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Community workshops report

(2025) Community workshops report for Digital Action on Climate Change with Heritage Environments (DACCHE)

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Community workshops in Donegal

For their case study, Donegal County Museum partnered with 3 local communities to gather heritage information associated with local heritage sites affected by climate change, monitor climate change at selected sites, and communicate heritage stories using digital technology. Here follows a brief overview of the process.

Preparative steps

Donegal County Museum contracted Kate Robb from John Cronin Associates to choose the sites and work with the associated community groups in 2024. Kate is an archaeologist based in Donegal with experience of working on other community-based projects.

Kate devised a range of criteria which were used to select three case study sites. The criteria were formulated as follows.

Site selection must be a minimum of three, each in different county Municipal Districts in order to achieve greatest geographical spread. Other key desirable criteria are detailed below.

Heritage site selection: desirable criteria

1. An archaeological monument/structure/landscape with a coastal and/or riverine geographical location. This will focus project outputs on climate-related issues including but not limited to:
 - a. Rising sea levels
 - b. Coastal erosion
 - c. Sea-water exposure
 - d. Extreme storm weather effects (wind, wave)
 - e. Sand dune shifting/erosion
 - f. Freeze/thaw action
 - g. Rising temperatures
2. An established community group with heritage interest/focus within the archaeological monument/structure/landscape geographic locale, that have an active interest in researching, documenting and protecting our Donegal heritage.
3. Diversity of site type across each selected monument/structure/landscape, and in turn diversify the range of climate risks and digital actions that can be applicable to the project.
4. Dramatic and/or remote picturesque and scenic locations, with heritage research opportunities and unique stories to tell.
5. Heritage monuments/structures/landscapes that are located on publicly accessible lands. (In cases of private landownerships, in whole or in part, permissions must be agreed in advance).
6. Opportunities for project collaboration such as:
 - a. Statutory/non-statutory stakeholders (future funding opportunities)

- b. Academic research programmes (new approaches and critical thinking)
- c. Museums (artefact assemblages including digitisation)
- d. Natural heritage organisations (to address biodiversity and ecological inputs)
- e. Youth audiences (future advocates)

The 3 sites/local communities were:

1. Inishkeel Island, Portnoo + local group of interested individuals
2. McSwyne's Castle, St. John's Point, Dunkineely + Dunkineely Community Ltd
3. Portbane/Tonduff, Dunree, Inishowen + West Inishowen History and Heritage Group

Engaging with the communities

Kate met with individuals associated with each group on numerous occasions and visited each site. Kate also gathered research materials from the groups relating to each site.

Kate also liaised with statutory agencies and other organisations working with the sites – the Discovery Programme at St John's Point, Dunkineely and the Office of Public works and National Monuments Service at Inishkeel island.



L-R Judith McCarthy, Donegal County Museum, Kate Robb, project facilitator, Cormac Duffy, Discovery Programme, Janet Deane, Dunkineely Community Ltd at McSwyne's Castle, St John's Point



Kate visiting Port Ban, Inishowen with John Hegarty of West Inishowen heritage Group.



Kate visiting Inishkeel Island with community members.

We organised and participated in community events linked to the DACCHE project – see photos below.



Community group members at a Heritage Week event in Donegal County Museum, August 2024



Community event at McSwynne's Castle, Dunkineely during Heritage Week, 2024

Pilot story gathering workshop with communities

During the DACCHE partner meeting that took place in Donegal with surroundings in October 2024, a pilot story gathering workshop was tested together with Dunkineely Community Ltd.



There were two elements to the workshop:

- Train the Trainer
- Story Gathering

The first part was dedicated to letting key persons in the community get the tools to be able to facilitate story gathering workshops related to climate change and the heritage of their communities. The second part was then a possibility for them to try the method right away.

The Dunkineely Community Ltd helped with inviting people in their community, and it attracted about 30 participants.

Here you can see the layout of the workshops with workflow and content.

Train the Trainer Workshop

1. Introduction to the Workshop (5 minutes)

- Purpose: Explain the importance of the upcoming community workshop and the role of facilitators in preserving the oral histories of the site/area.
- Overview: Briefly outline what will be covered in this training session.

2. Understanding the Role of a Facilitator (5 minutes)

- Facilitator's Role: Discuss the responsibilities of a facilitator, focusing on creating a comfortable and respectful environment where participants feel safe to share their stories.
- Key Skills: Highlight the essential skills of a facilitator—active listening, empathy, patience, and the ability to guide conversations gently.

3. Techniques for Eliciting Stories (10 minutes)

- Open-Ended Questions: Teach participants how to use open-ended questions to encourage storytelling (e.g., "Can you tell me about a time when the landscape changed in a way that impacted you?").
- Memory Prompts: Introduce memory prompts to help trigger specific recollections (e.g., showing old photographs, mentioning specific local events, or referencing traditional practices).
- Respecting Silence: Explain the importance of allowing pauses and giving participants time to think and reflect before responding.
- Handling Sensitive Topics: Provide guidance on how to navigate sensitive topics that may arise, ensuring that facilitators are prepared to respond with care and respect.

4. Active Listening and Identifying Key Themes (5 minutes)

- Active Listening: Emphasize the importance of listening attentively without interrupting, and being fully present during the storytelling.
- Identifying Themes: Teach participants how to identify key themes or patterns in the stories, such as recurring references to specific locations, events, or emotions.
- Taking Notes: Offer tips on how to take concise notes while listening, without disrupting the flow of the conversation.

5. Practical Recording Techniques (5 minutes)

- **Recording Best Practices:** Provide a brief overview of how to use audio or video recording equipment, including tips for positioning the recorder, ensuring good sound quality, and obtaining consent for recording.
- **Note-Taking Tips:** For those who will take notes instead of recording, discuss strategies for capturing the essence of the story accurately.
- **Preserving the Context:** Encourage facilitators to note any contextual information (e.g., the environment, mood, or physical reactions) that may add depth to the stories being recorded.

6. **Role-Playing Exercise (10 minutes)**

- **Mock Storytelling Session:** Divide participants into pairs or small groups for a role-playing exercise. One person will act as the storyteller (an older community member), and the other(s) as the facilitator.
- **Practice Facilitating:** Each facilitator will practice guiding the conversation, using open-ended questions, and recording the story.
- **Feedback Session:** After the role-play, regroup to share experiences, discuss challenges, and provide feedback. Facilitators can reflect on what worked well and what could be improved.

Story Gathering Workshop

The aim is to work with people to capture living memories - How is climate change affecting their life?

1. **Welcome and Introduction (10 minutes)**

- **Introduction to the Workshop:** Briefly explain the purpose and importance of capturing these stories.
- **Community Bonding:** Encourage a sense of unity and importance in preserving their shared heritage.

2. **Setting the Stage (10 minutes)**

- **Icebreaker Activity:** Start with a gentle icebreaker that encourages participants to share a fond memory of their youth, particularly focusing on the landscape or natural environment.
- **Introduction to Storytelling:** Explain the value of storytelling in preserving history and how their stories will contribute to the community's legacy.

3. **Guided Storytelling Sessions (45 minutes)**

- **Group Discussions:** Break participants into small groups, each led by a facilitator. Ask them to share their experiences related to the following themes:
 - **The Changing Landscape:** How has the physical environment of the place changed over the decades?
 - **Weather and Climate:** What shifts in climate and weather patterns have they noticed?
 - **Community and Traditions:** How have the local traditions and ways of life adapted to these changes?

4. Sharing and Reflection (15 minutes)

- **Group Sharing:** Bring everyone back together and invite each group to share one or two key stories or insights from their discussions.
- **Reflection:** Discuss the importance of these stories in understanding the heritage and changes which have taken place.

The story gathering workshop was engaging, and many participants shared about their memories of their childhood and how the climate has changed since then with warmer snowless winters and wetter summers as a re-occurring theme.

The facilitators involved in the train the trainer workshop has expressed interest in making new storytelling events, to collect more stories from local communities on how they are affected by climate change.

Communicating

We completed 3 short videos telling the story of each site and integrating material such as footage of each site, archival material such as photographs and plans and interviews with community members.

What did we learn?

Working with communities is both rewarding and challenging. Often those you are working with are acting in a voluntary capacity because they have an interest in and love of their area or their heritage or their culture or their community – or all of these. While you may be working on the project full-time, they may have full-time jobs and/or other responsibilities. A project will always take longer than you plan. The community members you started working with may not be the people who are with you at the end. You are not always the only expert in the room – and in fact may not know anything about the history or heritage of this community – but they do.

Any work with communities will have its challenges but for successful community co-production to work there are some key points to consider.

1. Remember people have lives. Everything will take longer than you planned.
2. Research, research, repeat. Know your subject backwards but remember you are not the only expert in the room.
3. Proper Preparation Prevents Poor Performance. Make sure you are prepared for the journey – even if this means bringing the right footwear.
4. Find your gatekeepers. Find those who can introduce you to the community. Knock on doors, make phone calls, have as many cups of tea as necessary!
5. Whoever gets involved, they are the right people. If it's only 5 or if it's 50, they are the right people.
6. Be human. Smile, make small talk, pass compliments, drink lots of tea (or coffee).
7. Expect the unexpected, it will happen.
8. Plan proactively, practice reactively. Improvise and don't worry.
9. It's OK to be attached. And it's OK to care.
10. Listen. Above everything else, listen.

And perhaps most important:

The journey that you take with the community is as important - if not more so - than the end result.

Community workshops in Jämtland

The community workshops in Jämtland took the form of a workshop series which we named Berättarland. The workshop series meant that a group of participants coming from both the civic sector as well as the public sector met over the course of seven months to tackle the subject of climate change and cultural heritage through the lense of storytelling.

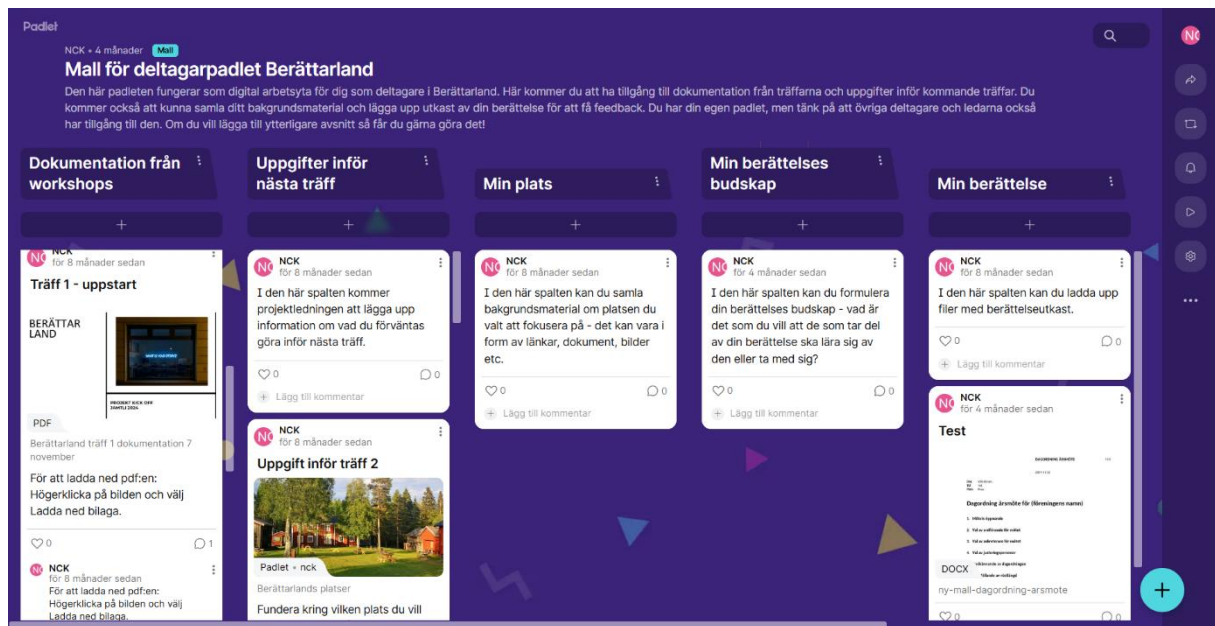
We gave the participants the task of creating a story using the themes of climate change and cultural heritage as a starting point. We wanted them to take a place in the Jämtland county as the starting point for their story. They could choose the place themselves. We said from the start that the stories would be recorded as part of the workshop series, and that they would get to perform the stories at a storytelling evening. We also emphasised that they would be free to use the stories in their own organisations as they saw fit.

The persons forming the team behind Berättarland were Kevin Denham from Jamtli and Helena Kuhlefeldt from NCK, representing the project partners. We took help from Johan Eriksson, facilitator at Hyper Island who helped us with general workshop layout and facilitation. Iñaki Escudero became our main guest lecturer, who made workshops on storytelling as well as individual coaching with the participants. We also invited other experts on climate change, archival sources and transmedia storytelling.

We used our respective networks to find participants and had 11 participants in the start. Not all participants could participate in all workshops, and in the end five stories were recorded and one more was written down.

The idea of the workflow was that we would spread out the workshops over a couple of months' time to give the participants time to do research and to write their stories. We wanted to consider that the participants had a lot of other things on their schedules and to make sure that they could participate anyway. We did however get the feedback that it might have served some better with a shorter time span, see more below.

We set up a Padlet for each participant, a sort of digital mind map tool to help them to collect their sources but also as a guiding tool in the creative process. They were also asked to upload drafts of their stories to their Padlet to get peer feedback from each other. This was also where the notes from each workshop were shared with the participants. The Padlet did not require any login, as we wanted to keep it as simple as possible for the participants to use it. We can now see that some of the participants used their Padlet a lot, while others did not.



Session overview

Agenda meeting 1 - Introduction (Early November 2024)

- Introduction of the day and the project
- Two things that has shaped me
- Cultural heritage as a tool for change
- Storytelling as a tool for change
- Workshop overview and expectations

Agenda meeting 2 – Climate change and archival sources (Late November 2024)

- Lecture: Climate change in Jämtland
- Group discussion on the lecture's themes
- Sharing session about possible places and themes
- Lecture: Archives and what to find in them
- Workshop: Interpreting archival sources
- Preparations for next workshop

Agenda meeting 3 – The basics of storytelling (January 2025)

- Check-in – tell the story about how you got your name
- Reflection about the storytelling task
- Lecture: Storytelling techniques
- Workshop: What kind of moral or message do we want to convey?
- Lecture: Building a story
- Workshop: Storyboarding
- Check-out

Agenda meeting 4 – Storytelling deep-dive (March 2025)

- Reflection: What do you like best about your story so far? And what are you struggling with?
- Exercise: Tell your story as it is now in 2 minutes – let the others share their thoughts: What’s clear, what do you want to know more about, what do you like about the story.
- Exercise: Summarise your story in one word
- Exercise: The main character’s transformation
- Summarising

Digital coaching sessions

Agenda workshop 5 – Transmedia storytelling (April 2025)

- Workshop: Where are we at?
- Workshop: Listen, mirror, deepen
- Workshop: Integrate feedback into your story
- Lecture: Transmedia storytelling
- Discussion: How can the use of different media deepen my story?

Digital coaching sessions

Agenda meeting 6 (June 2025)

- Recording of stories in pod studio (done individually)

Agenda meeting 7 - Conclusion (June 2025)

- History map
- Feedback on the process

Session 1 – Introduction

The first session was devoted to getting to know the project, the workshop series and each other. The meeting facilitator Johan Eriksson helped with leading exercises were the participant and staff shared about two things that has shaped them into who they are today. Kevin Denham presented the DACCHE project, and Helena Kuhlefeldt talked about cultural heritage as a tool for change as well as how heritage, both tangible and intangible, can be affected by climate change. Iñaki Escudero then held an online lecture on the power of storytelling, and gave the participant a task for the first storytelling workshop:

- What do the stories I find myself telling revolve around? What themes are common? What type of stories?
- Listen to other people's stories: What do they want to convey? What kind of values and morals do they focus on?

The next part was devoted to presenting the workshop series layout, and what the purpose of the workshops were, as well as the expected end results. The participants were also asked to start to think about what kind of places they wanted to use as starting point for their stories. Some suggestions in finding the places were:

- An engaging place
- A forgotten place
- A place where climate change is noticeable (changed temperature, erosion, exposure to weather, changed vegetation)
- A place that is important for the future
- A place that shows the relationship between humans and nature and the landscape
- The people who have been active in this place
- A place we can learn from
- A place with many historical traces
- A place at risk of losing its meaning

Session 2 – Climate change and archival sources

The second session was meant to give the participants some factual knowledge to start of with in terms of how climate change is affecting our own region. We engaged Torbjörn Skytt, affiliated researcher at Mid Sweden University who did his PhD on Jämtland county's carbon emissions. We also wanted them to get to know how to go about when finding archival sources for their stories, and therefore engaged the National Archives and Association Archives of Jämtland.

Torbjörn Skytt – Climate change in Jämtland

Torbjörn began by sharing a story about a global urban planning conference around the turn of the last century, which addressed one of the major urban issues at the time: all the horse manure on the streets, as all transportation was by horse and carriage. They saw no possible solution—removing the manure would require more horses, which would produce even more manure. At the conference, it felt like an unsolvable problem—what could replace horses? A few years later, trams and gasoline-powered cars arrived, solving what was considered an impossible problem. Torbjörn drew parallels to how it is difficult for us today to see how the climate crisis can be solved, but perhaps there are solutions we cannot yet imagine.

Torbjörn then briefly described what has happened since the Paris Agreement in 2016, an international commitment to limit global warming to 1.5°C, which has since been broken down into national, regional, and local levels. Most activities are intended to take place at the municipal level, but since municipalities have no legal obligation to work on

climate issues, it often becomes a matter of prioritization against other budget areas like schools and healthcare.

Globally, CO₂ emissions have steadily increased, except during financial crises and COVID-19. Even COVID-19 only resulted in a relatively small emissions reduction compared to the reductions needed—despite the near-total halt of global air travel. Substantial societal changes are necessary to achieve the level of CO₂ reductions required.

To meet Sweden's emission targets, virtually all fossil fuel use needs to be phased out, and the industry must significantly increase energy efficiency. An important aspect is that “fossil-free” does not always equate to “best for the climate,” especially since fossil-free fuels often come from forests.

The Earth's average temperature has increased since 1850 at a rate not seen in over 2,000 years, and this increase should not have occurred based on calculations of natural climate variations.

Torbjörn described the different future scenarios created by the UN's IPCC panel, showing how much more the Earth's temperature will rise depending on how successfully we reduce CO₂ emissions.

It is important to remember that CO₂ breaks down slowly in the atmosphere—70% of CO₂ remains after 1,000 years. Every ton we emit contributes to long-term temperature increases.

Global average temperature increases affect the Earth unevenly—we will see greater temperature increases at the poles compared to the equator. In Jämtland, we will see greater temperature increases than the global average.

It can be difficult to grasp what these temperature changes actually mean, but one way is to compare regions with current equivalent temperatures. In a medium scenario, Jämtland would end up with winters similar to those in the Stockholm area today—not particularly snow-safe. Mountain ecosystems will change, and we will get a longer growing season.

Torbjörn warned against drawing quick conclusions about climate change and extreme weather events like floods. He also described climate adaptation strategies in various societal sectors, such as reindeer husbandry and tourism.

Torbjörn concluded by sharing that the late 1800s was a very cold period, resulting in crop failures and hunger. For example, in 1867, the lake in Burträsk, Västerbotten, was frozen until June. In Hälsingland, planting could not occur until mid-June, and frost also came early.



Discussion

Group discussions were held around these questions:

- What thoughts and/or feelings did Torbjörn's presentation evoke in you?
- What would you like to share with others about what Torbjörn just described?
- How do you want, and can you bring this knowledge into your storytelling work? Do you need additional support to do so?

Topics raised included:

- The difficulty for a geopark in relating to extremely long-time scales and climate changes over time. Earth's climate has changed drastically before—what makes the current situation alarming? It feels like a hard story to tell.
- Climate change means cultural changes, like the loss of snow, which brings grief.
- The discussions around climate change are often about risks—what are we risking in the future? It does not feel tangible here and now. We adapt to the current situation.
- What will be sacrificed? Reindeer herding is already under pressure and seen as an obstacle in the green transition.

- Someone mentioned hearing that humans are physiologically poor at planning far into the future; our brains cannot handle it well. We may want to do better, but how? “The road to hell is paved with good intentions...”
- The way society is structured makes it difficult to think and act long-term, for example, in municipalities where budget cycles are only one year and funds cannot be carried over to the next year.
- Consumption is constantly promoted in the media as desirable—how can we address and relate to that?
- What societal visions exist today? In the 1950s, there were dreams of flying cars and living in space. Are there any visions for the future now? To envision, creativity is required, and creative subjects and culture must be given space in schools and society.

Our places

Participants shared where they are in the process of choosing places and which themes they are considering. The places were primarily linked to their organizations, with themes including how to engage children and youth, the relationship between Vikings and the Sami, the challenge of telling stories over long time spans, combining past and future perspectives as places change with shorter winters, and Sami history.

Introduction to archives

Representatives from the National Archives in Östersund and the Association Archives in Jämtland County presented what can be found in their respective archives.

- **National Archives** manage state archives but also farm, personal, and company archives. They store church archives older than 2000 when the church separated from the state.
- **Association Archives** hold archives from the county’s civil society, from nearly 5,000 associations, both active and defunct.

Jim Hedlund from the National Archives shared what can be found in the archives, focusing on how different source types provide different insights into human destinies, folklore, and societal changes. He described how the archives have worked outwardly with their material, such as in podcast format.

Participants toured the reading room and archives, viewing special documents.

Eva Tegnhed from the Association Archives led a workshop, helping participants explore different document types, reflecting on their context and purpose, and considering that absence in archives does not necessarily mean the phenomenon did not exist.

Eva highlighted the archives from discussion associations around the 1900s, where members practiced debating and gained organizational skills, providing fascinating material on past relevant topics and debates.

Both archives encouraged contacting them for help finding sources, either by searching the National Archives Database (NAD) or getting guidance in person. Since many archives are stored off-site, it is recommended to contact them in advance to prepare materials for your visit.



Session 3 – The basics of storytelling

We began the workshop by pairing up and sharing how we got our names, both to get to know each other better and to practice storytelling. It turned out that even a relatively simple question can reveal much about a person, their history, and cultural context.

Values-based storytelling

Iñaki Escudero continued by discussing how stories can convey values, messages, and morals (in English, “moral of the story”). To do this, the storyteller needs a clear understanding of which values they want to convey, as this shapes the choices made when constructing the story.

You should not reveal the moral/message at the start.

To land on the moral at the end, you need to stay a step ahead of your audience, choosing the twists your story needs to reach that conclusion.

Iñaki asked participants about the assignment given before the session: to try identifying the stories others tell and the values behind them. Participants found this task

somewhat challenging. One had discussed it with her parents, who each had a story with a moral: her father's story concluded that one should not drive under the influence, while her mother's showed that bad things can lead to something good.

Several found it difficult to identify the moral/message in stories they heard. Iñaki noted that this may be because it requires practice to analyze stories externally and that much of storytelling is intuitive. We constantly hear and tell stories without always thinking about what the storyteller wants to convey.

The same message may be new to one listener and old to another.

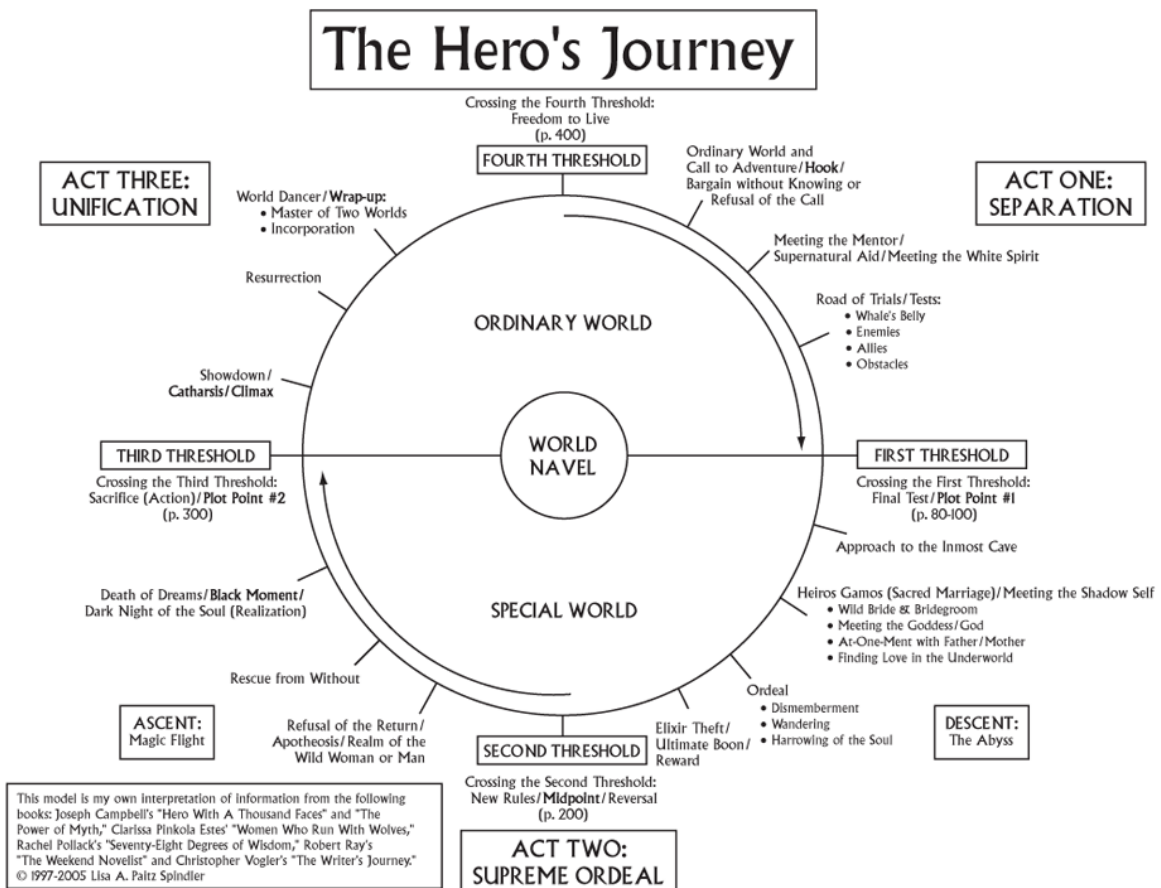
The stories we tell define who we are and how we perceive the world. By being conscious of this and creating stories based on cultural heritage, climate change, and our societal trajectory, we can help shape worldviews and thereby foster change. This means we should be intentional with our stories.

To help listeners relate to the story, it is helpful to tell stories about people—it is easier to relate to a person than to a country. Alternatively, give the main character human traits in some way.

Story structure

Iñaki then explained a common storytelling structure in Western tradition: **The Hero's Journey**, noting that almost all Disney films use this structure. Once you learn it, you see it everywhere.





(Reference: <https://lisapaitzspindler.com/for-writers/stages-of-the-journey-the-heros-journey-worksheet/>)

The story's message

Participants discussed whether all stories really have a moral. Sometimes stories are told for their own sake. What truly constitutes a story? Everyday stories may not always follow a clear structure, but we constantly build narratives (e.g., "Your dad works so hard for you," with the underlying message being "You should appreciate what your dad does").

Participants reflected on:

- What do listeners of our stories need to learn/take away?
- What story do we want to tell about climate change and how it impacts our cultural heritage and places?

This formed the basis for the message participants wished to convey through their stories.

Discussion outcomes



- Be kind to the Earth and take better care of it, so our children can experience things like snow.
- Feelings of loss and grief which we discuss are our feelings; future generations may not share the same baseline experiences.
- Respect the Earth—we depend on it.
- Even a single person can make a difference, despite narratives that change is impossible or solely in the hands of large corporations.
- The Earth will recover regardless of what we do; it is humanity and human civilization that are threatened.
- Learn to listen: inwardly, to the Earth, and to others' knowledge and worldviews.

Who is the main character in the story of climate change?

Values to convey

- The world changes and has always changed.
- Pause to experience and take in your environment.
- Different stories on similar themes provide various perspectives and values.
- The story's purpose depends on the audience—what do they need to learn, and how can the story help them change their behaviour?

Building your story

A simple storytelling structure example is Pixar's structure, similar to the Hero's Journey:

- Once upon a time...
- Every day...
- But one day!
- Because of that...
- And because of that...
- And because of that...
- Until finally...
- And ever since then...

This structure is comforting for audiences, who recognize it while still being surprised by the content.

Summary

What do you want listeners to learn/take away = the message.

Story structure: the known world – something happens – the world changes.

Iñaki concluded by emphasizing defining the main character: where they come from, what they want, and what drives them. Stories should start with the opposite of how you want them to end, shaping how the character is introduced and developed. *Start with the end to find the beginning.* You control your character's journey to convey your intended message.

Participants began creating a storyboard using Pixar's structure.



Closing reflections from participants

- “Difficult but fun to be creative, I’m not used to it.”
- “Challenging.”
- “Give yourself the freedom and permission to be a storyteller and tell what you feel needs to be told!”
- “How far can you take it? For example, with a house as the main character—you decide what the audience should believe, then it’s about bringing them along.”

Session 4 – Storytelling deep dive

This session focused on workshopping participants’ storytelling processes, so the notes are heavily summarized.



Participants reflected on:

- What they liked most about their stories so far.
- What they were struggling with.

They shared their stories, and the discussions afterwards revolved around topics such as how to make the story clear for those unfamiliar with the historical content, engaging the audience in the story, and how to select among all the archival sources and angles on the story that you can choose from.

The participants also reflected on what kind of messages they want to convey with their stories:

- Stories survive change but may need to be filled with new meaning.
- Listen to what nature tries to tell us.
- Gain historical perspectives on humanity’s relationship with nature.
- There is value in “animating” things, as it fosters care for them.

Summarize your story in one word

Examples:

- Sofi: “Love.” (Iñaki suggested: Appreciation, useful, purpose)
- Helena: “Pilgrimage.” (Iñaki: Perspective, discovery, openness, appreciation)
- Lena: “Resilience.” (Iñaki: Preserve, endure, outlast, survive, love)

The main character’s journey

Participants reflected on:

- What change the main character undergoes.
- Whether the story has a clear message.
- What emotions the audience should feel at the end.

Final product: length and format

The project team outlined these expectations:

- Each participant creates a written story that can also be told orally.
- Recordings will be offered for use in your organization.
- The stories will be shared with others through the project and at a public storytelling evening in June for those who wish.

It was emphasized that the format should suit each participant’s organization—whether for example a written story for a website, a recorded story, or guided tour with storytelling parts.

Iñaki advised making the story as long as it needs to be to convey your message clearly.

Participants discussed using Padlets to share drafts for feedback using Hyper Island’s feedback format: “I like, I wish, I wonder...”

The session concluded with discussing how ChatGPT or other AI tools can support storytelling, showing examples of generating ideas for stories and character descriptions—not to write the story for you, but to provide new perspectives.



Session 5 – Transmedia storytelling

In this session, we wanted to combine a continuing work on the stories with some inspiration on how the same story can take many different forms. Therefore, we invited Lissa Holloway-Attaway from University of Skövde who has done a lot of research as well as experimented herself with different ways of conveying a story.

Workshop: Where are we now in our storytelling process?

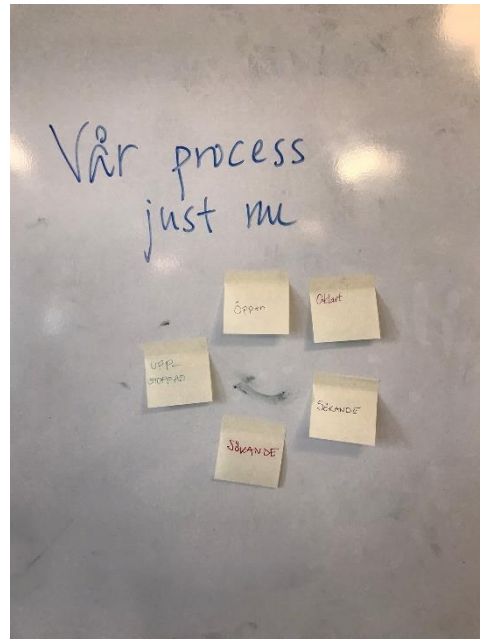
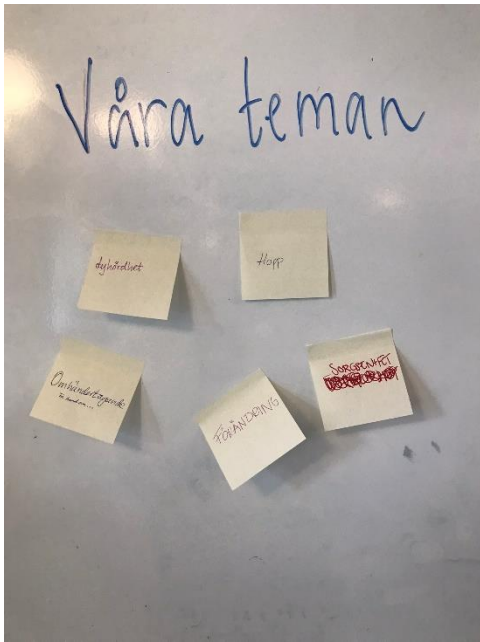
Participants reflected on their process by sharing with a partner:

- What the story is about.
- Where they are in the process.
- What currently occupies their focus.

They then wrote on two post-it notes:

1. The main theme of their story.
2. A word describing their current feeling about the process.

The themes were hope, responsiveness, caretaking, change and sadness. The description of the process was being open, unclear, searching, and constipated.



Participants gave and received feedback in pairs using prompts:

- “What I was drawn to...”
- “I’m curious to know more about...”
- “I perceive the story to be about...”

They then switched roles and later shared reflections, noting that many gained new perspectives and angles for their stories.



Lissa Holloway-Attaway – Transmedia storytelling

Lissa presented her research group, GAME (Games, Art, Media, Experience) at the University of Skövde, describing her dissertation using a 3D castle to visualize Edgar Allan Poe's works.

She shared projects on transmedia storytelling, including:

- **Remaking Moby-Dick:** A fragmented retelling of *Moby-Dick* using poems, stories, images, videos, dance, and museum collaborations. The key takeaway: *Have fun with the text and tell it your way.*
- **KASTiS – Cultural Heritage and Game Technology in Skaraborg:** A digital platform using characters “Kira and Luppe” to collect mythical creatures, connecting stories to real locations with books, AR apps, and exhibitions.
- **Sagospellet Skaraborg:** A game encouraging players to tell stories about treasures and creatures tied to Skaraborg, supporting cultural heritage transmission through storytelling.
- **Climate-themed projects:**
 - *Klimatspellet Mariestad* (board game on creating a climate-neutral city).
 - *Here's Life – The Kinnekulle Biosphere* (game connecting local experiences with Agenda 2030).
 - *Seedbox* (exploring climate change through arts and humanities).
 - *Story of a Fish* (a game teaching about the Baltic Sea's health).
- **BSR Cultural Gaming and Minecraft Workshops:** Using Minecraft with children to rebuild and rethink their cities, learning that the *stories* and *dialogue* during building were more important than the builds themselves.

Lissa concluded by encouraging exploration of non-linear storytelling, breaking stories into pieces that can be experienced independently, and considering how different media (images, sounds, etc.) can bring storytellers closer to their stories.



Storytelling evening

To create a space where the stories could be shared with an audience for the first time, we arranged a small storytelling evening in Östersund. The participants in the project were invited to share their stories, and Iñaki Escudero also held a storytelling session with the audience. The evening was done in collaboration a local design association (Svensk Form Jämtland Härjedalen) and an artist collective (Tullgatan6) which had a pop-up collection with objects made from scrap material.



Session 6 – Recording

A practical session where participants visited a podcast studio one by one to record their stories, with Helena Kuhlefeldt from NCK managing the technical aspects. The recordings were then edited by the podcast studio. This resulted in five recorded stories.

Session 7 – Conclusion

Originally planned as an in-person session, it was moved online due to participant availability.

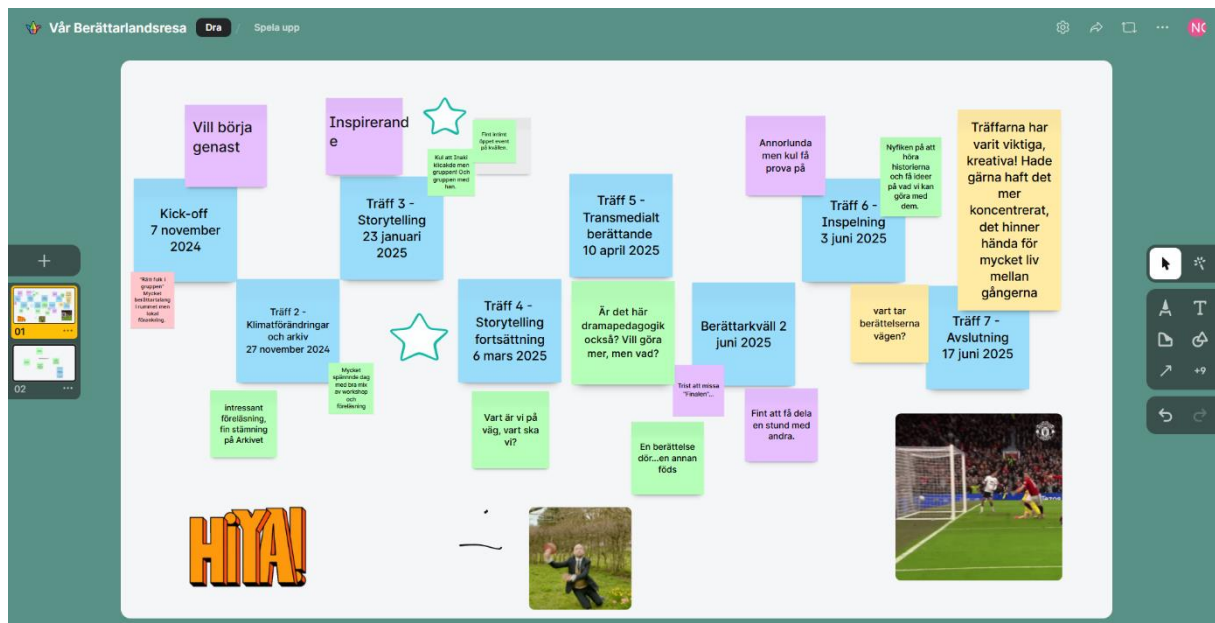
Using a history map method, participants reflected on:

- Highlights.
- Challenges.
- Memorable moments.
- Surprises throughout the process.

Key reflections:

- Sessions on storytelling were particularly important, showing that storytelling is a craft that can be improved with practice and the right tools.
- Transmedia storytelling sessions broadened perspectives on different forms of storytelling.

All participants shared that they had felt very inspired during the process, and that they had liked the open atmosphere during the sessions where everyone helped each other out with their stories. The peer learning was highlighted as particularly important. Participants noted that the framework felt too broad at times, and some wished for a narrower focus and clearer expectations for the final product from the start. One participant wished for a shorter, more intensive process. “There was so much life coming in between the meetings” as she put it, meaning that a lot of things came in the way of doing the homework for each meeting.



Plans moving forward included:

- Organizing storytelling evenings with their organizations as hosts.
- Using the stories in work with children and youth.
- Scheduling a final in-person session in autumn to concretize how the stories can be used.

What did we learn?

- The workshops became a space for exploring your creativity in a new way, but also to raise important and existential questions about where we are going as a society. How does climate change affect us as individuals and as society, and how can we deal with these changes both socially and culturally? There was an eagerness among the participants to share with each other, and we felt that these kinds of spaces are quite rare today.
- Do not be afraid of narrowing down the task you give to the participants. We wanted initially to leave it up to the participants to decide the format and subject of their story as we wanted to leave room for them to adjust to their own needs within their organisations. However, the feedback afterwards was that this had made the task feel a bit unclear and too big for some. To give restraints can also spark creativity!
- There are pros and cons to keeping the process short and intense, or longer with more time for reflection and time to work independently. Think about what suits the reality of your participants and what you try to accomplish.