Centring Lived Experience

Implementation guide for equity storytelling partnerships

UNSW SYDNEY

Developed by

ACSES

This project was supported by the Australian Centre for Student Equity and Success (ACSES) at Curtin University.

Contents

Centring Lived Experience: Implementation guide for equity storytelling partnerships **3**

Introduction 3

Why centre lived experience? 3

Purpose of this guide 4

Pedagogical foundations & guiding principles 5

Program structure 6

Workshop 1: exploration and connection 7

Workshop 2: development and form 7

Workshop 3: revision and workshopping 7

Individual consultations 8

Sample documents – workshop resources 8

Evaluation Guide 17

Sample documents – expression of interest and legal process 22

Further reading **23**

Bibliography **24**

Project team **25**

Centring Lived Experience: implementation guide for equity storytelling partnerships

Introduction

This guide supports tertiary institutions to develop ethical, student-centred storytelling initiatives that strengthen belonging, agency, confidence, reflection and institutional learning.

The guide is informed by the UNSW Centring Lived Experience: Student Stories program and by contemporary scholarship on writing, reflection, student partnership and equity. It positions storytelling as a communication activity and a developmental practice through which students make meaning of their experiences, connect with others, strengthen their sense of self and contribute to institutional understanding.

Why centre lived experience?

Across Australian higher education, there is increasing recognition that improving equity outcomes requires more than widening access. Institutions must also develop meaningful mechanisms through which students from historically underrepresented groups can influence institutional culture, inform practice and contribute to understandings of participation and success. While quantitative data provides important information about student outcomes, it often struggles to illuminate how students experience higher education, how they navigate barriers and how they make sense of achievement, belonging, identity and aspiration within complex educational environments.

Storytelling provides opportunities for students to:

- reflect on educational journeys
- explore identity and belonging
- recognise strengths and achievements
- develop confidence and agency
- contribute knowledge to institutional improvement

At the same time, institutions gain access to richer understandings of the conditions that shape student participation, belonging and success.

Purpose of this guide

This guide has been developed to support tertiary institutions seeking to establish or strengthen lived experience storytelling initiatives with students from equity cohorts. It does not present a single prescribed model. Instead it offers principles, frameworks, examples and implementation considerations derived from practice and designed to support adaptation across a range of institutional contexts. The guide is intended to provide guidance, rather than prescriptions, recognising that effective storytelling partnerships may take many forms depending on local needs, resources, communities and objectives.

Throughout the guide, lived experience storytelling is approached as both a pedagogical practice and a partnership practice. It is pedagogical because it supports learning, reflection, identity formation and capability development. It is a partnership practice because it positions students as collaborators and knowledge-holders whose experiences contribute to institutional understanding and improvement. In this sense, storytelling becomes not only a method for sharing experiences, but also a mechanism for fostering more inclusive and responsive institutions.

Access Centring Lived Experience Publications

https://bit.ly/centring-lived-experience

Pedagogical foundations & guiding principles

The Centring Lived Experience program is grounded in student-partnership, reflective and strengths-based pedagogies that recognise students as experts in their own experiences and active contributors to knowledge creation. The program combines creative writing practice, structured reflection, collaborative learning, and individual mentoring to support participants in exploring the relationships between identity, belonging, motivation, achievement and success.

Storytelling is positioned as a developmental and meaning-making practice through which participants investigate their experiences, connect them to broader social and educational contexts, and develop the confidence and agency to communicate their perspectives to others. The program views writing as a mode of inquiry through which participants construct meaning from their educational and personal journeys. Through drafting, reflection, revision and discussion, participants are encouraged to discover new understandings of their experiences, identities and aspirations.

The approach is underpinned by principles of participant agency, cultural safety, ethical engagement and trauma-informed facilitation, ensuring that students retain ownership of both their stories and the meanings they derive from them.

The workshop design asks participants to complete sustained ideation activities and exploratory writing to encourage engagement with a broad range of experiences and aspects of their personal journeys. Participants move from exploration and idea generation, through development and drafting, to revision and publication, engaging in iterative cycles of reflection, feedback and creative experimentation. The early drafting sessions provide space for participants to explore ambiguity and make new connections between various aspects of their lived experience. Small-group workshops foster connection, reciprocity and a sense of belonging, while individual consultations provide personalised support and preserve participant autonomy over content, form and disclosure.

Participants are supported in recognising and valuing the developmental processes through which growth, confidence, agency and expertise emerge. The Centring Lived Experience program is particularly concerned with the discoveries made as students explore transitions such as:

- university entry
- changing aspirations
- belonging
- family expectations
- professional identity

In the context of storytelling initiatives, participation involves having opportunities to articulate experiences, contribute perspectives and influence conversations that become part of institutional understanding. This is of particular importance to equity students who may not feel an historical connection to the tertiary environment.

1. Reflection and remembering

Reflective storytelling enables participants to connect past experiences, present circumstances and future aspirations. Through this process, stories support continuity, meaning-making and personal agency during periods of transition. Storytelling allows these elements to be connected into a coherent narrative which students can share, discuss and use to enrich their relationship with each other and educational institutions.

2. Feedback as dialogue

Feedback is most effective when it supports participant reflection and development. Within the Centring Lived Experience model, feedback is:

- descriptive
- conversational
- developmental

During the program participants are guided through multiple forms of feedback: peer-to-peer, verbal, written, and one-on-one mentoring sessions with the facilitator.

3. Participant agency

The program is built on establishing participant agency over the content and form of their writing. Initial activities are designed to encourage dialogue and provide opportunities for participants to test material and lead decisions about the content and form of their work.

Participants should have the agency to:

- make decisions about their content and form of their work
- interpret feedback
- feedback on workshop structure and delivery
- identify the meaningful experiences which will become part of their work

Program structure

The 2026 Centring Lived Experience program was completed in partnership with ten University Ambassadors. University Ambassadors are current UNSW students, employed as facilitators of UNSW Gateway programs. Many Ambassadors have a long relationship with the Gateway programs both as high school participants and current facilitators. Centring Lived Experience participants completed an expression of interest form detailing their reasons for wishing to complete the program. Participants represented a range of study areas and previous experience of creative writing. The Centring Lived Experience model used a staged workshop design that combined creative writing pedagogy, reflective practice, peer learning, and individual mentoring.

Session	Focus	Duration
Workshop 1	Exploration and connection	4 hours
Workshop 2	Development and form	3 hours
Workshop 3	Revision, editing and workshopping	3 hours
Workshop 4	Individual or small group support	60 mins
Workshop 5	Additional individual support	60 mins

Note:
This section is a description of workshop facilitation during this 2026 program. The Sample Documents on pages 9–16 contain an updated and simplified version of the sequence with a workshop guide and resources. The updated sequence was created in collaboration with UNSW Student Ambassadors after the delivery of the 2026 Centring Lived Experience program.

Workshop 1: exploration and connection

Purpose: Generate ideas, build trust and explore identity.

The opening workshop prioritises relationship building and establishes a small learning community in which participants can safely explore ideas and experiences. Activities focus on identity, community, motivation and success - encouraging participants to begin reflecting on their educational journeys while developing trust within the group.

The primary objectives are to:

- explore identity and self-understanding
- generate a diverse range of ideas and memories
- identify experiences relevant to participation, belonging, motivation and success
- begin establishing narrative voice
- develop confidence in reflective writing and discussion

These exercises are designed to encourage students to identify significant experiences, relationships, turning points, aspirations and challenges. Rather than focusing narrowly on adversity or deficit narratives, students are encouraged to explore success, change, achievement, inspiration and belonging.

Guiding questions for the first workshop include:

- What experiences and communities shape me?
- What motivates me?
- What does success mean to me?

Workshop 2: development and form

Purpose: Transform ideas into stories.

The second workshop focuses on transforming exploratory material into coherent pieces of writing. Activities focus on testing and identifying forms that will be used when developing ideas gathered in the first workshop. Activities contribute to participant agency, creative confidence and communication capability by providing sustained support during the transition from ideation to development.

The primary objectives are to:

- identify promising material
- explore narrative possibilities
- experiment with form
- begin drafting

Workshop 3: revision and workshopping

Purpose: Refine stories through reflection and feedback.

Workshop 3 links the development workshop with individual consultations by providing participants with a grounding in editing, feedback and workshopping techniques. The workshop positions editing as reflective and productive, allowing participants to critically engage with their own work while retaining ownership of meaning and voice.

The primary objectives are to:

- provide and receive structured peer feedback
- refine existing work
- editing for clarity and impact
- reflect on audience and purpose

This framework helps participants understand writing as a developmental process rather than a one-time activity. Participants share work and receive feedback in structured workshop environment. This can occur as a whole group or by creating smaller groups. Each participant shares a selection of their work and receives verbal feedback from peers. Feedback in the workshopping stage is based on the principle that feedback is a description of a reading experience rather than a judgement about quality. This approach encourages belonging, reciprocity and confidence while reducing anxiety associated with evaluation.

Individual consultations

The consultation model is a key feature of the program. Participants meet with facilitators individually or in small groups to discuss:

- structure
- form
- audience
- content
- ethical considerations
- revision decisions

These consultations are opportunities for collaborative refinement rather than assessment. One-on-one consultations allow participants to speak openly about the writing decisions being made, and continue a productive and targeted dialogue with the facilitator.

Workshop resources



Lived
Experience

Writing and Reflection Kit

UNSW SYDNEY

Introduction

The Lived Experience Writing and Reflection Kit provides a structured, flexible framework for supporting participants to develop creative and reflective writing grounded in their own experiences. The resources are particularly effective in equity contexts where personal experience, belonging, identity, aspiration, and reflection are important foundations for engagement and learning.

Designed around a sequence of prompt cards and writing activities, the resource guides writers through six stages: generating ideas, developing material, identifying connections, experimenting with form, writing, and refining.

The sequence prioritises exploration, discovery, and sustained reflection. Participants collect memories, observations, relationships, places, questions, moments of wonder, and personal insights before gradually shaping them into more developed creative works.

The approach aligns strongly with contemporary English teaching practices that emphasise process, experimentation, reflection, voice and audience awareness. By encouraging participants to draw upon lived experience, the resource supports authentic expression, helps writers discover meaningful subject matter, and provides multiple entry points for students with varied levels of confidence and writing experience.

Resources:

Lived Experience Cards (30 cards plus one Instruction Card)

Lived Experience Writing Guide (1 A3, double sided worksheet)

Presentation Version of Card Deck

Visit Additional Resources
https://bit.ly/LivedExperienceAdditionalResources

Facilitation Options

The Lived Experience Cards and accompanying resources provide facilitators and participants with a structured framework for generating ideas, developing creative writing, and reflecting on the writing process. While the cards are designed to be used flexibly across a range of educational settings, they are most commonly implemented in three ways:

1. Mini Workshop:

A condensed writing experience focused on idea generation and drafting.

2. Extended Workshop:

A longer, more comprehensive workshop series that guides participants through the full writing process, from idea generation to drafting and refinement.

3. Reflection and Discussion:

A reflective approach that uses the cards to prompt conversations about personal experiences, creative choices, and the development of ideas through writing.

Note: timings on the cards/presentation are for the Extended Workshop

Mini Workshop

Recommended Duration:
45-90 minutes

This Mini Workshop provides a concise introduction to lived experience writing and is suitable for high school workshops, outreach programs, orientation activities, classroom tasters, or introductory tertiary sessions.

If the workshop is being delivered in a classroom context, with a large group of participants or with a limited supply of Lived Experience Cards the supplementary resources can be used to support participants. Facilitators can use the cards to assist with their delivery of the workshop material.

Supplementary Resources

Lived Experience Writing Guide (included for classroom use)

Presentation Version of Card Deck

Sequence

1. Ideas Brainstorm (5 minutes)

Participants generate ideas connected to memories, significant moments, emotions, places, conversations, people, objects, hopes, fears and recurring questions. The aim is to collect a wide range of material without worrying about quality or organisation. This stage helps participants identify experiences and ideas that may become the basis of later writing.

2. Develop Ideas (15 minutes)

Participants select two or more development options and complete the writing activities. Prompts explore themes such as identity, place, memory, wonder, conflict, fascination and personal insight. Each activity produces a short piece of writing, helping participants move beyond initial ideas and begin developing experiences into richer, more detailed narratives and reflections.

3. Connections (10 minutes)

Participants review their writing and identify recurring images, places, emotions, questions or themes. Using a simplified Web of Connections activity (without the writing component), they look for relationships between separate pieces of writing and consider the larger ideas emerging across their work. This stage helps participants recognise patterns and discover possible directions for a longer piece.

Note: view Web of Connections card for additional delivery suggestions.

4. Test Forms (5 minutes)

Participants select the form they would like to use. They might transform their writing into a lyrical, fragmented, epistolary, braided, hermit crab or hybrid piece. The focus is on exploring how different forms influence meaning, voice and reader experience, while helping participants identify the structure that best suits their ideas.

Note: view Stage 4 cards for additional information about each form.

5. Write (20 minutes)

Participants combine and expand earlier writing using the selected form. Encourage participants to select their strongest ideas, images, memories and reflections and develop them into a short draft.

6. Refine (10 minutes)

Once drafted, participants type and refine their work through targeted revision, focusing on aspects such as detail, honesty, vulnerability, intimacy, structure or language before completing a final copy edit.

Benefits

Builds confidence through structured and accessible writing activities.

Supports authentic voice and lived experience storytelling.

Develops reflection, creative thinking and communication skills.

Introduces writing as a process of experimentation, drafting and refinement.

Provides a practical pathway from idea generation to a completed piece of writing.

Encourages exploration of a range of contemporary creative forms.

Extended Workshop

Recommended Duration:
4 hours minimum, delivered over multiple sessions.

The Extended Workshop follows the complete Lived Experience writing sequence, guiding participants from initial idea generation through to drafting, revision and a completed creative piece. It is most effective when delivered to a small group, with each participant having access to their own deck of Lived Experience Cards.

Facilitators should refer to the cards for detailed instructions, prompts and guidance for each stage of the process.

Note: duration can be extended by an additional 3-5 hours to provide extra time for writing activities, discussion and feedback.

Sequence

1. Ideas (30 minutes)

Participants begin with the Brainstorm activity, collecting memories, experiences, observations, questions, emotions and personal interests. The focus is breadth and range of possible material.

2. Develop Ideas (40-50 minutes)

Participants select four Development Cards and complete their writing tasks. Activities encourage exploration of identity, place, memory, wonder, conflict, relationships, perspective and personal insight. Each activity generates a short standalone piece of writing.

3. Connections (30-40 minutes)

Participants review all material and create one or more Webs of Connections. They identify recurring images, places, people, emotions, questions and themes. This stage helps participants see larger patterns emerging across separate pieces of writing.

Note: view Web of Connections card for additional delivery suggestions.

4. Test Forms (30 minutes)

Participants test two creative forms from the Test Forms cards, including:

- Lyrical
- Braided
- Hermit Crab
- Epistolary
- Fragmented
- Hybrid

This stage encourages students to consider how form shapes meaning and reader experience.
Note: view Stage 4 cards for additional information about each form.

5. Write (40 minutes)

Participants select their strongest ideas, combine material where appropriate, and create a substantial first draft. Emphasis is placed on discovery, risk-taking, and expansion of ideas rather than perfection.

6. Refine (40 minutes)

Participants refine their drafts through a structured editing process. Ask participants to select an Action card and a Priority card to create an editing focus. The Action determines the revision strategy, while the Priority directs attention to a particular quality of the writing.

Participants should complete at least two editing passes, each using a different combination of Action and Priority cards. For example, they might begin with a Structural Edit focused on Detail, before completing a Language Edit focused on Vulnerability.

For Example:

Structural Edit + Detail: Reorganise the writing to strengthen important moments and ideas.
Language Edit + Vulnerability: Refine language to communicate uncertainty, risk or personal insight more effectively.

Actions

- Constructive Edit
- Structural Edit
- Language Edit

Priorities

- Detail
- Honesty
- Vulnerability
- Intimacy

The process concludes with a Copy Edit focusing on spelling, grammar, punctuation and formatting.

Benefits

The complete sequence helps participants:
Develop a sustained writing practice.
Understand writing as a process.
Build confidence through scaffolded experimentation.
Strengthen narrative and reflective writing skills.
Develop audience awareness and authorial voice.
Engage with a range of contemporary creative non-fiction forms.
Produce a polished piece suitable for publication, assessment or presentation.

Reflection & Discussion

While the cards are designed to support creative writing, they can also be used to prompt reflection on the many decisions writers make while developing a piece of writing. Each stage of the sequence represents a different kind of authorial choice, providing a framework for discussion about how writing evolves from initial ideas to a completed draft.

Facilitators can invite participants to reflect on questions such as:

- Why did you choose to develop certain ideas and not others?
- Which experiences or memories felt most important to explore?
- What patterns emerged during the Web of Connections activity?
- How did experimenting with different forms change your thinking?
- What did you add, remove, reorganise or rewrite during drafting?
- Which editing decisions had the greatest impact on the final piece?
- How did your understanding of the topic change through writing?

By discussing the choices made at each stage, participants develop a stronger awareness of writing as a process of selection, shaping and refinement rather than simply recording ideas. The sequence makes visible the often-hidden decisions involved in generating material, identifying themes, selecting form, structuring a piece, and refining language.

This approach is particularly valuable in educational settings because it helps participants articulate their creative process, reflect on their growth as writers, and provide evidence of learning. It can support reflective journals, portfolios, process statements, assessment reflections, and discussions about writing craft. The cards offer a framework for generating writing and a shared language for examining how writing is made.

In school settings, reflection activities can support:

- Senior English reflection tasks
- Portfolio development
- Small group discussion
- Idea generation
- Editing

In tertiary and equity contexts, reflection activities can support:

- Student voice initiatives
- Belonging and engagement programs
- Orientation and transition activities
- Leadership programs
- Outreach and widening participation initiatives
- Evaluation and impact storytelling

UNSW SYDNEY

Evaluation Guide

The evaluation framework used in this program supports institutions to assess outcomes for both student participants and institutional stakeholders.

The Centring Lived Experience model is grounded in the premise that storytelling can operate simultaneously as a student development program and an institutional learning mechanism. Implemented thoughtfully, storytelling initiatives can strengthen participant wellbeing and belonging, enhance institutional understanding of equity and contribute to more inclusive cultures, policies and practices across higher education.

This guide provides practical examples of evaluation tools and approaches used for Centring Lived Experience. Other institutions can use or adapt these examples to suit their own programs and contexts.

Participant learning outcomes

On completion of the Centring Lived Experience program participants will have developed:

- LO1: An increased sense of belonging and participation in the university community
- LO2: Strengthened confidence, agency, social connection including identity affirmation, connection to culture and feelings of being valued and heard
- LO3: A deeper understanding of motivation, achievement and success
- LO4: Improved creative, reflective and communication skills applicable within and beyond university

Institutional outcomes

Through ethically engaging with student stories, institutions will develop:

- IO1: Student-informed resources that can be embedded into training
- IO2: Improved equity policy and program design

Evaluation methods

It is important to use a combination of impact evaluation and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) to understand what the Centring Lived Experiences program achieves and how it can be strengthened. Impact evaluation focuses on whether intended outcomes are being achieved and identifies unintended outcomes. CQI focuses on how and why the program is working by examining delivery, participant experiences, and factors that support or limit success.

The Student Equity in Higher Education Evaluation Framework (SEHEEF) Guidance Manual offers advice and examples for evaluating equity projects across the student lifecycle. Provided below are practical examples of tools that can be used or adapted to evaluate Centring Lived Experience initiatives in different contexts.

Through survey and qualitative data, it is possible to assess participants' experiences, intended and unintended outcomes, and the processes that limit or support success. This evidence informs ongoing improvements to program design and delivery while generating broader institutional learning about how lived-experience storytelling can strengthen inclusive practice.

Evaluation should be proportionate to the program and its resources. A short pulse check, a final participant survey and structured facilitator reflection may be sufficient. Focus groups could be added to gather deeper qualitative data insights.

Ethical evaluation

Centring Lived Experience may involve personal or sensitive experiences, so it is essential that evaluation is designed to protect participants' privacy and wellbeing.

- Participation in evaluation should be voluntary.
- Allow participants to skip questions and provide feedback in an alternative format if they prefer.
- Explain how evaluation, stories and quotes will be used.
- Obtain consent before using identifiable stories or quotes in reports, training or published materials.
- Report evaluation findings in a way that protects confidentiality, especially where small participant numbers could make participants identifiable.
- Close the feedback loop by acknowledging what was heard and explaining what will change, what cannot change and why at the beginning of each workshop.

Sample data collection instruments

The following instruments are examples rather than a fixed evaluation package. Select and adapt the questions that are most relevant to the evaluation purpose, the timing of the program and the capacity available to analyse the data

1. Post-workshop survey/pulse check

Survey component / question	Purpose and use of the data
Outcomes	
From 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) please rate your level of agreement with the following statements as a result of participating in today's workshop. 1. I felt a sense of connection or belonging within the group today (LO1) 2. I feel more confident developing or sharing my story after this session (LO2) 3. Today's workshop supported my learning or reflection (LO4) 4. I felt safe and respected in today's workshop	Administer after each workshop to monitor immediate participant outcomes and to identify sessions that participants felt the achieved outcomes were achieved to a greater or lesser extent. Look for low or changing responses across sessions and interpret these alongside open-text feedback and facilitator reflections. Use findings to adjust pacing, prompts or group activities for subsequent workshops.
Feedback	
• One thing that supported me today was... [open text] • One thing that could be improved next time is… [open text]	Use this feedback to identify issues relating to safety, facilitation, accessibility, content, group dynamics and logistics. At the beginning of the following workshop, briefly acknowledge the feedback: • Name one or two themes you noticed, for example "Many people spoke about confidence growing." • Identify adjustments made, for example "We've allowed more quiet writing time today based on your feedback." This reinforces trust, accountability and reciprocity.

Reflective prompts

Choose the prompt/s that you would like to respond to. Feel free to write your response in whatever style you prefer: dot points, sentences or fragments are all appropriate.

Sample prompts:

- What does success mean to you now?
- What motivates you to continue?
- How has your sense of belonging changed?
- What achievement matters most and why? (LO3)

Use these optional prompts to collect richer qualitative evidence about LO3 and to capture outcomes that may not be visible in rating scales.

Review reflective prompt responses longitudinally to note shifts in:

- language,
- confidence,
- sense making, and
- emotional tone.

Use a simple coding framework and retain de-identified examples that illustrate the quantitative patterns.

2. Final participant survey

The final participant survey provides an opportunity to assess the program as a whole and to invite participants to describe its benefits, limitations and possible improvements. It should be administered at, or within a week of, the final workshop.

Survey component / question	Purpose and use of the data
Outcomes	
From 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) please rate your level of agreement with the following statements. **This program:** 1. increased my sense of belonging and social connection with the university community. (LO1) 2. strengthened my confidence and sense of agency when sharing my lived experience. (LO2) 3. deepened my self-awareness and reflection around motivation, identity or achievement. (LO3) 4. increased my creative, reflective and/or communication skills that I can apply within and beyond university. (LO4)	Administer at the end of the program to assess participants' perceptions of change in relation to the four learning outcomes. Summarise the distribution of responses for each outcome and report the number of responses and response rate where available. Compare patterns across delivery groups or program cycles only where numbers are sufficient and comparisons are meaningful. Interpret ratings alongside participants' written reflections and facilitator observations; the survey provides self-reported evidence of contribution, not proof that the program alone caused the outcome.

Feedback

What were the most useful and beneficial aspects of the program? [open text]	Use open-text responses to identify the components participants valued, the changes they experienced and the improvements they recommend.
What changes or developments would you recommend for the current program? [open text]	Code responses into a small number of themes and note the frequency, strength and diversity of views without reducing all experiences to counts.
What final comments or feedback would you like to provide? [open text]	Use the themes to explain or qualify the rating-scale findings and to develop practical recommendations for the next iteration.
	Use only de-identified quotations in reporting, and obtain permission before using a quotation where a participant could be recognised.

3. Facilitator reflection

Facilitator reflections should be completed after each workshop. They provide contextual information about process, pedagogy and group dynamics that may not be visible in participant survey data.

Suggested areas for reflection include group dynamics, participant engagement, safety observations, adaptations made and recommendations. Facilitator reflections can be recorded using the template below.

Reflection area	Suggested prompts
Group dynamics and engagement	Who participated actively? Were there signs that anyone was excluded, hesitant or uncomfortable? What supported participation? Use this to refine group size, activities, prompts and facilitation.
Safety and wellbeing	What observations suggested that participants felt safe and respected? Were there moments of discomfort or withdrawal? What support or follow-up were required?
Process and pedagogy	Which activities or prompts generated reflection, connection or engagement? Which were unclear or too demanding?
Adaptations made	What changes were made during or between sessions in response to participant feedback? Did the adaptations appear to help?
Recommendations and institutional learning	What should be retained or changed next time? What themes or implications may be relevant to staff training, equity policy or program design?

4. Program evaluation – results summary

A results summary should bring together the evidence collected through participation monitoring, pulse checks, the final survey, facilitator reflections and any follow-up data. It should distinguish participant-reported outcomes, implementation findings and longer-term evidence, and should acknowledge limitations such as small numbers and response rates.

The following structure can be used to prepare a concise results summary:

Summary area	Evidence to bring together	What to report
Reach and participation	Attendance, completion, participant characteristics and survey response rates.	Who the program reached, who contributed feedback and gaps in participation or response rates.
Participant outcomes	Pulse-check ratings, final survey ratings, reflective prompt responses and facilitator reflections.	What participants reported changing. Quantitative patterns interpreted alongside qualitative evidence.
Participant experience and safety	Feedback on belonging, connection, safety and support.	What helped or hindered participation and what is needed to maintain a safe and inclusive program.
Implementation	Facilitator reflections, attendance records, program delivery documents and participant suggestions.	Which elements worked as intended, what adaptations were required, and what should be retained or changed.
Institutional outcomes	Themes from stories and reflections, resources produced and changes to delivery considered or made.	How student-informed learning has been used, or could be used, to strengthen inclusive practice and policy.
Recommendations	Findings from all evidence sources.	Actions that should be taken, the person or team responsible, timing and how changes and actions will be monitored.

Sample documents expression of interest and legal process

To recruit participants for the process, we drafted the following documents:

- **Participant brief:**
  this overview document explains the purpose, structure, expectations, and benefits of the program to help potential participants make an informed decision
- **Expression of interest questionnaire:**
  shared alongside the Participant Brief, this questionnaire is a short application form used to assess participant suitability, confirm availability, and gauge initial willingness to share their lived experience publicly.
- **Participant consent and licensing agreement:**
  A formal legal agreement that sets out how participants' work, image, and recordings can be used while protecting both the participant's rights and the institution's ability to use the material. This document is only shared with program participants once selected.

- **Key considerations for the creation of the Participant Brief and Expression of Interest Questionnaire:**

1. Transparency:

both documents clearly outline the information participants need to make an informed decision about their participation. This includes specific information about:

a. Renumeration for participation in the program
b. Time commitment and participant expectations
c. Intended outcomes and outputs of the program
d. Selection criteria for program participation

2. Centre participant safety and agency:

we ensured that the Participant Brief explicitly stated that participants will be engaging in personal storytelling, and that workshops would involve developing, refining, and potentially sharing narratives based on their own life experiences. This aimed to reduce ambiguity about the nature of participation and ensure participant agency.

- **Key considerations for the creation of the Participation Consent and Licensing Agreement:**

1. Co-design and consultation with your institution's Legal team:

we created our Agreement in consultation with the UNSW Legal team to ensure it was clear, accurate, and fit for purpose. Legal input helps make sure key areas are properly covered and reduce potential risks for the institution, while clearly outlining the rights of the participant.

2. Inclusions in an Agreement might cover:

a. A clear definition of "the Work," including all materials created during the program and submitted via the EOI
b. Permission for the institution to create and use recordings (audio, video, photography, transcripts)
c. A broad licence allowing the institution to reproduce, publish, adapt, and share the work across multiple formats and purposes (e.g. education, training, promotion)
d. Confirmation that participants retain ownership (copyright) of their original work and provisions relating to attribution and moral rights, including flexibility in how work is credited and used
e. Participant warranties that their work does not infringe on others' rights or cause harm
f. Specific consideration of Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property (ICIP), including responsibility for appropriate permissions

Further reading

Ethical Storytelling resources

UNSW Harnesing lived experience
Caritas Australia Ethical Storytelling Guidelines
Ethical Storytelling
FYA – telling ethical stories
Voice of Witness – ethical storytelling principles
Guide to Public Narrative

Bibliography

Adler-Kassner, Linda and Wardle, Elizabeth (2015) Naming What We Know: Threshold Concepts of Writing Studies.
Utah State University Press, an imprint of University Press of Colorado

Adsit, Janelle (2019) Toward an Inclusive Creative Writing: Threshold Concepts to Guide the Literary Curriculum.
Bloomsbury Academic

Belanoff, Pat; Dickson, Marcia; Fontaine, Sheryl I. and Moran, Charles (2002) Writing With Elbow
University Press of Colorado; Utah State University Press

Chavez, Felicia Rose (2021) The Anti-Racist Writing Workshop: How to Decolonize the Creative Classroom.
Haymarket Books

Dawson, Paul (2005) Creative Writing and the New Humanities
Routledge

Donnelly, Diane (2010) Does the writing workshop still work?
Multilingual Matters

Elbow, Peter (1973) Writing without Teachers.
Oxford University Press

Elbow, Peter (2012) Vernacular Eloquence: What Speech Can Bring to Writing.
Online edition, Oxford Academic

Gordimer, Nadine (1995) Writing and Being.
Harvard University Press

Project team
Mary Teague
Richard Short
Josephine Perry
Dr Katie Osborne-Crowley
Julie Smith
Travis Paul Keene

