



# Applicant Information Pack

## Early Career Story Fellow

The Story Society

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## Welcome

**Dear Candidate,**

Thank you for expressing interest in joining *StoryArcs*, a pioneering Programme led by The Story Society at Bath Spa University. We are excited by the opportunity to collaborate with you as we explore the transformative power of storytelling in shaping the world around us.

At its heart, *StoryArcs* is dedicated to harnessing the deeper currents of storytelling—what we call **Story Skills**—to address pressing societal challenges. Supported by the **Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)**, this Programme brings together an international network of researchers, enterprises, and cultural organisations to create a dynamic space for innovation and positive change.

As a **Story Fellow**, you will play a key role in this mission. You will engage in impactful projects that tackle contemporary issues, applying Story Skills as key strategies for leadership, cultural change, and community engagement. Your work will span diverse themes such as social impact, decision-making around personal health, creative collaboration, and the preservation of cultural legacies, equipping you with skills that resonate across professional sectors.

We believe that storytelling is not just a way to communicate, but a profound means of fostering empathy, connection, and understanding in a rapidly changing world. Through *StoryArcs*, you will be part of an immersive ecosystem designed to empower early career professionals like yourself to lead with purpose, driving social change and inspiring meaningful transformation.

We look forward to receiving your application and learning how your unique vision and creativity can contribute to our growing network of storytellers and changemakers.

Best wishes,

**Professor Bambo Soyinka**

Director and Principal Investigator of the *StoryArcs* Programme

## About the Story Fellow Role

The *StoryArcs* Programme, funded by the AHRC, is dedicated to exploring Story Skills as strategies for change. Story Fellows will engage in placements that challenge them to leverage their expertise alongside Host organisations, addressing real-world issues while enriching their understanding of Story Skills.

Central to our mission is the empowerment of early career professionals through the cultivation of Story Skills. By building an international network of researchers, enterprises, and cultural organisations, we harness the art of Story to navigate the complexities of our interconnected lives.

As a Fellow, you will lead a **placement project** and actively participate in the **Deep Story Leadership Platform**, engaging with a diverse community, learning from experts, and co-developing impactful narratives that resonate with various audiences. This collaborative approach fosters understanding and encourages collective action in shaping the cultures we aspire to inhabit.

## Placement Projects

The *StoryArcs* Fellowship offers an exciting opportunity for Story Fellows to engage in meaningful storytelling projects that address a range of societal challenges. Whether your interests lie in social impact, community identity, health, decision-making, creative collaboration, preserving cultural legacies, or capturing historical narratives, you will have the chance to immerse yourself in projects that leverage the art of Story for positive change.

In these placements, you will lead projects that tackle complex, real-world issues. To succeed, you will need to apply a range of Story Skills – from content development through to community building, Story planning and strategic narrative delivery. Our expectation is that you will not only apply your narrative skills but also engage with collaborators and audiences, empowering them through the stories you help to tell.

We seek creative and socially conscious individuals eager to collaborate across disciplines and committed to amplifying diverse voices and experiences. Mentorship and professional development are integral to these placements, ensuring you have the support needed to thrive. Your passion for storytelling can truly make a difference—so which adventure will you choose to help inspire cultural development?

## Deep Story Leadership Platform

The **Deep Story Leadership Platform** is designed to empower Story Fellows by helping them to identify and progressively work towards their career goals through immersive training and hands-on experiences that focus on the development of their Story Skills.

The **Deep Story Leadership Platform** uses an experiential 'adventure' framework, emphasising participatory, self-directed professional development. Story Fellows engage in real-world projects that allow them to apply and refine storytelling techniques. This approach ensures you gain both theoretical knowledge and practical skills, enabling you to implement storytelling solutions that address specific organisational challenges, foster inclusivity, and engage diverse audiences.

Regular online meet-ups and tailored mentoring will enhance your experience, creating a supportive network. Our ethos focuses on continuous improvement and reflective evaluation, ensuring that learning is embedded in our practices and those of our partners.

**Key Features** of the platform include:

**StoryArcs Fellowship:** Connect with a peer-led network where you will engage with a diverse community of peers and experts, fostering mentorship and shared values that support inclusive workplace cultures.

**i-Story Research Space:** Explore and innovate in content development, accessing story patterns, knowledge packs, and interactive tools to refine your narrative style and enhance capacity to generate.

**Hands-On Story Projects:** Lead initiatives that tackle real-world challenges, developing leadership capabilities while contributing to cultural production through structured storytelling techniques.

**The Narrative Exchange:** Share resources, celebrate your storytelling journey, and build a public profile, showcasing the importance of strategic storytelling across various roles and industries.

Through this platform, you will gain invaluable, proactive experience, mentorship, and access to a community committed to positive change. Graduates will be honoured with the **StoryArcs Award**, recognising your significant contributions to storytelling and societal impact.

## StoryArcs and The Story Society

The Story Society is one of three university-wide Strategic Research Centres tasked with enhancing research activities across and beyond Bath Spa University. We explore the many uses and values of stories across borders; in particular, we are dedicated to harnessing the transformative power of storytelling to tackle pressing societal challenges. We nurture a creative ecology where diverse stories can thrive, collaborating across sectors to promote storytelling for the public good. Our vision is simple: one world, many stories.

The Story Society delivers *StoryArcs*, alongside other programmes such as the creative writing incubator with a social conscience, Paper Nations, and the low residency international PhD Programme, The Story Foundry.

The mission of *StoryArcs* is to explore the values and uses of Story Skills across life, learning and work. We invite you to visit the *StoryArcs* [website](#) to discover the programmes, resources, and opportunities available. Engage with our community and, together, let's harness storytelling as a tool for positive change.

## Partnership Structure of StoryArcs

The *StoryArcs* Programme comprises several key connections:

**StoryArcs HQ:** Coordinated by the *StoryArcs* team at The Story Society, providing support and training for Story Fellows while developing the Story Skills Knowledge Base.

**Host Organisations:** Comprising businesses, charities, and creative organisations that present challenges requiring Story Skills.

**Partner Universities:** Employing Story Fellows, providing mentorship, and supporting the expansion of Story Skills.

**Academic Mentors:** Experts from Partner Universities guiding Story Fellows throughout their placements.

**Story Fellows:** Bringing unique skills to help solve the challenges presented by Host organisations.

## Our Partner Universities

To support our Story Fellows effectively, we are partnered with the University of Nottingham, University of the Arts London, and Cardiff Metropolitan University. These institutions serve as employers, providing mentorship and contractual support which enhances the sustainability of the *StoryArcs* Programme.

## The StoryArcs Team

Led by Professor Bambo Soyinka, the world's first Professor of Story, our diverse team combines academic expertise with a creative, community-focused approach, engaging with storytellers and researchers across the UK. Through pioneering research, including into the Story Skill Set, we empower individuals to become agents of change, fostering dialogue and connections that transcend cultural boundaries.

Our team consists of ten permanent members of staff, all with different expertise and backgrounds. This team is complemented by a network of advisors, editors, and consultants. Together, we prioritise fieldwork and collaboration with communities, companies, and creatives.

## A Few Words from Our Team

Dr Simon Strange is *StoryArcs'* Research Programme Manager for Story and is responsible for leading the Fellowship. Here, he shares his thoughts about the type of culture he hopes to foster among Story Fellows, explaining some of the concepts and theories which underlie his work and ethos:

My research delves into the concept of *scenius*, which explores the dynamic interplay of collective creativity as it emerges from music scenes and art schools. These foundational ideas shape my ethos for the Story Fellowship, where I am dedicated to cultivating a dynamic cohort of storytellers. I believe in creating an inclusive, non-hierarchical environment that empowers individuals to explore the values of individual and collective stories for the common good (see *Blank Canvas*, 2022, Intellect Press).

I envision the Fellowship as a blank slate—an innovative space where cohesive and organic interactions among diverse individuals and groups can flourish, allowing them to cultivate their natural, free-flowing narratives. This collaborative journey will unfold through a variety of formats, including in-person and online collective sessions, mentoring opportunities, immersive Deep Story Leadership Workshops, and engaging virtual discussions. Here, Story Fellows will unite to network and delve into the myriad forms of storytelling. Through this process, we will embrace a playful ethos that encourages improvisation and spontaneity, dismantling barriers and pushing the boundaries of our creativity. Together, we will foster a cohesive community committed to shared exploration and growth, where connections and dialogues enable individual talents to emerge organically, creating an environment that continuously nurtures creativity and collective inspiration.

Dr Ella Harris is *StoryArcs*' Postdoctoral Research Assistant and i-Story Champion, working at the intersection between research and Story generation. Here, she explains her role within the Programme, as well as some of the influences which shape her work and ambitions:

My work as the i-Story Champion within *StoryArcs* is driven by a fascination with how ideas are generated and embedded within complex emergent contexts. I'm an expert in creative methods and am especially interested in how creative practice can help us to untangle and move forward at a time of intersecting crises. My approach to the i-Story will draw from my own work in this area, which has included developing interactive documentary as an experimental research tool (as explored in my book *Encountering the World with I-docs*, Bristol University Press, 2025), co-creating 'thinking tools' to scaffold dialogue between young people and policy makers (The British Academy, 2024) and examining how crises are narrativised (including in my books *Rebranding Precarity*, Zed Books, 2020 and *The Growing Trend of Living Small*, Routledge, 2022). I spend a lot of time thinking about how creative practice can help us to see differently, work collaboratively and co-create knowledge in impactful ways.

I envisage the i-Story as a living, interactive space where the findings of different Story experts can be brought into dialogue to uncover deep structures and shared with audiences in interactive and immersive ways.

## Applying

To apply for the Story Fellow opportunity, please complete the application form, the Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form (optional), and upload your CV via our application portal. See our call for Story Fellows [here](#).

## Award Size

Employee-based Story Fellows (for our projects delivered in partnership with the University of Nottingham or the University of the Arts London) will receive a salary aligned with Point 30 on the National Spine for Postgraduate Research Assistants, at £37,999 pro rata (£18,999 per year, plus London weighting, where applicable).

Freelancer Story Fellows (for our projects delivered in partnership with Cardiff Metropolitan University) will be compensated under the terms of a freelancer contract, with a grant of approximately £28,815 over 14 months for 130 working days at a rate of £220 per day.

## Summary of Role and Benefits

A summary of the roles and benefits is provided below. Please read this alongside the Project Briefs and the Job Description or Freelance Specification, all accessible through our application portal. Together, these documents offer detailed information about the project requirements.

### Your Role as a Story Fellow:

- 🌐 **Lead an Inspiring Project:** Collaborate with a Host organisation to tackle significant creative, cultural or community challenges. Use your storytelling skills to inspire and develop innovative solutions that promote positive action.
- 📖 **Shape the Future of Storytelling:** Engage with our i-Story initiative, an innovative space for groundbreaking research in storytelling, where your contributions will help redefine this evolving field.
- 🤝 **Build Community and Enrich Lives:** Immerse yourself in the Fellowship community, fostering connections and sharing your unique perspectives to uplift and inspire others.
- ✨ **Showcase Your Impact:** Craft compelling narratives that highlight the transformative power of storytelling to impact individuals, communities, and broader systems.

### What You'll Gain:

- 🦋 **Leadership Development and Growth:** Access a cutting-edge Deep Story Leadership Platform designed to elevate your skills, enhance your research, and deepen your capacity to lead with empathy and purpose.
- 💬 **Invaluable Connections:** Become part of the *StoryArcs* Fellowship – a network of storytellers, researchers, and industry leaders who share your commitment to fostering positive change.
- 🏆 **Recognition and Awards:** Earn the prestigious *StoryArcs* Award for your achievements and contributions toward creating positive change through storytelling.

## Frequently Asked Questions

Further guidelines about the application process can be found in the appendices of this document. In addition, our Frequently Asked Questions can be found on our website, which we update regularly. Visit our FAQs page for more information [here](#).



## Appendix: Application Tips

To apply for a *StoryArcs* position, please complete your application via our dedicated portal, which you can access [here](#).

Below, we have outlined the application process, along with helpful tips to guide you in preparing your responses for Stage 1.

The application process is split into three stages:

★ **Stage 1 – Expression of Interest and Host Project Pitch**

- Section 1 – Personal Details  
Complete the personal details form (name, email, phone, address etc.)
- Section 2 – Profile  
Attach your CV
- Section 3 – Questions  
This is the core of your application – answer 12 questions about your interest in Story and chosen Host project. At the end of this section there are several optional questions to help us to monitor the diversity of our programme.
- Section 4 – Submit Application

★ **Stage 2 – Detailed Project Proposal.** If your Expression of Interest and Pitch is successful, you will then progress to Stage 2.

★ **Stage 3 – Interviews.** If your detailed project proposal is successful, you will then progress to Stage 3.

### General Tips for the Application

1. **Understand the Role:** Research the Host organisation and Host project thoroughly to tailor your responses effectively.
2. **Use Your Story Skills:** Write clearly, concisely, and thoughtfully. Structure your answers to engage the panel, who will review many applications.
3. **Provide Examples and Evidence:** Support your answers with specific examples that demonstrate your experience and achievements.
4. **Highlight Achievements and Skills:** Focus on measurable outcomes and show how your skills made a positive impact. Remember, this is more than a job; it's a professional development opportunity and a pathway to the prestigious *StoryArcs* Award. Make sure your application highlights your best work and expertise in Story creation or analysis.
5. **Edit and Review:** Allocate sufficient time for proofreading and refining your application to ensure clarity and accuracy.

### **Tips for Applicants Considering More Than One Project:**

You can apply for more than one project, but we recommend limiting yourself to a maximum of three. You have two options:

- Submit separate applications for each project, ensuring a tailored approach for each Host.
- Alternatively, indicate interest in additional projects in Section 3. If you do not meet the criteria for your first choice, we may reach out to ask you to complete a form for another Host project.

## **Section 1 – Personal Details**

You will be asked to provide personal details including your name, your email address, your phone number and your place of residence.

## **Section 2 – Profile**

You need to attach an up-to-date CV.

## **Section 3 – Questions**

This is the main part of your application and includes questions about your right to work in the UK, your interest in Story, and your proposed Host project.

***The first question is about your right to work in the UK. PLEASE NOTE: Candidates must have the legal right to work in the UK.***

1. *Do you have the right to work in the UK?*

Yes / No

***Questions 2-6 assess your suitability for the Deep Story Leadership Platform.***

2. *PhD: If you have a PhD, please provide a synopsis of your PhD research here. If you do not have a PhD, tell us how you meet the criteria for equivalent expertise. (up to 100 words)*

Tip: Be succinct, focusing on the core of your research or equivalent experience.

Further information about equivalent experience: A PhD involves approximately four years of focused research, culminating in a publishable thesis. Equivalent experience requires at least four years of relevant professional work demonstrating creative expertise and critical inquiry. Candidates should highlight roles in academic or creative fields, showcasing original contributions and a strong understanding of research processes.

3. *Collaborative Work: Describe a time when you worked with a diverse group of stakeholders to achieve a shared goal. How did you navigate differences and foster collaboration? (up to 100 words)*

Tip: Provide evidence of your approach's effectiveness, explaining why it was successful.

4. *Story Skills: What would you consider to be your top three Story Skills, and why? (up to 150 words)*

Tip: Be specific and back your top skills with brief examples that highlight their value. Why are you focusing on these three skills?

5. *StoryArcs: What attracts you to StoryArcs? If successful, what would you like to have achieved by the end of your Early Career Fellowship with us? (up to 100 words)*

Tip: Focus on the aspects of StoryArcs that resonate with your professional goals.

6. *Portfolio or Work Samples (optional): If applicable, please attach any relevant work samples (e.g., writing, project reports, storytelling content) that demonstrate your skills.*

Tip: If you have relevant work (e.g., writing or visual samples), attach examples and a brief description of each sample. Include only your best, most relevant work.

**Questions 7-10 focus on your choice of Host and your mini-pitch. Candidates who are longlisted for Stage 2 will be asked to expand on their pitch.**

7. *Host Organisation Project: Name of the Host organisation project that you are applying for.*

8. *Interest in Host Project: What draws you to this Host organisation's project? What personal and professional experiences and skills can you bring to support the Host organisation when responding to their challenge? (up to 100 words)*

Tip: Tailor your response to the specific Host organisation; demonstrate how your unique experiences align with their needs.

9. *Pitch: Review the brief from your chosen Host organisation. Please outline your initial proposal for how you would approach this brief, including your vision, your proposed Story methods, project goals and narrative presentation strategies. (up to 150 words)*

Tip: Address key challenges in the brief and propose innovative solutions while being clear about your objectives and how success will be measured.

10. *Interest in other Host Projects: If you are unsuccessful in applying for this specific Host project, would you like to be considered for any other Host project that may be more aligned to your skills? If yes, please indicate which Host projects also interest you.*

Tip: If we feel your application is strong but you are not the right match for the Host project you have applied for, we would like to consider you for other projects. In this section, please let us know if you are happy for us to do this, and list any other projects you might be interested in.

*11. Further Information: Is there anything else you would like to share with us that is relevant to your application? (up to 100 words)*

Tip: Mention anything important about yourself or the project that didn't fit into previous answers.

*12. Would you like to be added to our Network and our Mailing List?*

Yes / No

For most candidates, the core part of the application consists of the 12 questions above. However, candidates applying to work with Tomorrow's Warriors are also required to answer an additional question about their choice of Partner University:

**Partner University (for Tomorrow's Warriors only):** *For this project, you are expected to find your own Partner University. Please propose a Partner University for this project. This could be your current employer, or a university that you have previously studied at or worked with. Should your application as a Story Fellow be successful, StoryArcs will pay a grant to the university of your choice to cover your employment costs. If you don't have a Partner University in mind, please indicate below. We may be able to help broker a university partnership for you.*

## Diversity and Inclusion

In an effort to promote equal opportunities and reinforce hiring practice we have included some optional demographic questions. Your responses, or your choice not to respond, are entirely anonymous and will not be associated with your application.

## Section 4: Submit your application

In this final section, please confirm your consent to store your personal data by checking the box below. You can view our privacy notice for more information. If you're not ready to submit your application yet, you can save it for later.

**Once you've completed your application, don't forget to click "Send"!**

Thank you for your interest in *StoryArcs*! We wish you the best of luck with your application and look forward to meeting you in the near future. We look forward to your application.