Module: Digital Storytelling for fundraising

PDF-3 Using StoryMaps

StoryMaps Research

Research has highlighted the potential usefulness of StoryMapping in developing digital fundraising campaigns, for communication for non-expert audiences and exploring community cultural heritage (Surata et al., 2014). It has been used for encouraging activism, engaging people in the participatory planning of community issues and in taking a journalistic approach to a historical issue (Iturrioz et al., 2016).

A shared StoryMap allows content to be highly accessible, where potential donors benefit by having access to interactive, real-world media and data, which is a key component of online engagement. According to Cope et al. (2018), the compactness of StoryMaps is appealing, as they are effective for communicating and visualising complex ideas and large amounts of information in an organized, user-friendly interface targeted to the specific audience or lesson.

According to Aiello (2021) story mapping is increasingly being used by non-profit organisations to promote their work and actions and to provide opportunities for interactive fundraising campaigns. In most cases, those involved reported that relatively little time needs to be spent on the 'technology' as StoryMaps are easy to use to present the results of research or project work. They can be used to examine timelines, events or artefacts with images and comments, or to investigate and map characters or explore texts. It is a great way for potential donors to get a sense of the spatial and temporal relationships of events and ideas that relate to cultural heritage. A community may, through imaginative work, frame a story of itself which may be strong enough to sustain and maybe even mobilise the community's agenda.

Jayawardene (2020) uses Storymaps in Africana studies. The purpose was to make available deep and critical engagement with Afrodiasporic histories, social formations, thought, and practices; develop important and necessary critiques of Eurocentric knowledge structures. The concern was for cultural relevance not merely in research agendas and the material made available, but also in interaction. Storymaps were used to develop and deliver a conference style presentation that effectively communicated the work and engage a critical audience.

Eikenes (2015) linked StoryMaps to the research process as it helps to organize thoughts, evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of a situation, give a clear visual reference for exploring potential new directions and an instrument for understanding and addressing complex issues.

References

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