

# Storytelling Fellowship 2024-2025

Call for applications

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# Storytelling Training Fellowship 24/25 in Impact Production

The Storytelling Fellowship programme is now accepting applications for the 2024 cohort.

This year we are offering up to eight fellows a free training programme in impact production. Fellows will learn the skills of impact production, routes to impact and develop impact plans and campaigns for their projects.

Impact Production is a profession and set of skills that has developed over the last 18 years, out of the work of [Doc Society](#) and their [Impact Field Guide](#). Originally developed for documentary producers this practice is being used in other genres such as XR, theatre and writing.

This programme takes the training in impact production into a wider range of disciplines including TV, fiction film, novels, non-fiction writing, journalism, theatre, XR/immersive/interactive, games and audio/podcasts, animation, comic books, creative documentaries and docufiction.

# About the AKO Storytelling Institute

The AKO Storytelling Institute works at the intersection of storytelling and social change. As a part of UAL's new Social Purpose Group, our mission is to enable storytellers to make a greater social impact through their work.

## Impact storytelling: an emerging ecosystem

Storytelling is regarded by many as an ancient practice which holds an innate and immutable power to inspire change. Arguably the primary means of making sense of the world by humans, studies conclude that stories are the main 'processing unit' of our pattern-forming brains. While storytelling and its potential to drive change may be considered timeless, "impact storytelling" is still considered an embryonic and emerging ecosystem by many of its own experts and leaders.

Social change efforts are often siloed (including across traditional storytelling communications, grassroots organising and advocacy, and the work of individual artists and cultural institutions) and substantial evidence gaps remain about how stories lead to social change and how storytellers can produce and share stories for maximal impact upon their audiences.

Since the 2010s, we are seeing the emergence of a new ecosystem of practice, particularly in response to seemingly increasing waves of global political, environmental and social crises. This worsening 'poly-crisis' – that includes climate change, inequity of marginalised groups and the rise of misinformation – fuels a shared, ambitious and urgent conviction across the ecosystem to disrupt these crises and succeed in driving systems-level change.

There are now, more than ever, artists and creatives who are looking to influence positive social change through their work with more impact, and those working in the areas of campaigning and strategic communications who are increasingly conscious that they need the involvement of the Arts & Culture and Media domains to more effectively and sustainably shift cultural narratives.

Impact Production is a profession and set of skills that has developed over the last 18 years, out of the work of [Doc Society](#) and their [Impact Field Guide](#). It is one of the key impact methodologies for creatives, originally developed for documentary producers but being expanded to be used by other genres such as XR, theatre and writing. It is one of the core frameworks that the Institute is embracing. For this fellowship, our aim is to offer a practical professional development programme that reaches to disciplines wider than documentaries to expand this practice and to allow those from other areas to benefit from these skills.

## Our mission

UAL's AKO Storytelling Institute has joined the impact storytelling ecosystem in 2022 with the belief that by better harnessing the power of storytelling for social change we can empower artists and creatives to make the world better place.

We do this through research (please see our recent report), through public engagement (symposia and events) and through practical labs, workshops and a fellowship programme.

Our focus is on the storytelling ecosystem and how we can bring impact driven artists and media practitioners together with those working in the campaign, advocacy and strategic communications space to create a more holistic approach to stories with a mission to create real world change.

## Programme description

### What is the Storytelling Training Fellowship in Impact production?

The Fellowship is a structured training programme designed to provide specialist training, mentorship and professional development in Impact production. The interdisciplinary training Fellowship offers the opportunity to acquire new skills and gain a deeper understanding as well as hands-on experience of Impact Production. It brings together a team of trainers that draw on successful methodologies from many years of expertise delivering impact-focussed workshops, campaign development and festivals

The programme consists of a one-week intensive lab of training followed by 6 months of mentorship. The Fellowship programme is designed to support and enhance the impact campaign surrounding and supporting the work. This is not a programme to work on the creative development or production of the project itself.

### Objectives

The objectives of the Fellowship are to:

- Equip the Fellows with impact production skills and strengthen their understanding of change
- Assist and mentor the Fellows in crafting an impact plan that is tailored to their projects with the intention to maximise the influence of their work
- Provide a practical, hands-on learning experience through workshops, case studies and mentorship
- Explore the benefits of a cross-disciplinary impact training programme that broadens the application of impact production skills across different creative practices

### The programme

The UAL Storytelling Fellowship runs from **November 2024 to June 2025**.

## 2024-2025 Call for applications

The programme employs a mix of lectures, group work, case studies, and hands-on activities across various media. This approach ensures that participants not only learn theoretical aspects of impact production but also apply them in real-world scenarios with their creative projects while gaining a holistic understanding of the impact production ecosystem.

The programme begins with a 5-day intensive workshop and is followed by a six-month mentoring programme. Specifically, it includes:

- **An introductory online meeting (08 November 2024 at 2pm GMT)**
- **A 1-week Impact Production Lab (25-29 November 2024):** this one-week intensive lab will take place in London and will allow the space for the Fellows to be practically trained in different aspects of impact production (impact strategy, the role of an impact producer, partnerships for impact etc.). Each day is dedicated to a specific theme and takes the Fellows through lectures, workshop sessions and case studies.
- Programme topics include:
  - Introduction to impact production and impact strategy development
  - Targeting audiences: where to find them, prioritise segments and building personas, and how to effectively reach them.
  - Creative strategies: How to stand out from the crowd and evaluating creative possibilities
  - Partnership building for impact
  - Ethical responsibilities: avoiding stereotypes, cultural sensitivities, respecting subjects and collaborators
  - Impact plans, evaluation techniques and impact campaigns including budgets, timelines and teams
  - Tools and resources for impact production
- **A 6-month mentoring programme (December 2024 – May 2025):** Following the Lab, the Fellows will be matched with impact producers who will provide guidance and support monthly over a period of six months as the Fellows develop their impact production plans
- **A closing session (May or June 2025)**

As part of the workshop sessions, we will set aside time each day for reflections on what you learned. The Fellows should also be prepared to participate in group meetings to discuss learnings and to be interviewed individually by the Institute team and/or to complete surveys as part of our evaluation process.

## The Fellows: who can apply

The programme is interdisciplinary, specifically offering free places to 6-8 storytelling professionals and practitioners from these backgrounds:

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- TV
- Fiction film
- Fiction writing / novels
- Non-fiction writing
- Journalism
- Theatre
- XR/Immersive/Interactive
- Games
- Audio / Podcast
- Animation
- Comic books
- Creative documentary and docufiction

Fellows must prioritise “impact first”. This means they should be driven to make work primarily to create positive change in the world. Supporting creatives to create real world change is the mission of the institute.

While an understanding of how change happens, of impact strategy, narrative change or impact production is not a prerequisite for applying, a commitment to using your art or media to change the world, is.

Fellows can be at any stage of their career but must have had at least one creative project launched to a public audience.

Fellows will bring a project that is already developed and ready for the production stage or in production, but not launched publicly yet. It needs to have a clear social impact potential and a clear timescale for launch, broadcast or release.

## Eligibility criteria

All applicants must:

- Have the right to work in the UK for the duration of the Fellowship
- Be in London for the in-person sessions
- Be able to commit to the whole programme
- Be active in one of the disciplines stated in the section ‘The Fellows’
- Bring a project from their own practice that has been fully developed but has not yet launched. The project should have completed its development stages and be preparing for a launch in the foreseeable future. It should have a clear artistic vision and should be close to or in the process of creation.

- Have an interest specifically in the development of impact and in making a difference with their work
- Be fluent in English

## What we offer

In addition to a bespoke programme of workshops and mentoring from experienced trainers with a global perspective, peer-to-peer discussions with other creatives and the opportunity to develop an impact production plan for your creative piece we cover:

- Travel and accommodation expenses in London for the 1-week Lab for UK participants who come from outside London
- Although we welcome international applicants, we are unable to cover the cost of international travel and/or visa costs. If you are accepted on the programme as an international application, we will cover the cost of your accommodation for the 1-week Lab in London. You will be responsible for booking your travel and covering visa expenses

**The Fellows are participants to the Fellowship programme of the AKO Storytelling Institute and not staff or students of UAL. This means that you will not receive legal support, HR support, Library access, access to UAL buildings, UAL short courses and any other benefits.**

**The AKO Storytelling Institute is unable to offer dedicated studio space, production costs or additional expenses associated with childcare, legal support, materials or general living costs including financial support with VISA costs.**

## The application process

To apply, submit the following documents as a single PDF **by Thursday 05 September 2024**, at 17:00 (BST)

- A **cover letter of not more than 2 A4 pages** (font size should be 11 or 12) outlining:
  - 1) About you
    - who you are
    - your interest in and suitability for the Fellowship
    - what you understand by impact and if you have achieved it in your past projects.
  - 2) Your project
    - What is your project?
    - What stage is your project at?
    - What impact would you like your project to have?
- An updated **CV**
- **A video recording** of 3 - 5 minutes introducing yourself and your project.

## How to apply

Please refer to the FAQ at the bottom of this page before applying.

The cover letter and CV should be submitted in **a single PDF file** via email with the subject: Fellowship application – (your name)

The video recording can be attached as a file (if the size of the file allows this) or shared as a private link or sent via a file transfer service.

Please email your application materials to [storytelling@arts.ac.uk](mailto:storytelling@arts.ac.uk)

## Assessment and selection process

A team of impact production experts and creatives from different disciplines will review the applications against the selection criteria, ranking all applications and recommending a shortlist of candidates to interview.

The committee will review the applications and will consider the following criteria:

- Criterion 1: The creative potential of the work
- Criterion 2: The impact potential of the work
- Criterion 3: Your commitment to impact and openness to learning more about impact

We are dedicated to bringing together a diverse cohort of Fellows from different backgrounds. Our goal is to have a balanced cohort of projects in the programme in terms of the social issues that the projects address reflecting diversity in the challenges we face. We aim to have rich and productive discussions and create an inclusive and safe environment for all identities.

## Key dates

- Deadline for applications: Thursday 05 September 2024, 17:00 (BST)
- Notification of results: 16- 20 September 2024
  
- Pre-Fellowship meeting: 08 November 2024
- One-week Lab in-person, in London: 25-29 November 2024
- Mentorship programme: 02 December 2024 – 30 May 2025
- Bi-monthly group mentoring online sessions: January, March, May 2025
- Closing session: May or June 2025

## Contact

Please read the FAQ before applying.

If you have any questions that are not covered in the FAQ, please email us at [storytelling@arts.ac.uk](mailto:storytelling@arts.ac.uk)

We will endeavour to **respond to inquiries** on the following dates:

- 07-09 August 2024
- 19-21 August 2024

## We are UAL

University of the Arts London (UAL) offers an extensive range of courses in art, design, fashion, communication and performing arts. We are a collegiate University spread across London with six Colleges, four Institutes and five Research Centres. UAL also has two subsidiary companies, delivering specialist activities – UAL Short Courses Ltd, and UAL Arts Temps Ltd.

We're made up of all types of people, coming together in London, the world's creative capital. We are designers, artists, performers, thinkers, researchers and makers. Our students, staff and graduates form a global network of creatives, entrepreneurs and leaders. Together, our ideas change the world. Because the world needs creativity.

We are ranked highly across the board. We are ranked first for specialist art and design, second in the world for Art and Design in the 2023 QS World University Rankings (for the fifth year in a row), ranked fifth in sustainability and two of our colleges were rated in the top three fashion schools in the world.

## Our culture

We have become one of the world's most international Universities, welcoming over 22,000 students and 6,000 staff from 130 countries. And, as a global university, staff and students learn from different cultures and perspectives, which leads to new conversations and innovative work. At our very core, everything we do seeks to challenge the status quo by driving social purpose and standing up for what matters.

We welcome applicants from all backgrounds including those who may feel underrepresented in the workforce due to their socioeconomic circumstances such as those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (B.A.M.E.) backgrounds. We aim to be a university where everyone can be themselves and are supported to reach their full potential.

With our commitment to inclusion and diversity, we are proud to be a Race Equality Charter (REC) member to help us reduce barriers that negatively impacts B.A.M.E. staff, a Stonewall Diversity Champion to ensure all LGBTQ+ people are valued at work, a Disability Confident Scheme Committed employer and member of the Business Disability Forum which help us to improve the lives of disabled people in the workplace.

## Processing personal data

Your personal information will be processed as part of the application process. We will handle personal data securely in line with UK data protection legislation. For more information, please refer to our Privacy notice.

# FAQ

## How many Fellows will be selected for this Programme?

We plan to select up to 8 Fellows for the Storytelling Fellowship 24/25.

## What qualifies as a Storytelling Fellowship project?

For the purposes of our fellowship programme, a project could be a piece of artistic output that aims to engage audiences and aims to influence real-world change, in the following disciplines or practices:

- TV
- Fiction film
- Fiction writing / novels
- Non-fiction writing
- Journalism
- Theatre
- XR/Immersive/Interactive
- Games
- Audio / Podcast
- Animation
- Comic books
- Creative documentary and docufiction

## What is not a Storytelling Fellowship project?

We discourage applications involving:

- a project in concept stage
- a project that has been launched
- a project where the artistic merit and experience are high but the creator's aim and intent for social impact is minimal

## As a Fellow, what would be expected of me?

- a commitment to the fellowship and your cohort: attendance of the pre-Fellowship meeting, the 1-week Lab, the mentorship programme and the closing event is mandatory
- an open mind and a respect for the experience and views of the other fellows
- a commitment to developing an impact plan
- an ongoing relationship with the Institute and UAL community beyond the length of the fellowship

### **What is the participation fee for this Fellowship?**

The training Fellowship is **free** for the successful applicants.

### **How much time do I need to commit to the Fellowship?**

1 online pre-meeting of up to 2 hours (08 November at 2pm GMT)

5 in-person full days in London, 25-29 November 2024

6 online mentor sessions, December – May 2025

3 online group mentor sessions January, March and May 2025

1 online closing session in May or June 2025

As part of the workshop sessions, we will set aside time each day for reflections on what you learned. The Fellows should also be prepared to participate in group meetings to discuss learnings and to be interviewed by the Institute team and/or to complete surveys as part of our evaluation process.

### **Can I have other professional commitments and still carry out the Storytelling Fellowship?**

Yes, but we need your **full commitment** for the in-person Lab week and mentorship programme and online activities (like the pre-Fellowship meeting). It will not be possible for you to do any other work during the week of the lab.

Your project might be part of your work or a sideline or a core part of your work for the year.

## **Eligibility Criteria**

### **Who is eligible to apply?**

Self-employed freelancers

Part-time employees who can commit to the fellowship in addition to their existing work commitments

Full-time employees who have the support of their host organisation

### **Do I need to be a UK Citizen?**

No, but you need a right to work in the UK for the duration of the Fellowship.

The AKO Storytelling Institute will not financially support VISA applications for entry to the UK

Although we welcome international applicants, we are unable to cover the cost of international travel and/or visa costs. If you are accepted on the programme, we will cover the cost of your accommodation for the 1-week Lab in London. You will be responsible for booking your travel and/or covering visa expenses

### **Can groups apply?**

We welcome group applications of not more than 2-3 creatives. We are unable to accommodate larger groups.

In the case of group applications, we can only cover travel and accommodation for one person from the group.

### **Is there a theme?**

No. Your project can be about anything as long as it has a strong impact aim.

**Do I need to live and work in London?**

No, but you will need to be in London for the in-person sessions

**I am already based at UAL. Can I apply?**

Yes, though this is a programme for professionals so if applying as a student, fellows must show a professional artistic career as well. Post grad, PhD candidates, Post docs, lecturers and researchers are all welcome to apply.

**Will you pay for my time?**

No. This is a free training programme. This is not paid work for which we will cover your time.

**Experience**

We welcome different levels of experience of artistic practice. There is no upper age limit for applications.

**Can an organisation apply?**

An individual from an organisation is welcome to apply but not the organization itself.

**What support do you offer to Fellows?**

We offer a workshop-based programme of applied learning and a bespoke mentorship programme. The mentors will support the development of your impact plan.

We cover the travel and accommodation expenses of the UK Fellows who come from outside London for your stay in London. International applicants are responsible for booking the cost of their travel and potential visa costs for entry to the UK.

The Fellows are participants to the Fellowship programme of the AKO Storytelling Institute and not staff or students of UAL. This means that you will not receive legal support, HR support, Library access, access to UAL buildings, UAL short courses and any other benefits.

The AKO Storytelling Institute is unable to offer dedicated studio space, production costs or additional expenses associated with childcare, legal support, materials or general living costs or financial support with VISA costs.

AKO Storytelling Institute

July 2024