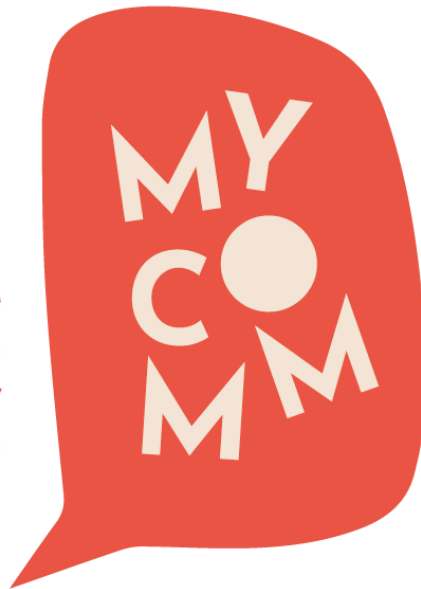


Migrant and Refugee
Youth Communication
and advocacy for equity
and inclusion



Thematic Manual

AUDIO-VISUAL TECHNIQUES

MYCOMM ERASMUS+ YOUTH 2022 TOG



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Migrant and refugee Youth COMMunication and advocacy for equity and inclusion

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Introduction

This manual will act as a resource to empower youth organisations targeting migrants and refugees in Europe. This section of the manual will provide practical guidance and resources for youth leaders and participants about Audio-Visual techniques in order to contribute to a more inclusive society. This manual will delve into the foundational aspects of audio and visual mediums exploring their influence and relevance in contemporary society.

This manual will be broken down into ten main topics:

- 1. Introduction to Audiovisual Media:** An overview of the fundamental concepts and principles in the creation and consumption of audiovisual content.
- 2. Camera Operation and Techniques:** Instruction on the use of cameras and various techniques to capture visually compelling images in filmmaking and video production.
- 3. Sound Recording and Editing:** Techniques and processes involved in capturing, refining, and editing audio elements to enhance the overall quality of audiovisual projects.
- 4. Video Lighting Software:** Software tools designed for manipulating and enhancing lighting effects in video production to achieve desired visual aesthetics
- 5. Lighting Techniques:** Methods employed to effectively illuminate scenes, subjects and environments in audiovisual productions for visual impact and storytelling.
- 6. Scriptwriting and Storytelling:** The art and craft of creating narratives, scripts, and compelling stories for audiovisual mediums.

7. **Cultural Sensitivity in Audiovisual Production:** Considerations and practices to ensure respectful and accurate representation of diverse cultures in audiovisual content.
8. **Legal and Ethical Considerations:** Exploration of the legal and ethical frameworks of audiovisual media production, including copyright, intellectual property, and ethical content creation.
9. **Accessibility and Inclusivity:** Strategies and practices to make audiovisual content accessible to diverse audiences, including considerations for people with disabilities and promoting inclusivity.
10. **Hands-On Practical Workshops:** Practical advice on applying various production skills and techniques.

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1. INTRODUCTION TO AUDIOVISUAL MEDIA

Audio-visual media refers to any form of content that combines both visual and auditory elements to tell a story or communicate a message. This form of media has many elements, including television, film, video games, and virtual reality experiences. The use of sound and optics makes for a much more immersive experience for the audience receiving it.

The use of audio which includes but is not limited to, spoken dialogue, music, and sound effects plays an important role in conveying emotions and setting the mood whilst also providing context for visuals. They serve to add clarity and emotions to the learning process and help us understand and remember information better. Audio aids are knowledge for our ears! (Aspiring Youths, 2023). Visuals include images, animations, graphics, and special effects. Visuals act as captivating companions to audio. They paint pictures in our minds that help us understand ideas with just a quick glance. They also unlock imagination and creativity within the audience consuming the media.

Not all people are auditory learners who can obtain a large amount of information from lectures and speeches. This way, audio and visual mediums are potent tools to engage people in different manners. Many people are visual learners who respond better to still or moving images. The blend of sight and sound not only encourages but also reinforces this retention, allowing people to make a deeper connection with the information being presented. Audiovisual techniques simplify the process of psychologically accessing and retaining information even after time has passed (Creel, 2017).

This combination of audio and visual is a powerful storytelling technique and means of communication. By being exposed to different ideas and concepts, we have an opportunity to think outside the box and explore different solutions that we may not have considered before. Audio-visual media has the potential to transcend language barriers which makes it a universal communicative tool that can be used in advocating for both equity and inclusion.

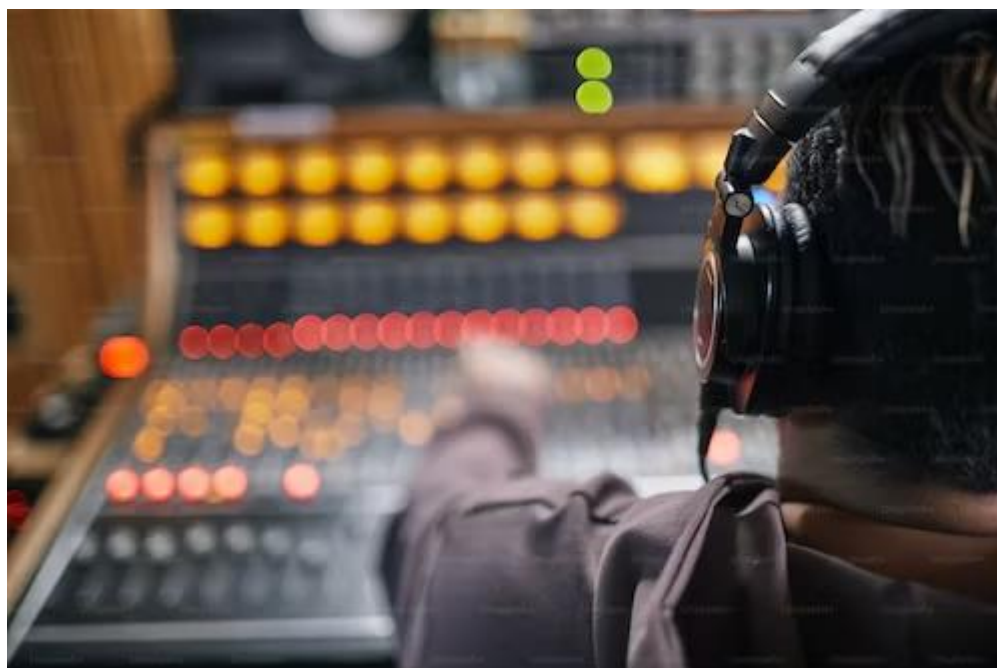


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2 CAMERA OPERATION AND TECHNIQUES

In order to properly operate a camera it's crucial to first understand its basic functions and settings. The main idea behind using a camera is capturing light. Although each camera will be slightly different there are similarities amongst cameras such as physical controls, including buttons, dials, and menus systems. Firstly familiarise yourself with your own camera's functions.



Power on your camera and select whatever shooting mode that suits your situation best. There are four kinds of camera shots, wide shot, medium shot, close up and extreme close up. A wide shot captures a broad view, showing the entire view you are shooting. Medium shots frame the subject from the waist up, providing more detail while still showing some of the background shots. Close ups are shots that zoom in on the chosen subject with great emphasis on detail. Extreme close ups focus more intensely on a small portion of the subject with more intricate detail.

Camera framing is the placement and positioning of the subjects in your shot. Rather than simply pointing the camera at the subject of your shot you need to compose an image. One of the most important things to consider for framing a shot is the number of subjects you want to feature in the shot and their relationship to each other. It is up to you to depict that in your shot. There are three main things to consider for framing your shot, size, relationships, and balance. The size relates to the importance, the relationship whether it be romantic or contentious can be portrayed in the framing and a balanced frame includes elements on both the left and right sides (Lannon, 2020).

Building the craft of camera operating takes time. It is about both technique and performance. There is an emotional arc which needs to be told through the camera operation, and knowing how to connect each shot with the next in order to progress with the storyline is what makes a great technician (NFS Staff, 2020). These basic concepts provide a foundation for capturing visually engaging and well-composed photographs.

3. SOUND RECORDING AND EDITING



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Sound recording and editing are both integral parts of the Audiovisual process. This can include music, podcasts, film, or any other audiovisual project. Good audio editing depends heavily on the source material, and without properly recorded audio the process becomes one with little

return (Ivanov, 2018). Here is a breakdown of the key steps involved in sound recording and editing.

Sound recording involves the capturing of sound waves and then saving this data as a digital file. Relatively speaking, capturing sound is a new phenomenon. The initial breakthrough in sound recordings occurred in 1877 with the creation of recordings on cylinders. In more recent times, digital audio workstations, alongside high definition video cameras and computers capable of recording multiple channels simultaneously have become the standard practise (Ivanov, 2018).

There are two types of sound recordings, analogue and digital. Analogue sound uses an electromagnetic signal in order to record audio vibrations on magnetic tapes. Whereas digital sound records convert the audio vibrations into numbers that can then be stored electronically with no loss of quality. In order to create a high quality sound recording it's important to consider the right microphone for the task at hand. The environment must be suitable, whether that be a tranquil, quiet place or busy and loud.

Sound editing implies the refining and enhancing of audio recordings to achieve desired quality. It includes using basic editing tools such as trimming, cutting, and arranging audio clips. Along with these tools, pitch and time corrections should also be performed for the best possible quality. It is important to regularly save versions of your project for backup and to continuously listen to your audio in order to address any imperfections. Once you are happy with your edited audio file, export the final version file in the desired format and quality.

4. VIDEO EDITING SOFTWARE

Video editing software is any programme that is capable of editing, modifying, generating, or manipulating a video or movie file. A video editor allows you to remove sections of the video you are working with and cut and arrange that same video and arrange it. All of this is done with the intent of giving the video a better flow and enhancing the quality.



Image via Unsplash

There is no shortage of programmes that will help you to edit your videos, some examples include but are not limited to, *Adobe*, *Apple*, and *Microsoft*.

Video editing software is a very useful tool for content creators, videographers, and general enthusiasts that are looking to transform their raw footage into more polished and professional videos. As mentioned above *Adobe* is a popular video editing software tool, specifically *Adobe Premiere Pro*, a versatile and highly capable platform that caters for both beginners and experienced editors. Users can seamlessly navigate through its many editing options, including advanced colour grading, audio manipulation, and a range of special effects.



Image via Unsplash

Video editing software empowers a wide range of producers to convey their narratives with impact. It allows for diverse voices to contribute to the rich tapestry of visual storytelling.

5. LIGHTING TECHNIQUES

When it comes to audiovisual production one of the most, yet often overlooked, aspects of achieving visual excellence is effective lighting. Failing to understand that even the most expensive equipment will create an amateur looking product without the correct lighting is a common mistake. Well-lit scenes enhance visibility, emphasise details, and contribute to a professional aesthetic. Insufficient or unsuitable lighting can lead to shadows, colour distortion, and reduced image clarity, diminishing the viewer's experience (Start Motion Media, 2023).

Setting up lighting for different purposes requires an understanding of the desired mood and tone. Lighting can totally transform a scene's atmosphere and mood. For example, when trying to shoot a bright, cheerful scene, use diffused lighting to minimise harsh shadows. Alternatively, for shooting a dramatic or intimate scene use shadows to your advantage as well as contrast lighting to create depth (Start Motion Media, 2023). Whatever the mood is, the correct lighting can add an extra layer of depth to the scene that reinforces the narrative being conveyed.

Experimentation with colour temperature can evoke different emotions. For example, red lighting is associated with an increase in heart rate, creating a sense of urgency or excitement, depending on the desired outcome. It's important to continuously monitor and adapt lighting during production to accommodate changing conditions. By prioritising property lighting techniques, producers can elevate the appeal and appearance of the scene whilst also effectively getting their intended message across to their intended audience.



Above: An an example of lighting techniques portraying a happy scene and conveying the subject's happiness also.

Below: The lighting in the image portrays more of a dramatic mood and atmosphere with the contrast lighting and creation of shadows.



6. SCRIPTWRITING AND STORYTELLING

Crafting compelling narratives for scripts for audiovisual projects requires a thoughtful approach to engage audiences visually and emotionally. Many people overlook storytelling and scriptwriting. A strong story can hook the audience in from the very first line of the script. It's important to have a compelling story that allows your characters to develop and keep the audience emotionally involved. From the beginning, it is important to identify your central theme, characters, and their goals. Ensuring your script has a clear beginning, middle and end helps with the overall flow of your story.

Firstly, it is important to create a character with a goal or challenge to achieve or overcome. The character should have a range of emotions whilst the story allows for character growth and arcs throughout the narrative. The script should challenge your character, creating tension and emotional investment. The script should also use universal themes that can resonate with a broader audience. Such themes can include, good vs. evil, loyalty, life and death, and family. In order to make the story interesting and maintain the audience's attention the character should be given a goal that requires them to almost put their lives on the line to achieve it. The more difficult the challenge is for the character the harder they will try to achieve it, and the audience becomes more attached to the storyline (Film Scriptwriting, 2023).

Creating impactful dialogue is also really important to advance the plot of the story. However, it is also important to keep the audience visually engaged using cinematic techniques such as close-ups and montages.



Image via Unsplash

Quality script writing and storytelling is all about creating relatable characters with universal themes and interesting visual storytelling. Dialogue that doesn't take away from the other factors involved in the overall process is important, as is making necessary changes and taking on board. Each of these pieces of the puzzle will make for a story that truly grabs your audience's attention.

7. CULTURAL SENSITIVITY IN AUDIOVISUAL PRODUCTION

Being culturally aware not only makes us more empathetic of others, but it also helps us to celebrate our similarities and differences alike. In essence, this means that you won't treat people differently for the simple fact that they are different from you ethnically or culturally speaking. There are more benefits than negatives to actually being more culturally sensitive and aware (Lesadmin, 2021). By becoming more culturally aware you are broadening your mind to many different perspectives and lenses, there can be a greater appreciation for diversity to come from it as well as improved communication skills.

In relation to cultural sensitivity in audiovisual production, the importance of respecting diverse backgrounds and cultures in storytelling is of grave importance. It promotes inclusivity, enriches narratives, and aids a deeper understanding of the lived human experience. By tapping into more diverse perspectives the storyteller is giving people a chance to be seen and heard from all backgrounds and points of view.



Image via Unsplash

When narratives are dominated by a singular cultural perspective, they risk perpetuating stereotypes and reinforcing biases. For example, audiovisual productions can reinforce gender norms, as well as inciting racial rhetoric and ethnic stereotypes. This can be done in movies, music and much more. However, by being more inclusive of diverse backgrounds this approach not only engages a broader audience but also challenges stereotypes.



Image via Unsplash

By recognising the wealth of stories that can be told by being more culturally sensitive, audiovisual media can benefit immensely. There becomes a much more vibrant and interconnected means of communication and storytelling.

8. LEGAL AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In audiovisual production, navigating copyright issues, permissions, and ethical guidelines is imperative. Understanding copyright laws in your own jurisdictions and the permissions that may or may not be in place in order for third parties to use the content is extremely important. These licences avoid any kind of legal consequences of copyright infringement by using music, images, or video clips. In some cases the use of copyrighted material may be considered “fair use”, which is a legality that allows for what is known as limited use for purposes such as commentary, news reporting, and reporting.



Image via Unsplash

Ethical consideration is important in any form of audiovisual production. The human dignity of every individual must be respected. The gender, age, ethical and cultural background, health, and religion of a person are just a few examples of factors that should always be respected and considered when producing an audiovisual project. Their privacy and dignity must be at the forefront and protected at all times (Yle, 2021). Ethical considerations are very different to copyright protection as it extends beyond legal compliance and relies upon responsible and respectful content creation.

A massively important step in the ethical consideration process is ensuring that the subject of your production understands that their participation is only required if they have given consent and that that consent was informed. Informed consent should be an iterative process, where a person has the right to stay continuously informed about the projects they are participating in and have the right to withdraw at any time they feel uncomfortable. The process must be a transparent one, where everybody is on the same page at all times. When working with migrants it is important to ensure that the language barrier, if it applies, is broken and that they understand and consent to whatever the project entails.

In what is a rapidly growing landscape of audiovisual media, a comprehensive understanding of copyright, permissions, and ethical standards is crucial for producers to navigate legal challenges and contribute positively to the integrity of the participant's experience as well as to the industry.

9. ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVITY

Creating audiovisual content that is inclusive and accessible to all is extremely important. Implementing features such as closed captions, audio descriptions, and sign language interpretation ensures that differently abled individuals can fully engage with the material you are producing. Using clear and simple language within audiovisual projects makes comprehending the content much easier and enjoyable for diverse audiences, including those with cognitive or language-related challenges. Using readable fonts and prioritising colour contrasts is an easy way of improving accessibility for differently abled people. Collaboration is a useful tool when trying to become more accessible and inclusive, listening to those whom you are trying to do so for is a powerful action and should be common practice. By embracing each of these practices content creators can contribute to a more equitable and enriching industry.



Image via Unsplash

[The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) (CRPD) is an international treaty that seeks to protect and promote the rights and dignity of individuals that are differently abled. The CRPD recognises the inherent worthiness and dignity of persons who are differently abled and emphasises their rights in all aspects of life. The convention covers a wide range of areas, including political rights, access to justice, education, employment, and healthcare. Audiovisual media is also protected within the convention. For instance, the convention supports the provision of closed captions for individuals with hearing impairments as well as audio descriptions for those who are visually impaired (CRPD, 2006). The convention's emphasis on accessibility aligns with the broader concept of universal design, which promotes the creation of inclusive content that accommodates everyone.

There are seven universal design principles as follows,

1. Equitable use.
2. Flexibility in use.
3. Simple and intuitive.
4. Perceptible information.
5. Tolerance for error.
6. Low physical effort.
7. Size and space for approach and use.

To read more about the 7 universal design principles visit: [\(Burgstahler, 2021\).](#)

10. HANDS-ON PRACTICAL WORKSHOPS

It is important to understand the intricacies of audiovisual media, however, so is actually practising audiovisual skills. Here are some ideas for participants to have the opportunity to practise their skills through hands-on activities and projects.

Creating a podcast is a great activity for participants to practise many different audiovisual skills such as, script writing, sound recording and effects, editing, editing software, and voice modulation. Having participants plan, record, and then edit their own podcasts encourages creativity and invites a diverse group of topics and discussions to be had on the podcasts. Participants have the opportunity to use their storytelling skills to narrate discussions and conversations from their point of view. This will create a more inclusive demonstration of their skills and allow them to personalise their podcasts.



Image via Unsplash

Buzzsprout have a dedicated '*How-to*' page on setting up your own page https://www.buzzsprout.com/blog/how-to-start-a-podcast?gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQiA6vaqBhCbARIsACF9M6IFFVXG0clfl4c2vewfz57q4mnTcRdl93NsnUAEzJABfgmfKL3V7wQaAo5UEALw_wcB.

Here they talk about how to develop your podcast, the format you can choose for your podcast, how to set up podcast recording equipment, choosing your podcast software, recording your first episode, editing your audio, creating podcast artwork and much more. The website has free podcast resources as well as detailed answers to frequently asked questions (Buzzsprout, 2023).

Facilitating the opportunity for participants to create a documentary is an excellent way to demonstrate their audiovisual skills. Giving the participants time to research and produce documentaries on a topic of their choosing means giving the participants an opportunity to tap into their creativity as well as their own personal interests which of course will be reflective of their lived experiences. It is also a great method of honing their storytelling skills and develops a deeper understanding of a subject that resonates with them. This hands-on experience not only allows them to showcase their skills but also encourages a sense of ownership and passion for the content being produced.

No Film School is a very helpful website as a resource for creating a short documentary. They publish the latest news, tutorials, interviews, and videos to help you become a better filmmaker. Coincidentally, they also have a podcast where they discuss all things filmmaking. Here, you can explore the wide range of insights within their website and get started on your filmmaking journey <https://nofilmschool.com/> (NFS,2023).

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