migrant women in your area: migrant support associations, women's shelters, cultural mediation services, adult integration centers with language schools. Even if your organization is already actively working with migrant women, it is still suggested to reach out to partners who could strategically improve your outreach, contribute to your workshop or even help you with the necessary equipment.

2.3. Creating Inclusive Learning Spaces

The next step is to create an environment where participants feel comfortable and respected. This may involve choosing an area accessible by public transportation, providing multilingual materials, offering flexible schedules, or simply ensuring that everyone is welcomed with warmth and openness. Trust is a foundational condition for effective learning and should be treated as a deliberate outcome of the centre's design, rather than an incidental by-product.

Piloting activities at a small scale is recommended before launching a full programme. A single workshop, a storytelling session, or a short digital skills activity can generate useful insights and allow relationships to develop gradually. Activities can then be expanded as participant confidence and engagement grow.

Two principles should guide this process:

1. Responsibility should be distributed as the centre grows. As more community members become involved, tasks can and should be delegated. Distributing responsibility is itself a form of inclusion, and participants who take on roles within the centre often become some of its strongest advocates.
2. Variation between centres is expected, not a deviation from good practice. This

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handbook provides a framework rather than a fixed template; each LLC should be adapted to reflect the specific context, resources, and needs of its community.

An inclusive learning space is one in which every participant is able to engage, contribute, and feel respected. While physical resources and technology matter, the atmosphere of the space is often the strongest determinant of whether participants feel able to engage fully.

2.4. Facilitator Roles and Responsibilities

Facilitators are at the heart of every successful LLC, and identifying or training the right people for this role is one of the most important steps in implementing the workshop. While they may introduce activities, guide discussions, and support learning, their role extends far beyond teaching.

Within the STORYLIGHT approach, facilitators are not required to hold expertise in every subject or technology addressed by the centre. Their role is to guide and support participation, and their primary responsibility is to create an environment in which participants feel welcomed and valued. However, facilitators should know or pre-learn which digital tools can help record and edit the stories, whether it is AI, video editing software, open source, or mainstream social media.

Effective facilitators demonstrate active listening, encourage collaboration, and adapt activities to the needs of the group. They recognise that participants bring their own knowledge and experience, and they create structured opportunities for that knowledge to become part of the learning process. In this context, qualities such as

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patience, empathy, and flexibility are frequently more consequential than technical proficiency.



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3. The Role of Digital Story Telling

Digital storytelling combines personal narrative with digital audio, visual, and interactive content to produce a structured, reflective account of lived experience. Within the STORYLIGHT approach, this practice is treated as more than a technical exercise: it is a means through which participants, and migrant women in particular, can articulate experiences that are frequently absent from public discourse on migration, and can do so on their own terms.

It is possible, in principle, to acquire basic video and audio editing skills through independently accessed tutorials. This is not, however, the function that Local Learning Centres are intended to serve. The value of an LLC lies in the surrounding process: participants are supported in identifying what they wish to communicate, developing the confidence to communicate it, and locating an audience willing to listen. Digital skills are acquired as a consequence of this process rather than as its primary objective.

As participants work through the stages of creating a digital story, they develop digital competencies and media literacy in a manner that is directly tied to a purpose they have defined themselves. The emphasis throughout remains on reflection, articulation, and exchange between participants, rather than on production quality or output for its own sake. Within this process, the facilitator's role is to establish and maintain the conditions, respect, confidentiality, and structured support, under which participants are able to develop and share their stories.

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3.1. Digital Skills Development

Digital skills are a central component of the STORYLIGHT approach. In an increasingly connected world, the ability to use digital technologies is no longer optional, it is an essential part of participating in education, employment, public services, and community life.

For many participants, digital learning begins with basic skills such as using a smartphone, navigating the internet, creating documents, sending emails, or accessing online services. While these may seem simple to experienced users, they can represent important milestones for individuals who have had limited access to technology or formal digital training.

Within LLCs, digital skills development should be practical, relevant, and connected to participants' everyday lives. Learning activities are most effective when they address real needs, such as communicating with family, searching for information, accessing public services, applying for jobs, or creating digital content.

We've found that digital storytelling is one of the most natural ways to help people pick up new tech skills. Instead of dry, abstract lessons, the focus is on creating something that actually matters to the learner. When someone is busy pulling together photos, audio, or video to share their own story, the technology becomes a helpful tool rather than a scary obstacle. It doesn't matter if they're a complete beginner; they can learn at their own pace in a supportive space. Ultimately, this goes way beyond just knowing how to use a computer, it builds the confidence to be heard, to chase new opportunities, and to feel truly at home in the community.

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4. Designing Learning Activities



Designing a learning activity within an LLC is not a matter of delivering instruction, but of structuring the conditions under which a participant can turn a personal memory into a short digital story. The facilitator's task is to provide sufficient structure to allow participants to begin, without directing the content or interpretation of what they choose to share.

Participants are best supported by narrowing their focus to a single, meaningful moment rather than attempting to represent an entire life history within one story. This narrower scope tends to make the task more manageable and the resulting narrative more coherent.

4.1. Workshop Structure

STORYLIGHT workshops follow a consistent four-stage structure within each session, designed to move participants steadily from personal reflection toward a completed digital story.

How to Organise the Workshop

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The STORYLIGHT workshop follows a **three-phase, flipped-learning structure** that guides participants from developing their story to producing and sharing a short digital story. The approach combines two face-to-face sessions with a period of independent work between them.

Phase 1 – Narrative Foundations | 4 hours
Begin by creating a safe and supportive environment. Use an ice-breaker and a *Story Circle* to build trust and introduce digital storytelling. Participants then identify a meaningful personal theme, explore a simple **beginning–middle–end narrative structure**, and draft their first-person script. The session concludes with a briefing on collecting photographs, audio recordings and other personal materials during the self-learning period.

Phase 2 – Self-Learning & Content Collection | 2–3 weeks
Participants work independently as "archivists of their own lives." They collect photographs, record sounds or voice notes, gather other relevant materials and refine their scripts. A facilitator can provide optional online or messaging-based support during this period, particularly for participants experiencing technical or creative difficulties.

Phase 3 – Production & Presentation | 4 hours
The final session focuses on transforming the collected materials into a digital story. Participants receive a practical introduction to accessible editing tools and combine their voice-over, images and music. They review their rough cuts with peers, make final adjustments and then participate in a **group premiere and sharing circle**, celebrating their completed stories and reflecting on what they have learned.

Key principle: Keep the workshop accessible and low-tech. Smartphones can be sufficient for recording, photographing and editing. Facilitators should maintain a safe, culturally sensitive environment and ensure that participants always decide what they are comfortable sharing.

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Draft schedule for Phase 1 – Narrative Foundations | 4 Hours

Objective: Introduce participants to digital storytelling, establish a safe and supportive learning environment, and guide each participant towards developing the first version of their personal story and script.

Welcome, Introduction & Ice-breaker: Welcome participants and introduce the purpose of the workshop. Briefly explain what digital storytelling is and what participants will create. Use a simple ice-breaker to help participants become comfortable with one another and the learning environment.

Story Circle: Sharing Experiences: Introduce the Story Circle as a safe space for sharing. Participants discuss a meaningful memory, experience, place, person or turning point from their lives. Participation in sharing should remain voluntary, and participants decide what they are comfortable discussing.
Introduction to Digital Storytelling: Present the basic elements of a digital story: a personal narrative, voice or narration, images and other audiovisual elements. Show a short example if available and discuss what makes the story engaging and meaningful.

Finding the Story & Personal Theme: Participants identify the specific story they want to tell. Encourage them to focus on one meaningful experience rather than trying to tell their entire life story. They identify the central theme, emotion or message they want the audience to understand.

Building the Narrative: Introduce a simple beginning–middle–end structure. Participants organise their ideas: What happened? What changed? How did they feel? What did they learn or understand afterwards? The facilitator supports participants in narrowing and organising their stories.

Script Development: Participants begin writing their first-person narration. The facilitator encourages the use of personal language and authentic voice rather than overly formal writing. Participants can write, dictate or otherwise develop their script according to their digital and literacy needs.

Sharing & Supportive Feedback: Participants who wish to do so share their story idea or a section of their script with a partner or small group. Peers provide supportive feedback focused on clarity, emotion and whether the main message comes through.

Preparing for the Self-Learning Period: Explain what participants will do between the two face-to-face sessions. **Show how to use the platform:** Participants can use the **STORYLIGHT online tutorials** as an optional self-learning resource. The tutorials can help them revisit key concepts, strengthen their digital storytelling skills and become more familiar with the tools and techniques they will use during the production phase. Participants can follow the tutorials independently and at their own pace

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Reflection & Closing: Ask participants to briefly reflect on what they have developed and what they want to work on next. **Show the participants how to use the online platform to ask the online tutorials.**
Confirm the next steps and remind participants that they will continue developing their story during the self-learning period.

Draft schedule for Phase 2 – Self-Learning & Content Collection | 2-3 weeks

Objective: The participants have used the tutorials, now we give them time to develop their stories independently, collect the photographs and other media they will need, and prepare their materials for the final production session.

Things to carry out in the time being on their own:

Review & Develop the Story: Participants revisit the script and narrative structure developed during Phase 1. They refine their story, clarify the main message and identify any sections that need further development.

Create a Storyboard / Media Plan: Participants identify what visual or audio material could accompany each part of their narration. They make a simple list or storyboard showing which photographs, recordings, objects, sounds or other materials they want to use.

Collect Personal Materials: Participants collect relevant photographs, images, short video clips, sounds and other personal materials. They can also take new photographs or make recordings with their smartphone where appropriate.

Record the Narration: Participants practise and record their voice-over using their smartphone or another accessible recording device. They can make several attempts and select the version that best represents their story and voice.

Organise & Prepare Materials: Participants organise their script, recordings, photographs and other media so that everything is ready for the production session. The facilitator can provide guidance if participants experience technical or creative difficulties.

Facilitator Support: The facilitator remains available for questions and encouragement, using an agreed communication channel such as messaging, email or an online group. Participants can also be directed to the project's online tutorials when they need additional guidance. Support should focus on helping participants overcome barriers without taking ownership of their stories.

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Production Readiness Check: Before returning for Phase 3, participants check that they have their final/near-final script, voice recording and selected visual materials available. They should arrive ready to begin assembling their digital story.



Draft schedule for Phase 3 – Production & Presentation | 4 Hours

The facilitator, during this phase, should act primarily as a technical guide and supportive coach. Individual assistance is particularly important during editing, while peer feedback should remain constructive and respectful. The emphasis should be on helping participants communicate their own voice rather than producing technically perfect videos. The workshop agenda specifically recommends keeping the process low-tech, with smartphones being sufficient for recording, photography and editing.

Welcome Back & Revision: Reconnect with participants and invite each person to share one interesting discovery, challenge or experience from the self-learning period. Confirm that everyone has their script and collected materials ready.

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Introduction to Editing Tools: Introduce a simple, accessible editing tool such as CapCut, Canva or another mobile-based video editor. Demonstrate the basic functions needed for the workshop: importing images, adding voice-over and music, arranging clips, adding text and exporting the final video.

Production Planning: Participants organise their materials according to their narrative. They decide which images, recordings and other media correspond to each part of their story before beginning the editing process.

Production: Building the Story; Participants begin assembling their digital stories. They combine their voice-over, photographs, video clips and other visual materials. Facilitators move between participants and provide individual technical support.

Refinement & Peer Review: Participants watch their rough cuts in pairs or small groups. They give supportive feedback on whether the story is clear, whether the pacing works and whether the participant's own voice and perspective come through.

Final Editing & Polish: Participants make final adjustments to their stories. They can add or adjust music, transitions, titles and other elements while ensuring that these support rather than distract from the personal narrative.

Final Check & Export: Participants watch their completed story from beginning to end, check the sound and visuals, make any last corrections and export/save the final digital story.

Premiere & Sharing Circle: The group watches the completed digital stories. After the screening, participants reflect on their experience, what they learned and how they might use their new digital storytelling skills in the future. End with a positive celebration of the participants' work.

4.2. Community Engagement

Community engagement should begin well before the first workshop session. This involves direct engagement with residents and local organisations to identify actual needs, rather than proceeding from assumptions about what a community requires. Consistent with the STORYLIGHT methodology, this reflects a shift from a service-delivery model toward co-creation, in which attendees are treated as contributors of

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skills and perspective rather than as recipients of a predetermined programme. This approach supports local ownership and ensures the centre reflects the identity of the community it serves.

Digital stories produced through STORYLIGHT activities can also serve a wider public engagement function. Community screenings and local events built around these stories provide a means of raising awareness, and of creating dialogue between groups that might not otherwise engage directly with one another. Sustained collaboration with local libraries, schools, and community organisations extends the reach of the centre's activities beyond individual sessions and supports the broader network of local synergies that the STORYLIGHT local learning centre model is intended to establish.

4.3. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation within LLCs should prioritise improvement and responsiveness over reporting for its own sake. Brief check-ins, informal conversations, and short reflection exercises at the end of each session allow facilitators to identify what is working and what requires adjustment as sessions progress, rather than only at a later evaluation stage.

Evaluation should extend beyond attendance records to capture change in participants' confidence with digital tools, the development of new social connections, and increased comfort in sharing personal narratives. These indicators are consistent with those defined for the STORYLIGHT local learning workshops more broadly, including participants' perceived satisfaction and improvement in digital competencies, and facilitators are encouraged to draw on the STORYLIGHT Evaluation Kit when structuring this feedback, to maintain consistency across centres.

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4.4. Challenges and Solutions

Recruitment and the management of mixed skill levels are among the most common challenges facilitators encounter, alongside the need to engage with the specific difficulties migrant women may have faced without judgement or assumption.

Where hesitancy to participate stems from language or confidence barriers, personal invitations and outreach conducted through existing community relationships tend to be more effective than formal promotional campaigns. Once sessions are underway, facilitators should expect a range of technical ability within the group. Rather than standardising activities to a single skill level, peer-to-peer support and flexible pacing allow participants to progress according to their own starting point.

Resource limitations, including constrained budgets and limited access to equipment, are a common condition across LLCs rather than an exception. Existing partnerships with libraries and community organisations, as described in Section 2.2, provide a practical means of sharing resources and expanding access to tools. Facilitators should also remain prepared to adjust plans in response to unexpected logistical issues, treating such adjustments as a normal part of the centre's operation rather than a deviation from it.

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5. Success Stories and Impact

The impact of Local Learning Centres is often best understood through the experiences of the people who participate in them. While statistics and reports can provide useful insights, it is the personal stories of growth, confidence, and connection that truly reflect the value of the work being done.

For many participants, especially migrant women, joining a LLC can mark the beginning of a new chapter. Simple achievements such as sending an email, creating a digital story, or using an online service independently can represent significant milestones. These moments build confidence and open the door to further learning and participation.

Beyond individual skills, many participants experience broader changes. They may feel more connected to their community, more comfortable using digital tools in everyday life, or more confident expressing their ideas and experiences. In some cases, participation in storytelling activities can help individuals reclaim their voice and share perspectives that had previously gone unheard.

Success stories also extend to the wider community. When participants share their digital stories through events, exhibitions, or online platforms, they contribute to greater understanding, empathy, and cultural exchange. These shared experiences can help break down stereotypes and strengthen social cohesion.

6. Sustainability

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A Local Learning Centre should not be understood as a project that ends when its initial funding or activities come to an end. Its sustainability depends on whether the relationships, skills, resources, and sense of ownership developed through the project can remain within the community.

For STORYLIGHT, sustainability begins with embedding the Local Learning Centre within structures that already exist locally. Libraries, community centres, adult education providers, migrant support organisations, cultural institutions, and non-profit organisations can provide spaces, equipment, expertise, outreach channels, and opportunities for continued activity. Building these relationships from the beginning reduces dependence on a single organisation or funding source and creates a stronger foundation for long-term operation.

Build local ownership

A sustainable centre is not dependent entirely on one facilitator or project coordinator. Participants and community members should gradually be given opportunities to contribute ideas, support activities, welcome new participants, or take on small responsibilities. This reflects one of the central principles of the STORYLIGHT approach: participants are not simply recipients of a service, but contributors whose experiences and knowledge strengthen the learning environment.

Over time, participants who have completed the digital storytelling workshop can become informal ambassadors, peer supporters, or even facilitators of future activities. This creates a cycle in which knowledge and confidence remain within the community rather than leaving with the end of the project.

Strengthen facilitator capacity

The continuity of an LLC also depends on the people who run it. Facilitators should therefore be supported to develop both educational and digital competencies. The STORYLIGHT workshop methodology, evaluation resources, handbook, and online tutorials can continue to serve as practical resources after the project period.

Facilitators should also document what they learn from each workshop: which

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activities worked well, what barriers participants experienced, which digital tools were accessible, and what adaptations were necessary. This creates a local knowledge base that can be used when new facilitators join or when activities are repeated with different groups.

Share resources through partnerships

Sustainability does not necessarily require an LLC to own all the resources it uses. A partnership approach can allow organisations to share computers, smartphones, recording equipment, rooms, internet access, expertise, and communication channels. Partnerships can also strengthen recruitment by connecting the centre with organisations that already have trusted relationships with migrant women and other community members.

The aim is to create a local ecosystem of support, rather than a centre operating in isolation.

Keep activities relevant

A centre remains sustainable when people continue to see value in it. Regular feedback, informal conversations, attendance patterns, and evaluation activities can help identify changing needs and interests. The STORYLIGHT evaluation approach can therefore be used not only to measure results, but to inform future programming.

The activities offered by an LLC do not need to remain exactly the same. The digital storytelling workshop may become one part of a broader programme responding to locally identified needs, such as digital skills, language learning, employment preparation, community participation, or creative activities.

Maintain the STORYLIGHT approach

Even when the original project has ended, the principles behind STORYLIGHT can continue to guide the centre: participation, inclusion, digital empowerment, personal expression, community connection, and respect for participants' own voices.

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Sustainability is therefore not simply about keeping a physical space open. It is about maintaining the relationships, confidence, skills, and opportunities that make that space meaningful.

A sustainable LLC is one that gradually becomes part of the community itself: supported by local partnerships, strengthened by local people, responsive to local needs, and capable of continuing to learn and adapt.

7. Future Opportunities

Once a Local Learning Centre has established trust within its community, its potential extends well beyond the initial STORYLIGHT workshop. Digital storytelling can become an entry point into a much wider range of learning, creative, and community activities.

The most important principle for future development is growth based on community needs rather than growth for its own sake. The centre should listen to participants and partners, identify emerging needs, and gradually introduce activities that build on the skills, relationships, and confidence already developed.

From storytelling to wider digital learning

The digital skills developed through storytelling can provide a foundation for further learning. Participants may wish to explore photography, video production, graphic design, online communication, digital content creation, media literacy, or other practical digital skills.

The existing STORYLIGHT online tutorials and learning resources can also remain available as a flexible learning pathway, allowing participants to revisit topics independently and supporting facilitators when introducing similar activities to new groups.

From participants to co-creators

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As participants become more confident, the centre can move towards a stronger **peer-learning and co-creation model**. Participants who have completed activities can support newcomers, contribute ideas for future workshops, help organise community events, or share their own skills with others.

This creates an important shift: the community is no longer simply participating in activities organised by the centre; it begins to shape what the centre becomes.

Create opportunities for public storytelling

Digital stories can also become a starting point for wider community engagement. With participants' informed consent, centres can organise screenings, exhibitions, storytelling events, intercultural activities, or discussions with local organisations.

These activities can create opportunities for migrant women to contribute their perspectives to local conversations and can help communities encounter migration through personal experiences rather than stereotypes or abstract statistics.

Because stories can contain personal and sensitive experiences, any public sharing must remain voluntary and follow clear agreements about consent, privacy, ownership, and where and how stories may be used.

Develop new community partnerships

As the LLC becomes established, its network can expand. Partnerships with schools, libraries, cultural organisations, adult education providers, migrant support organisations, employers, local authorities, and other community initiatives can open new opportunities for participants.

The centre can become a bridge between community members and existing local opportunities, helping participants move from informal learning towards further education, employment, civic participation, cultural activities, or other forms of

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community engagement.

Connect with other Local Learning Centres

The development of an LLC does not need to happen in isolation. Centres can connect with one another to exchange workshop ideas, learning materials, challenges, solutions, and examples of good practice. This can gradually create a wider community of practice around inclusive local learning and digital storytelling.

Such connections can also support future collaborative projects, joint events, shared training opportunities, and new forms of international exchange.

Explore new pathways for impact

In the longer term, an LLC may develop activities around areas such as:

- digital and media literacy
- employment and entrepreneurship
- language and communication
- civic and community participation
- intercultural dialogue
- creative and cultural activities
- intergenerational learning
- peer mentoring and community leadership

Not every centre needs to pursue all of these directions. The strength of the LLC model lies precisely in its flexibility. Each centre can develop according to the interests, capacities, and priorities of its community.

Looking beyond the project

STORYLIGHT provides a starting point rather than an endpoint. The workshops,

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online resources, evaluation tools, partnerships, and experiences developed through the project can be adapted and reused with new groups and in new contexts.

The future of a Local Learning Centre ultimately depends on its ability to remain useful, inclusive, participatory, and responsive. If participants continue to find value in the space, if local partners continue to see opportunities for collaboration, and if the centre continues to learn from its community, the work initiated through STORYLIGHT can continue long after the project itself has ended.

8. Conclusion

A Local Learning Centre that hosts STORYLIGHT does not begin with a building, a large budget, or a perfect programme. It begins with a willingness to listen to a community and create a space where people feel that they belong.

Throughout this handbook, we have explored the different elements that can help turn that idea into practice: understanding local needs, building partnerships, creating inclusive learning environments, supporting facilitators, designing meaningful activities, using digital storytelling as a learning tool, and continuously reflecting on what is working. None of these elements needs to look exactly the same in every community. The strength of the LLC model lies in its ability to adapt.

At the centre of this approach are the people who participate. Migrant women should not be seen simply as beneficiaries of an educational programme. Their experiences, knowledge, creativity, and perspectives are part of the knowledge that the centre itself is built upon. Digital storytelling provides one particularly powerful way to make that knowledge visible: a photograph, a voice, a memory, or a personal experience can become the starting point for learning, connection, and dialogue.

The role of the facilitator is therefore not to have all the answers, but to create the conditions in which people can learn from one another. Sometimes that means teaching a digital skill. Sometimes it means helping someone find the right words for

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a story. Sometimes it simply means listening.

The STORYLIGHT approach also reminds us that learning does not have to end when a workshop finishes. The skills developed through storytelling can lead to further digital learning, stronger community participation, new relationships, and new opportunities. The stories created in an LLC can continue beyond the workshop too, becoming resources for dialogue, reflection, cultural exchange, and community engagement when participants choose to share them.

Ultimately, sustainability is about more than keeping a centre open. It is about creating something that the community can continue to shape, use, and value. A successful LLC gradually becomes part of the local ecosystem: connected to organisations and institutions, supported by facilitators and community members, and responsive to the people it serves.

This is the opportunity that lies beyond the STORYLIGHT project. The methods and resources developed through the project provide a starting point, but their future depends on how communities make them their own.

So, as you begin or develop your own Local Learning Centre, start small if necessary. Listen carefully. Build trust. Work with the resources already around you. Give participants space to contribute and lead. Learn from what does not work as much as from what does.

And above all, remember the idea at the heart of STORYLIGHT:

Every person has a story worth telling. Creating the space for those stories to be heard is where meaningful learning, inclusion, and community begin.

Thank you for being part of this journey.

The STORYLIGHT Consortium

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