

## **Introduction**

This report will be an overview of the process and my experience working with the Changing the Story project as a Laidlaw scholar. It details my personal experiences, challenges, and key takeaways from my experience undertaking my research project and leadership development.

## **List of Abbreviations**

**CTS** - Changing the Story

**MAP** - Mobile Arts for Peace

## **Who am I?**



### **Jacqueline Adjei, Laidlaw Scholar and Curator of Changemakers in Film Summit**

Jacqueline is currently studying History as an undergraduate student at the University of Leeds. Jacqueline joined the Changing the Story team as an undergraduate research student through the Laidlaw Scholarship Programme in 2020. Before this, I also worked as a volunteer for other charity organisations such as TR Aid. She also has an interest in media and film making which enhanced her interest within the CTS project.

## **The project**

### **The Changing the Story Project**

Changing The Story is a four-year international, multi-disciplinary project that supports the building of inclusive civil societies with young people in twelve post-conflict countries. It is a collaborative project between universities, INGOs, artists, grassroots civil society organisations and young people across the world.

## **My Internship Experience**

The first year of my placement was in summer 2020. Summer 2020, unfortunately, did not start smoothly initially due to multiply COVID, which caused significant alterations in the programme structure. However, there was a quick transition to online work, which allowed me and my team to work from home.

### **Summer 1**

As part of my film festival involvement, I was able to take part in the interviews with the filmmakers. In doing so, I was able to see how the project had a significant impact on people from different social backgrounds worldwide. Throughout, the interviews I also realised that there was a largely personal element to these films. For many filmmakers, these films reflected social issues that they were either affected by or linked to. In many of them, being in the film festival was a huge deal because they felt that their issues were acknowledged

and taken seriously. This was mainly because it would be viewed by a wider audience and a panel of judges.

I have also included pictures and synopses of two essential films that shed light on some critical issues within the film festival.



#### Daniel in Uganda's Homophobic Lion's Den

Daniel in the Homophobic Lion's Den creatively uses stories from the Bible to tell the life experiences of LGBTQI+ Ugandan refugees living in Nairobi. In this film, the Nature Network uses Daniel's story to celebrate the liberation of the LGBTQI+ community against the anti-homosexuality bill in Uganda.



"The Last Man" is a documentary film on human condition of manual scavengers and the role of caste system in Indian societies defining the destiny of many poor and low-class communities within the sub-continent. The film also goes beyond to the official definition of "Manual Scavenging" in India and explore more scavenging practices that are also consider as inhuman work"

#### Summer 1 reflections

Throughout this research period, I have been involved with numerous examples of activities to disseminate my research.

First and foremost, the first activity that I was involved in was a research activity at the beginning of my research. This involved me watching numerous films used in the film festival for CTS (Changing the Story). This was the first time I had ever engaged in this activity before, and although it was time-consuming, I found the films enjoyable, and the results were rewarding. Additionally, I was also encouraged to speak with my supervisors about any parts that I found interesting or particularly engaging. This would be used in the CTS (Changing the Story) Twitter page as part of the broader outreach for the film festival across social media. I found that experience to be very rewarding because I was able to gain a different form of work experience that could enhance my CV.

Additionally, the first part of the research involved assisting in the Film festival. Films were submitted from 16 countries across the world and span a variety of formats and topics, from documentary shorts, animation to full-length features about mental health, addiction, migration, and child soldiers, to name a few. My task was to watch these films and come up with relevant questions to be asked to these film-makers during and after the festival was over. This task allowed me to assist within the management of the project and the film festival.

Summer 2

The second summer of my internship was focused on marketing and event planning. I was given the role as curator/chair of a three-part film-inspired series as part of our youth engagement strand, called 'Changemakers in Film Summit'.

The Planning Stage

My role as curator/chair for the three CTS events allowed me to control all aspects of the event planning process. The first stage of the event planning process was to plan out everything necessary to ensure that the event was a success. I did this by creating a planning

- Planning
- Marketing (Networking and Social Media)
- Creative Content
- Engagement with Speakers during the event
- Evaluation

	WHAT	WHEN
EVALUATION	Initial reflections on the process	3 <sup>rd</sup> June
PLANNING	Complete research and identify themes and videos	4 <sup>th</sup> June
PLANNING	Inés and Jacque meet to discuss wider film contexts / budgets	10 <sup>th</sup> June
MARKETING	Draft copy of what events might look like	15 <sup>th</sup> June
MARKETING	Draft an introduction to each film	18 <sup>th</sup> June
PLANNING	Check with FOAH team on film progress	18 <sup>th</sup> June
PLANNING	Decide on date for FOAH event	23 <sup>rd</sup> June
PLANNING	Confirm dates/availability with people	23 <sup>rd</sup> June
PLANNING	Subtitled of films into Spanish/English (Paul will know more!)	23 <sup>rd</sup> June
MARKETING	Schedule meeting with Lauren & Aisha to talk about marketing *add in what Q's you want to ask	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time BC: Meet with LW and AX re marketing / design / online (they can also feedback on your initial ideas). LW to also provide an overview of the Youth Engagement Strand.</li> <li>• E-Poster design</li> <li>• Create event pages online for registration and start promoting</li> <li>• Confirming speaker's involvement, making sure roles are clear</li> <li>• General event management stuff – interpreting etc.</li> </ul> Paying the film makers - 15 pounds an hour Canva Twitter CTS details Access permissions - Consent form - Event bright – use your own account Custom questions Bio paragraphs about themselves Banner – make a banner Send the logos Liberal Arts student talk to their network --- Marketing 29 <sup>th</sup> June
CREATIVE CONTENT	Ensure speakers are happy with format / get permissions for photos and recordings / access needs / get biographies?	29 <sup>th</sup> June

MARKETING	Final marketing blurb	29 <sup>th</sup> June
CREATIVE CONTENT	Drafting questions for people	
MARKETING	Build an event page on the website	
MARKETING	Create an e-poster	1st July
PLANNING	Google Translate the marketing copy into Spanish and Inés can double check	
EVALUATION	2 <sup>nd</sup> reflection – ideas for blog posts	4 <sup>th</sup> July
EVALUATION	Draft questions for audience development via Eventbrite	5 <sup>th</sup> July
PLANNING	Set up zoom links, Eventbrite page for registration (what do I need to include?)	5 <sup>th</sup> July
ENGAGEMENT WITH SPEAKERS	Share event page with speakers, introduce them to one another, make clear who has what role	6 <sup>th</sup> July
ENGAGEMENT WITH SPEAKERS	*Context of the films *Share questions in advance with people and check they're happy	6 <sup>th</sup> July
MARKETING	Email out to networks (CTS, Laidlaw, FOAH students)	4 <sup>th</sup> July
PLANNING	Design certificates	
MARKETING	Plan Social Media content to post in the run-up	4 <sup>th</sup> July
CREATIVE CONTENT	Upload films and descriptions	
PLANNING	Booking the interpreter for the events	Check with LW on timescale
EVALUATION	Design evaluation approach for audiences	5 <sup>th</sup> July
EVENT 1!!!!		7 <sup>th</sup> July
Event 2 !!!!		14 <sup>th</sup> July
EVENT 3!!!!		21 <sup>st</sup> July
EVALUATION	What went well / even better if SWOT analysis	
PLANNING	Thank you email & certificates	
PLANNING	Ensure payments etc completed	
MARKETING	Edit recordings and get them online	
EVALUATION	Look through questionnaire feedback etc	
EVALUATION	Write up final blog about the placement	Due 2 <sup>nd</sup> August

WB 29<sup>th</sup> June: EVENT WEEK

- Wed: Event 1
- Thu: Event 2
- Fri: Event 3

Fig.1  
A Screenshot of my personal planning sheet for the event planning process

document with my supervisor, who confirmed that it was done to a good standard to guarantee the success of the events.

This also involved coming up with a catchy title for the event series. I decided upon the title The Changemakers in Film Summit because I felt that it highlighted the impact that these film directors have made through their art and the discursive/conversational nature of each event.

The second stage of the event planning process was watching the films within the CTS archive of films. The Films were submitted from 16 countries across the world and span a variety of formats and topics, from documentary shorts, animation to full-length features about mental health, addiction, migration, and child soldiers, to name a few. My task was to watch these films select a few that resonated with me. I then grouped them into three groups for one for each event. The three final themes were youth, Health and Gender. These themes were then transformed into catchy event titles that were then sent by my supervisor and then later marketed on social media as part of my events within the Changemakers in film summit.

#### My final event titles

- Exploring Social advocacy through a youth defined lens
- Health is Wealth – Revisiting the influence of Arts organisations in helping the youth in post-conflict societies
- Dissecting the gender issues surrounding social advocacy in post–conflict societies

The first event had a different structure to the other two events because it was done in participation with a group of University of Leeds Liberal arts students. They created their films to highlight the work done by two Changing the Story projects: Ilizwi Lenyaniso Lomhlaba (South Africa) and Building Trust for Truth-Telling Among Former Child Soldiers: Animation for Inclusion and Peacebuilding in Colombia. These students acted co–panellists with the filmmakers during the event.

Another aspect of the project's planning stage was getting in touch with the right people at the right time. To help support each event, I thought hearing from professionals would add an extra layer of legitimacy and strength. Therefore, I researched the CTS archive and spoke with my supervisors to discuss people that needed to be included as panellists.

#### Marketing

Marketing the events was arguably one of the most significant aspects of the event planning process. This was because it determined the event's outcome and ensured that the people could participate in the circumstances. The first stage of the marketing process was marketing to the potential panellist to gauge interest to the events.

Hi [redacted],

My name is Jacqueline Adjei .I joined the team as a Laidlaw Scholar working with the CTS network. My role as curator allowed me to organise a film-inspired series of three events as part of our youth engagement strand, called ‘Changemakers in Film Summit’. The events will be spread across three weeks, focusing on different themes. In particular, I found the film Achabu Kire – A State of Mental Wellbeing Through Art to be insightful and felt that it was a good fit second event, which would focus on health and wellbeing. I would love to have at least one of the filmmakers to take part in the event. The date of the event is the 14th of July.

These events will be advertised widely across the Laidlaw network and the CTS page. Although the event remains open to all, it would be an excellent opportunity for young people from the network and beyond to explore the films and some of the issues that come out of them together. They will also be ‘in conversation style ‘and discursive allowing the directors/filmmakers to talk through the filming process and broader themes surrounding the event. Therefore, having the filmmakers there to talk about their films would help the overall discussion format.

All the best,  
Jacque

Fig.2 Screenshot of an example email sent to panellist in the beginning stages to confirm interest for the events.

This was the first marketing pitch that was uploaded to the CTS webpage and sent to the network.

Draft marketing plan

<u>Theme</u>
The overarching theme of these events will be youth in film, and this will be done by revisiting films made before COVID.
<u>Date</u>
Week commencing 28 <sup>th</sup> June
<u>Location</u>
Online – ZOOM event
<u>Purpose</u>
The purpose of the event is to showcase and highlight films that form part of the festival’s primary themes, youth in film and wellbeing.

Fig .3 table highlighting the initial plan stage

Structure

The events will be structured chronologically by beginning with films from before COVID and ending with a showcase event with Liberal arts students on their film created after Covid.

An ethical concern within the events is the language barrier for participation for the listeners and speakers. Therefore, there will be an interpreter at the event to translate the for those who may not be fluent in English. There will also be a Spanish translation within the third film for the Spanish viewers before the event.

## Audience

The event will be particularly beneficial to anyone who wants to learn more about issues in post-conflict societies.

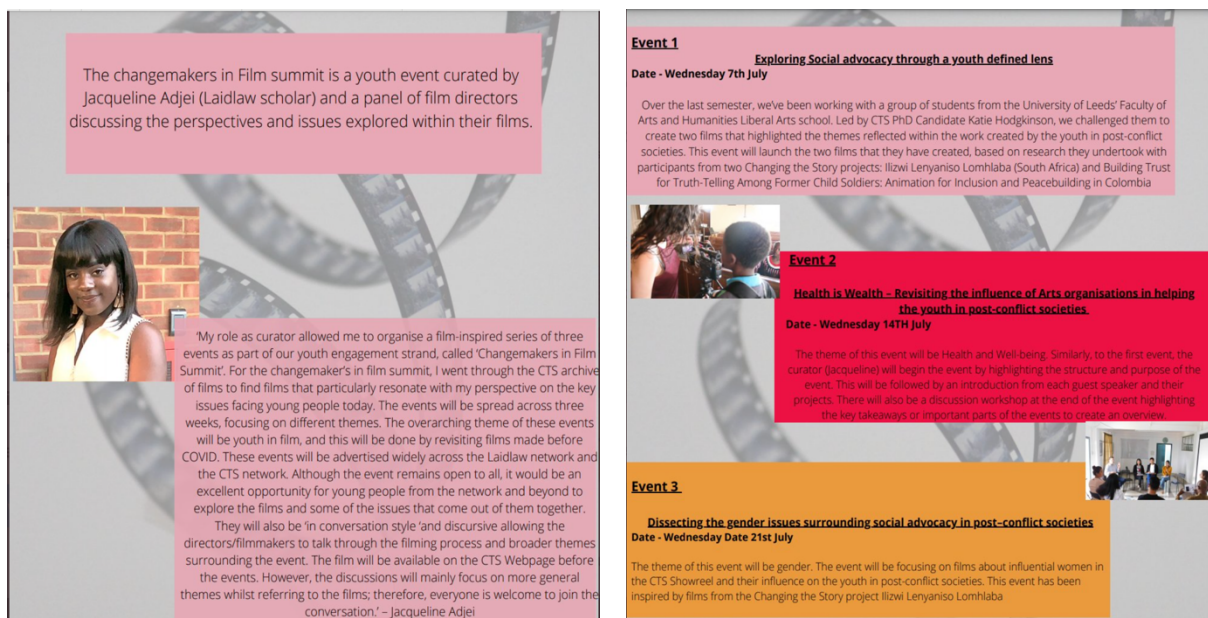
Advertisement target audience – Twitter, Plus programme newsletter, Laidlaw network, Liberal arts students

*The marketing channels we will focus on are Email, Eventbrite, and Twitter.*

These were the main posters that I created as part of the planning process to highlight the events to the participants and the viewing audiences.

Marketing channels included:

- Changing the story Network incl. CTS Webpage
- Laidlaw networks
- Eventbrite
- CTS Twitter page
- Email



These posters were created using Canva and included pictures previously used by the CTS team in previous events.

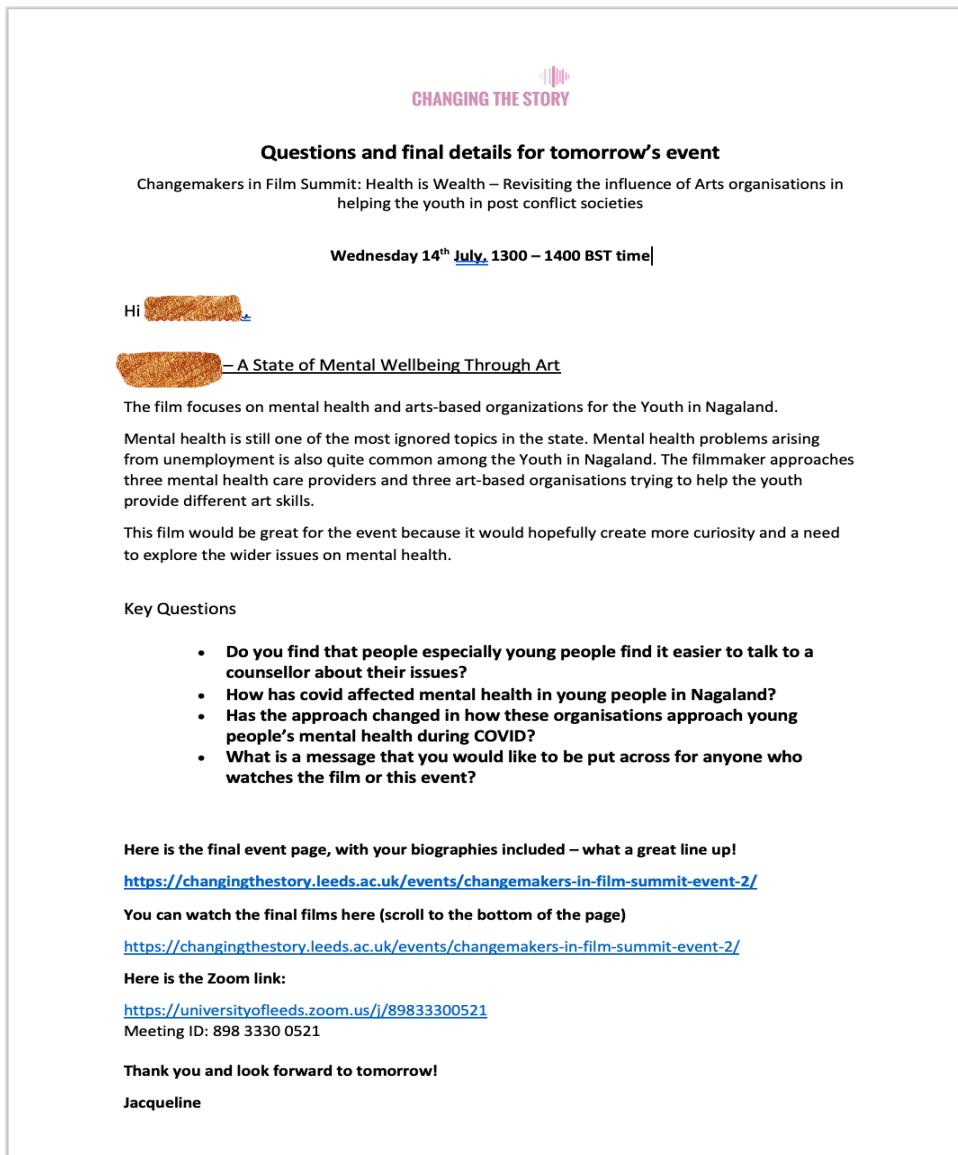


Fig.4 An example of a pre – event email that I sent to each panellist before each event

## Post Event reflections

### Blog Post

#### The Changemakers in Film Summit – Post-event reflections

This blog is part of Changing The Story's #YoungChangemakers series. This series was curated by Jacqueline Adjei, an undergraduate Laidlaw scholar working with the CTS team

This blog post details some of my reflections for each event however, it doesn't cover the full extent of each discussion. The full recordings of the events can be found on the changing the story website.

The Changemakers in Film Summit was a three-part series curated by Jacqueline Adjei as part of the Changing the Story project. This was an online event from 7<sup>th</sup> July to 21<sup>st</sup> July and was advertised widely across the social media and CTS network.

Throughout the series we explored key themes such as Health and Wellbeing, Gender, and Youth. As part of my project, I got the privilege of inviting and interviewing a group of panellists to each event. This included presentations from specialists such as Dr. Alyson Brody, **a Gender Specialist and Post-Doctoral Research Assistant at Changing the Story**, Prof. Ananda Breed, the Lead Researcher of Mobile Arts for Peace, and Martin Keat, CEO of the Bishop Simeon Trust.

The theme of the first event was social advocacy through a youth defined lens. In this panel we had an open panel discussion from the **Ilizwi Lenyaniso Lomhlaba project and Building Trust for Truth-Telling Among Former Child Soldiers**. **In this part of the series Angel David Hurtado Orozco raised the issue of getting the author to talk about their projects, especially since they might have to speak about harsh topics such as kidnapping and rape. However, he noted the impact that the project has had on his overall message, especially the public's perception towards his message and his hope for it to continue in the future for the better good of his country.**

A key takeaway from the specialists was the importance of having and maintaining arts-based programmes for young people. Although this has been made more difficult by COVID-19, organisations such as the MAPAt Home project have been dedicated to maintaining the support given to young people even during these unprecedented times. There was also a presentation from the lead organiser of the MAP At Home project Professor Ananda Breed. Her presentation illustrated how much the project promotes **the provision of online art programmes for psychosocial well-being, especially regarding building resilience (individual and systemic) against future outbreaks or crises.**

Martin Keat from the Bishop Simeon Trust was another speaker invited to speak in the second event in the series. In his presentation, he explains the work the Bishop Simeon Trust does to promote the health and well-being of the youth in South Africa. Martin also highlighted within the event the significance of arts-based programmes such as the Bishop Simeon trust in bridging the gap between the younger and older generations. In his explanation, he talks about how these programmes give young people a chance to talk about complex topics with their parents. Since the programmes are youth centred children often have an open dialogue with their parents, especially during discussions about complex issues such as sexual violence and human trafficking. In the second event we also heard from Achabu Kire, a participant from the CTS project Participatory Arts for Health Improvement in North East India, who highlighted the lack of professional care available to young people in Nagaland; although there are organisations, they often lack the necessary funding to provide young people with the care that they need.

Another takeaway from the series was the significance of using the arts when promoting the film directors' messages in each project. However, this doesn't mean that there weren't issues along the way. Everyone's journey is different, and the journey for women was sometimes more complex. In her presentation, Dr. Alyson Brody highlighted the importance

of focusing on gender equality and social justice, as well as what is happening to address these gender inequalities. This could be seen from Tahn-Dee Matthews' testimony in the **Ilizwi Lenyaniso Lomhlaba project in South Africa**. In the last event, Tahn-Dee talked about feeling that her gender often held her back. Not because she wasn't as capable as her male counterparts but because she was often overlooked and unheard. This is an issue that women in the workplace often face. Tahn-Dee also explained within her film that this is an issue that doesn't necessarily deter her from the industry but makes her want to get the message out there more for the betterment of other women in the industry. The **Ilizwi Lenyaniso Lomhlaba project also highlighted the importance of knowledge and access to information on fracking**.

Overall, I feel very grateful to the CTS team and Laidlaw team for allowing me to take part in this project. I would like to thank everyone involved in each event for their participation and hope that viewers would.

- Jacqueline Adjei

At the end of the series, I sent out a final thank you email regarding the event series to each panellist. The feedback was as follows:

#### EBI

- The event could have been further advertised as a live stream on the CTS social media Page to increase engagement
- I could have engaged more with the participants to ensure that it felt less like an interview and more conversational
- Possibly increase the time for discussion and reinforce further that the participants could ask questions to one another

#### WWW

- I was very professional and the questions that were given was great

#### Conclusions

To conclude, the leadership sessions and placement helped me identify my strengths and weaknesses as a leader. I was able to be put in a leadership position and was tested. This was a significant aspect of my leadership development because it confirmed the improvement and benefits, I gained whilst being part of the project.

I would like to thank the Laidlaw team and the Changing the Story Team for the support I was given throughout my placement. I had great support from my project team and supervisors Ines Soria-Donlan and Paul Cooke.

Every aspect of my placement became digitised, including our weekly team meetings. Unfortunately, COVID posed a lot of challenges to our initial project plans. However, our ability to overcome these challenges on short notices allowed me to learn more about the planning process gain better project management skills. It also taught me to adapt to unforeseen circumstances, given the unprecedented pandemic.

The Quintax report and individual Quintax sessions were also a significant part of my leadership development because they highlighted my strengths and weaknesses. This was important because it allowed me to be more introspective about my personality and behaviours. The follow-up sessions allowed me to examine talk through with my programme managers on overcoming my weaknesses highlighted within the report.

Although I have a lot to learn, I am grateful that I improved my project management, event planning, teamwork, communication, and leadership skills. The skills I learnt from the programme are transferable and will enable me to attain opportunities in the future.

The Laidlaw undergraduate scholarship programme provided me with the opportunity to expand my social network and meet my fellow peers outside my course. It also improved my confidence as both a researcher and a leader. The programme marked the beginning of my leadership and research journey, and I am looking forward to exploring these skills in a different setting in the future.

### Bibliography

My LinkedIn page: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jacqueline-adjei-141232201/>

### CTS pages

Link to CTS webpage: <https://changingthestory.leeds.ac.uk>

Link to CTS Twitter page: [https://twitter.com/Changing\\_Story](https://twitter.com/Changing_Story)

Link to the Marketing Pitch: <https://changingthestory.leeds.ac.uk/opportunities/cts-and-praxis-events/changemakers-in-film-summit/>

### Other projects

Link to the Map-at Home Blog: <https://map.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/map-at-home/>

Link to Bishop Simeon trust website: <http://www.bstrust.org/>