

**Title:** "SHOUT OUT!" - Using visual storytelling methods for empowering digitally excluded groups

How can refugees and asylum seekers, who moved to Denmark leaving their home without belongings, use visual storytelling methods to connect with Danish society? And how can digital storytelling be applied as a method to understand their culture, history, system and life.

Based on digital participatory visual methods, the project 'Shout Out' gave refugees in Denmark opportunities to tell stories about themselves, their municipalities and the systems which affect their lives. All the stories give powerful and personal insights into the realities of citizenship, democracy, participation, and local governance in Syria and Denmark today. Their stories are useful for developing future visual methods for data collection and research within minority group as well as advocacy, activism and the sparking of public dialogues around refugees cross europe.

This paper is based on several Danish and international projects and workshops using digital storytelling to give marginalized target groups a voice in society. The projects indicate that marginalized groups are often excluded from society caused by the lack of IT skills and digital expression. The main aspect is to explore and develop visual methods which can help include refugees and asylum seekers in society who are socially, culturally or economically marginalized. This paper elucidates the significance of digital technologies and visual storytelling tools in relation to inclusion and participation in the communication systems of an increasingly digitalized society. It is our experience that Digital Storytelling can provide marginalized people with important opportunities to become digital-literate, confident, and influential communicators by providing new digital-literate spaces and tools for learning. Through different visual participatory methods marginalised groups such as refugees and asylum seekers can produce powerfull forms of self-representation. The self-presentation comes along with the narrative as a primary genre for identity construction. By telling others who you are, can construction an agentive self.

Drawing on examples from the EU lifelong learning program; Silver Stories, The Danish Amnesty International campaign 'SHOUT OUT!, and workshops with asylum seekers and volunteers at the Asylum Festival 2015. This paper investigates how digital stories produced through these projects, provided digitally excluded groups a voice in society and most importantly a space for self expression and empowerment.

**Keywords:** Visual methods for self expression and empowerment, marginalized groups, inclusion, participatory visual research, migration, art therapy, human rights, freedom of speech, digital empowerment.

**Biography:**

*"To be a person is to have a story to tell."* - Isak Dinesen. Digital Storylab is the Copenhagen Center for Digital Storytelling, which Nikoline Lohmann started as a company in 2007 in Copenhagen after working at Berkeley University and in Oakland with digital storytelling for youth

at risk. Digital Storylab is based at Aalborg University in Copenhagen and creates new methods for using new media for empowerment. Nikoline has a background in journalism from La Trobe University in Australia, and has a master degree from the IT University of Copenhagen with focus on using social media and visual methods for user research .  
(Digital Storylab is a Silver Stories project partner.)

