

SEDI Deep Experience Learning Community

Ethical storytelling for social change

Workshop 2: Going deeper

3 March 2026

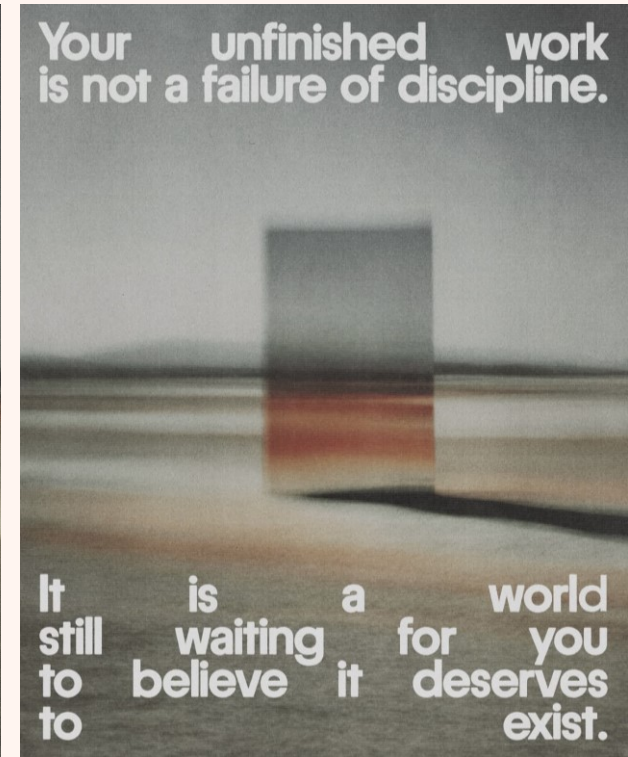
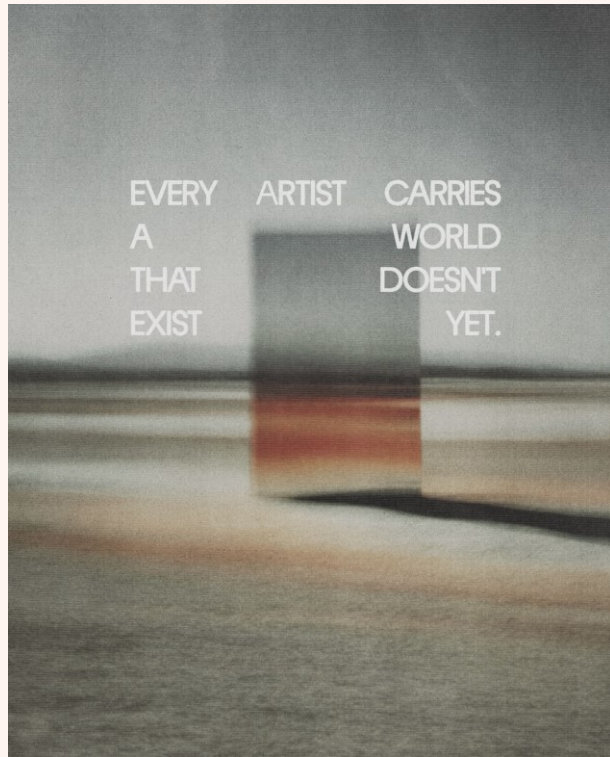




“When I think of the Acknowledgement of Country, I think of the land and the relationship of First Nations people, its plants, its waterways. **Everything this land was before First Contact.**

There are the waterways through the piece that feeds the plant life. I’ve placed us within the plants, to show our connection to them. **We aren’t separate from country, but exist with it, as a bond that can’t be broken.”**

[Charlotte Allingham](#) – Wiradjuri, Ngiyampaa woman from Central West New South Wales (living in Naarm)



Instagram: @loismac

Today's workshop



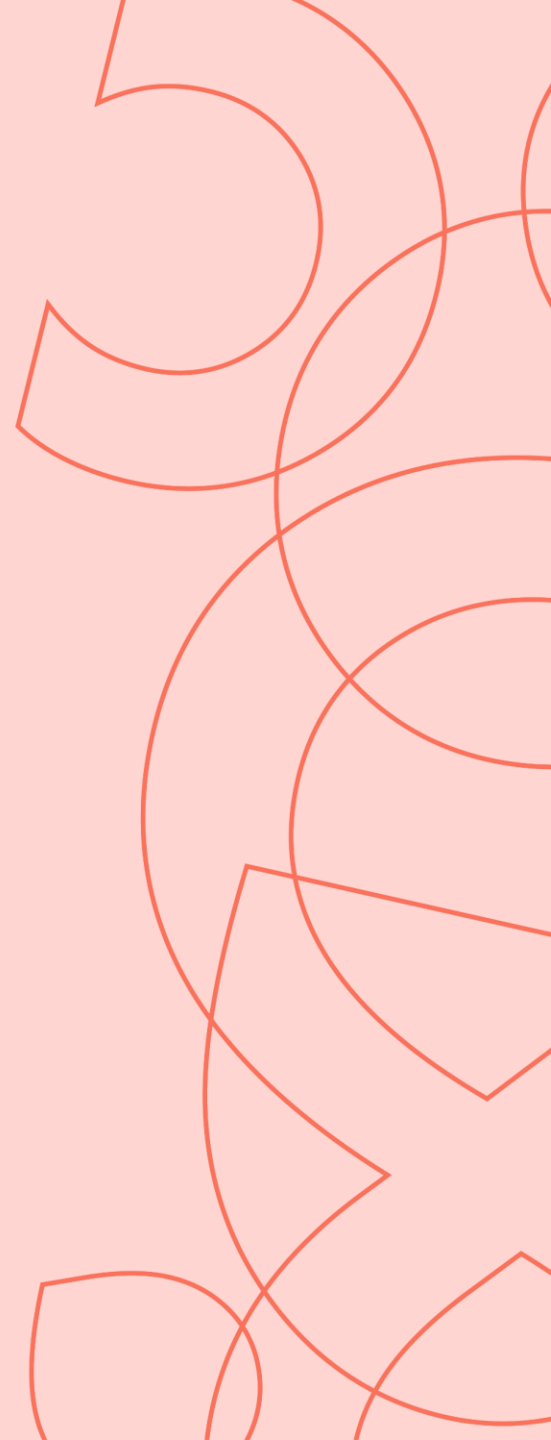
Workshop arc

1. Starting points 	2. Going deeper 	3. Getting specific
<p>What brings us together? What values and driving purpose do we share?</p>	<p>What do we want to challenge, change and build?</p>	<p>What advice do want to give so that more people and systems tell better stories?</p>
<p>Friday 13 Feb 2026 10am – 2pm (AEDT)</p>	<p>Tuesday 3 March 2026 10am – 2pm (AEDT)</p>	<p>Wed 1 April 2026 10.00-14.00 (AEDT)</p>

Session agenda

Timing		Activity
10.00-10.20	20 mins	Checking in & grounding
10.20-10.40	20 mins	Reflections on emerging themes
10.40-11.00	20 mins	Introducing, discussing & choosing doorways
11.00-11.30	30 mins	Small group work on doorways (in breakouts)
11.30-12.00	30 mins	Stretch break 🐾
12.00-13.30	90 mins	Playbacks from each group + discussion
13.30-13.45	15 mins	Agreement on how to use time in workshop 3
13.45-14.00	15 mins	Check-out & close

Checking in & grounding

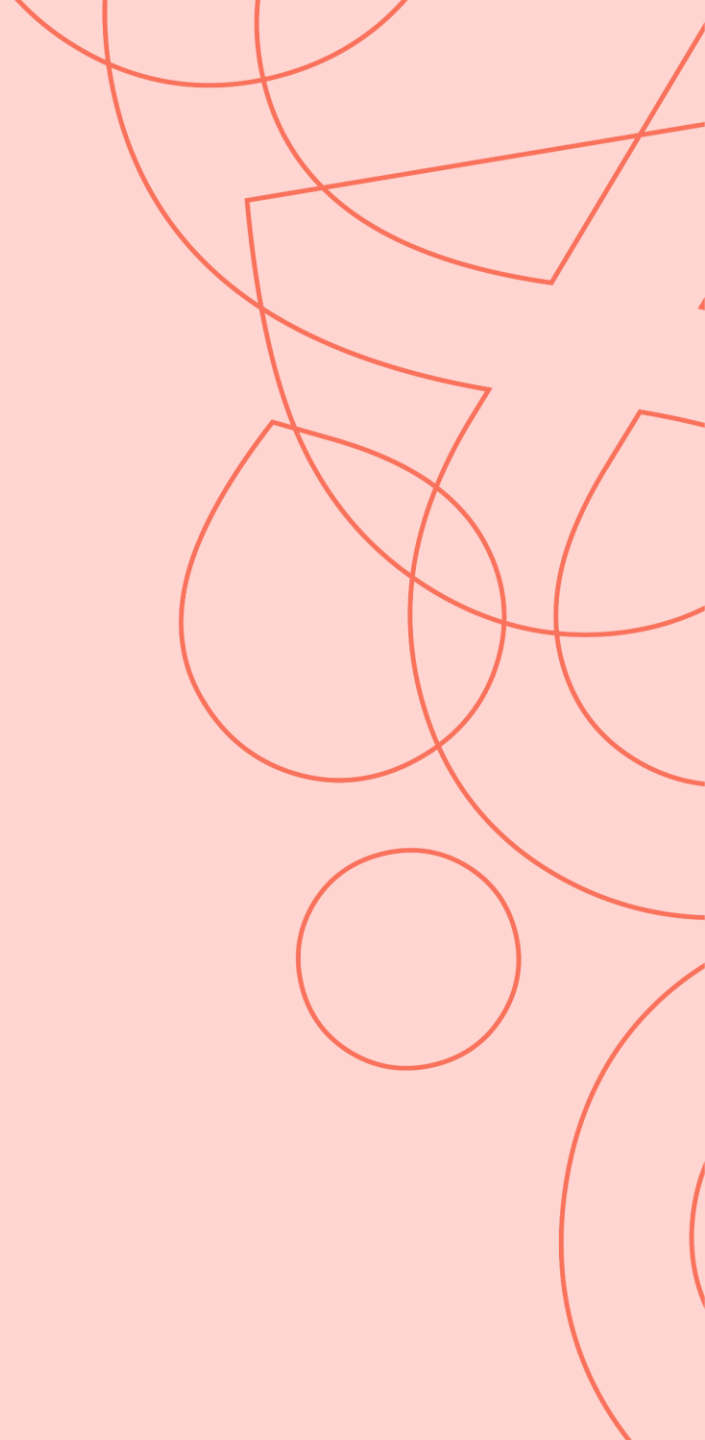


Check-in & grounding

- How are you arriving into the space today?
- Anything you've been thinking about since last time?



Revisiting scope



Our commitment to SEDI

1. Learning Community	2. Workshops	3. Create resource	4. Learning event
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit a group of up to 10 practitioners via EOI process. Cross-section of social enterprises and locations from across Australia who are committed to telling more ethical stories. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and facilitate 3x half-day convenings over 12 months. Share learnings, lived experiences and good practices that inform co-creation of a learning resource to support social enterprise sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce a draft learning resource and test with the core group. Share and test the draft learning resource with a wider group of social enterprise organisations in collaboration with SEA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver an Open Learning online event (1-2 hours). Between February 2025-June 2026, to share key learnings with the wider social enterprise community.

Our commitment to SEDI

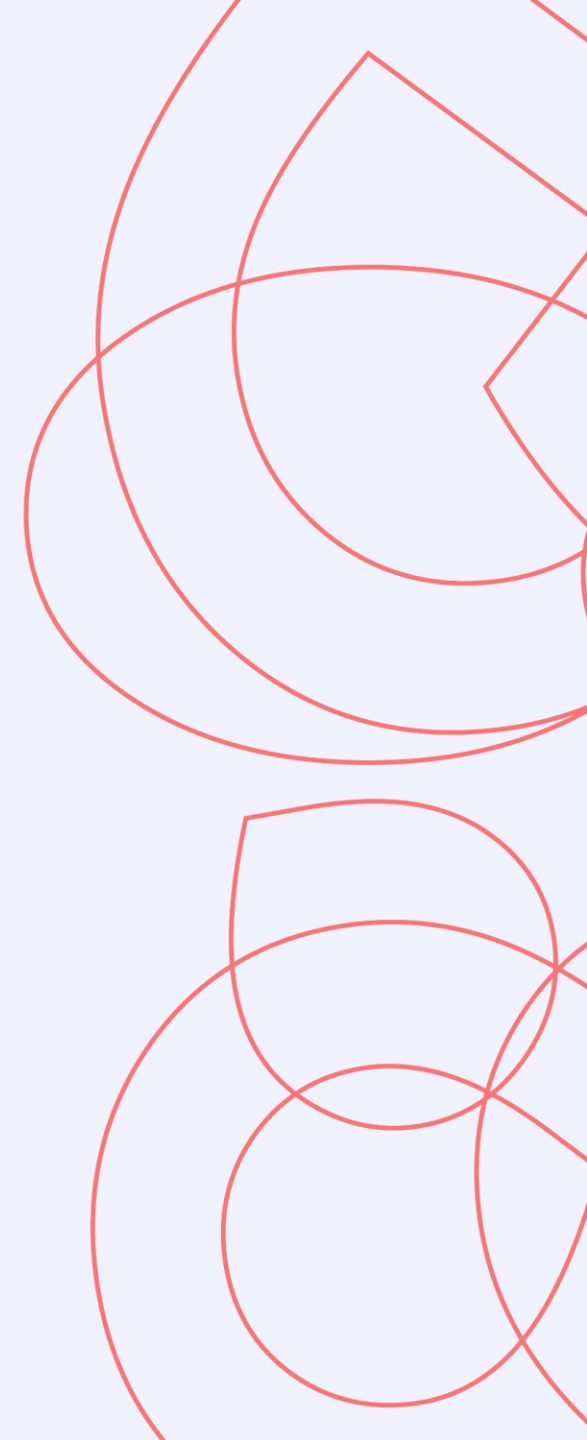
Learning Community HEART ❤️	Testing Community HANDS 🙌	Receiving Community FEET 👣
<p>Dedicated group of 6–10 core participants who will meet three times over 12 months.</p>	<p>Wider circle of practitioners who will review, test and provide feedback on the emerging resource.</p>	<p>Broader public and sector audience who will attend an Open Learning event and access the final resource.</p>

Emerging themes



We seem to not be asking:
“How do we tell stories ethically?”

We are asking:
“How do we relate to knowledge,
culture and power ethically *through*
the act of storytelling?”



Emerging theme 1

Shifting systems towards justice & equity

- Recognising the role storytelling can play in social and systemic change.
- Wanting greater clarity on the practices involved – how to work with stories in ways that genuinely lead to change and impact.

Emerging theme 2

Strengthening connection, community & legacy

Valuing ethical storytelling for:

- Self-identification and self-determination
- Connection, healing and recovery
- Solidarity and shared identity
- Historical record and legacy

Exploring:

- Different modes of storytelling (yarning, creative and non-verbal modes)
- Strengths-based practices
- Intergenerational knowledge transfer, recording and archiving
- Community access to stories they want and need

Emerging theme 3

Improving institutional storytelling practices

<p>Recognising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional capture of stories – who benefits and under what conditions • The narrowing of which stories are considered acceptable or “palatable” 	<p>Identifying the need for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear protocols to eliminate harmful practice • Emotional and cultural safety • Informed and ongoing consent • Fair and appropriate remuneration • Organisational capability to ensure safe, community-benefiting practice
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Emerging theme 4

Support, development & wellbeing

Valuing ethical storytelling for:

- Self-identification and self-determination
- Agency, advocacy and influence
- Connection, healing and recovery

Interested in:

- Radically enhancing support and wellbeing for people in the work
- Developing leadership opportunities and influence beyond lived experience contributions

Emerging theme 5

Growing personal & collective power

Valuing:

- Multiple ways of knowing and forms of evidence
- Epistemic justice and reframing what counts as knowledge

Interested in:

- Dialogue and exchange as sites of learning
- Creating platforms and “third spaces” for stories and ideas to flourish and influence futures

Points of tension

Relating to dominant systems and working with institutions

“When you’ve been living in the margins ... it’s easier to talk truth to power because you don’t rely on the system for your survival.”

"If I engage in storytelling, is it my responsibility to assimilate with the system or pushback?"

"Never assimilate ... but sometimes you have to use the master's tools."

“Trying to create these more sacred or third spaces ... and then we come into these dominant systems and they try to push us back.”

Points of tension

When power and agency isn't part of co-creation

“Even though we're talking about lived experience... co-creation and co-production... the agency is still missing.”

“The engagements that advocates engage in are pre-decided for them — what they say and how they're supposed to answer.”

“There's a lot of spaces that can be set up that feel very extractive.”

“Power isn't just who speaks, it's who sets the agenda.”

Points of tension

Balancing voice and influence with safety and wellbeing

"How little to no thought was given to the sacredness of that process, but also the potential harms of that process."

"People get burned out telling their stories over and over."

"Who is caring for the storytellers?"

"We can't keep relying on the same people."

"Just because someone says yes, doesn't mean it's safe."

“Valuing storytelling as an actual form... as a powerful tool for advocacy, for healing, for wellbeing.”

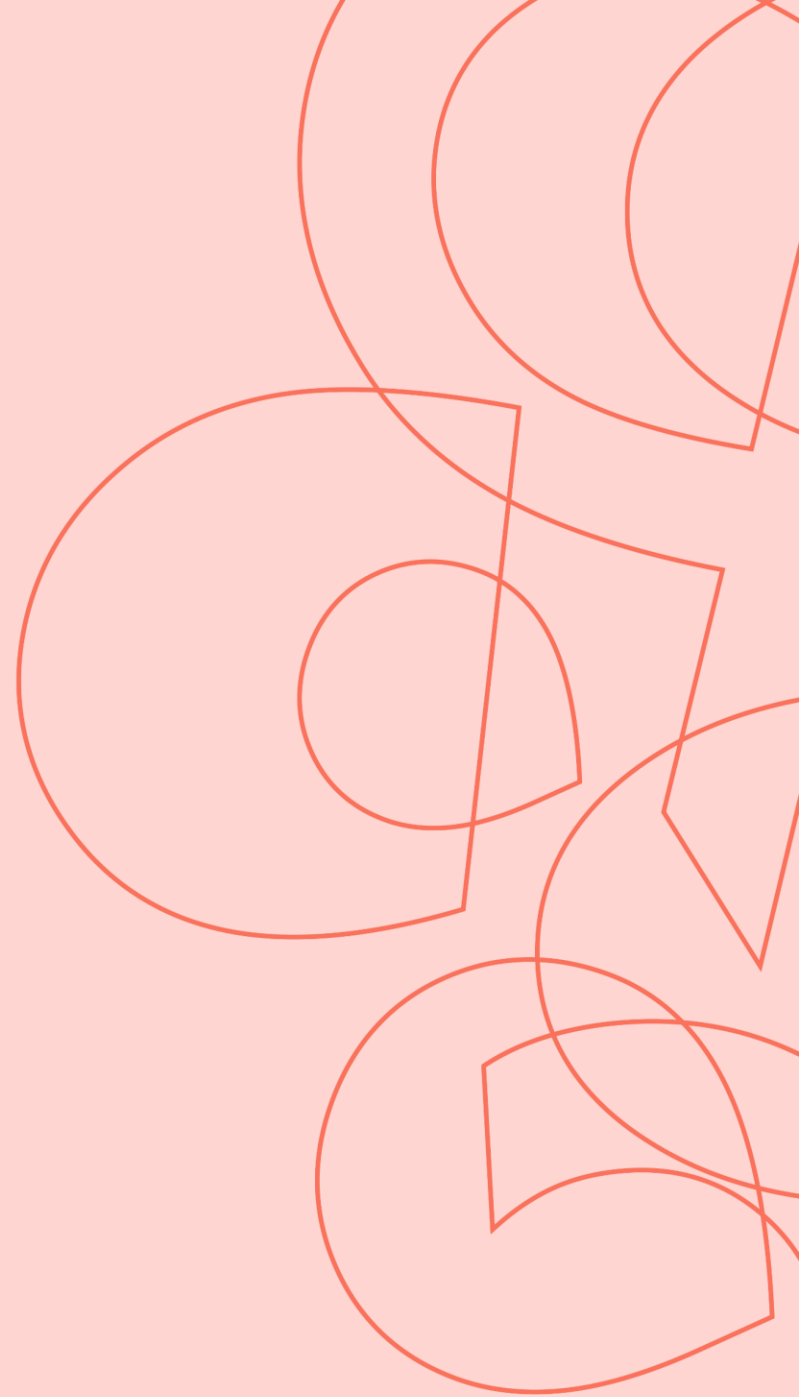
"Recovery and healing take place in relationship."

“Rushing is part of the harm. You can’t rush trust. Process matters just as much as outcome.”

"We need to pass the wisdom on to those we're yet to meet."

"How stories are received and the conditions around story-listening matter just as much."

Doorways into field-building



1 Shifting systems towards justice and equity

How can storytelling actively challenge systems of harm and oppression?

What does it look like to use stories to influence policy, funding, media and decision-making?

What practices help ensure storytelling contributes to justice rather than reinforcing inequality?

2 Strengthening community, connection and legacy

How does storytelling build solidarity and shared identity?

What would help more people access, contribute to and feel ownership of stories?

How do we ensure this work leaves something lasting for the communities it serves?

3 Improving institutional practice

What would we advise institutions to stop doing?

What would we encourage them to start or strengthen?

What structures, policies and safeguards are needed to prevent harmful storytelling and embed ethical practice?

4 Supporting storyteller development and wellbeing

What support do storytellers need before, during and after sharing their stories?

What might peer connection, mentoring, training or care look like?

How do we protect people from burnout, extraction and re-traumatisation?

5 Growing collective power and influence

How can we organise, collaborate and amplify each other's work?

What "third spaces" (outside institutions but connected to them) would strengthen our collective voice?

What shared principles or guidelines could help us act together with clarity and influence?

6 Expanding ways of knowing and imagination

How do we value different forms of knowledge – cultural, embodied, artistic, relational, community-held?

What storytelling approaches move beyond dominant Western or institutional frames?

How can imagination open up new possibilities for how stories are created, shared and understood?

Activity: Exploring the doorways

1. Choose a doorway that calls to you

Gather in a group to explore this topic together

2. These questions may help guide your discussion:

- What is the work that needs to happen?
- Why does this matter right now?
- Who are the key audiences or stakeholders?
- What existing work does this connect to or build on?
- Who would need to be involved?
- What would meaningful progress look like?
- If we could recommend one bold but realistic step for this doorway, what would it be?

Spend 30 minutes exploring this topic in your group and prepare to share back.

You don't need to solve the whole doorway. Focus on where energy feels strongest.

What form could our resource take?

<p>Ethical storytelling guidelines</p> <p>Practical principles and standards to guide ethical decision-making in storytelling practice.</p>	<p>Manifesto</p> <p>A bold, values-driven statement that declares what we stand for and what we refuse in storytelling.</p>	<p>Provocations</p> <p>Challenging prompts or statements designed to unsettle assumptions and spark new thinking.</p>	<p>Reflective practice questions / deck of cards</p> <p>A set of structured prompts to support teams and individuals to examine their storytelling practices.</p>	<p>Organisational case studies</p> <p>Real-world examples that illustrate ethical tensions, decisions and learning in practice.</p>
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Or something else entirely ...


Checking out & next steps




Check out

- Are there any truths about storytelling that feel clearer?
- One-word describing where you're landing

Next workshop

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**IN A DREAM YOU SAW
A WAY TO SURVIVE AND
YOU WERE FULL OF JOY**

Thank you

