# How to produce a film case study

## What is a case study?

A case study is a look at a particular subject or topic of interest which describes, explores, explains or analyses activities or events, groups or individuals. Case studies can be a good way to tell a story or share information and help other people to learn, understand and be inspired.

You can use this guidance alongside our case study template which shares information on how to structure a case study and the type of information and style that to aim for.

## Why use film?

Film can be a good way to reach people as it's easy to share and social media sites are set up so that watching and sharing films is easy. Film has an immediate quality - depending on who you are trying to reach, some people might be more likely to watch a three-minute film than they are to read a few pages of text.

## Telling the story

Although your case study might focus on one particular area, it's important to set the scene so people understand the story around your case study. For example, if you're talking about an activity in your area, remember to introduce briefly what group is and how your activity fits in with what you're doing in your area more widely.

If the people in your case study mention something which only a few people might know about, remember to explain in a sentence or two what they are talking about. For example, if you mention a group by name, say what the group is, maybe why they're called that name, what they do and when they meet.

## Storyboard

Before you start making your film case study, work out what you want to include and how you are going to cover these things. If your case study is to discover things you don't already know, you can outline the questions you want to ask and what you'd like to find out. Some people decide to set out storyboards as a quick cartoon.

## Location

The location of where you do your filming is important and will help you to tell your story. For example, if your case study is about a particular street, you probably want to do quite a lot of filming on that street. If you interview a shop owner, filming the interview in or just outside the shop is all part of helping to tell the story. Where this isn't possible, you can try to use photos.

## Sound

Sound is a big part of the film watching experience and you will need to prepare in advance so that your sound quality is good. If your film is hard to listen to then people are less likely to watch it through or share it with others.

Try and use a microphone to get the best results. Using a microphone will minimise the amount of background noise that gets picked up and is particularly useful if you're outside.

If you don't have an external microphone try to avoid filming outside or on a windy day (as wind sounds very loud through the camera's microphone!) and avoid places with strong echoes (such as sports halls).

Doing a sound check means that you record a little to listen and watch back to check the quality.

## Length of film

The length of your film case study will depend on what is suitable for your content and the story you are telling. You might have recorded quite a lot, and part of the challenge will be about deciding about what is important to include and knowing what to leave out and when you might be repeating yourself.

Think about how much time you might give to watching a film online. It's probably not very long!

As a guide, a case study covering one story or one activity should be approximately 2-5 minutes. For example, you can watch these case studies of Star People award winners. If your case study has a number of different parts to it and is about describing a bigger story, it should be approximately 6-12 minutes.

## Applying styles

Styles are effects that you might apply to your film. For example, special effects in between different film clips or photos that move around. For accessibility reasons we suggest not applying styles or effects as they can be hard to watch and are distracting. Your film will look much 'cleaner' if kept simple.

## Text

If you use text on your film, use a simple font which is easy to read. Local Trust use the font Arial. You should check that the text you display can be read against the background (for example white text against a dark background reads well, white text against a light background is hard to read). You also need to check that the length of time the text appears is enough for all of the text to be read easily. If you have a large amount of text, think about breaking it up into smaller parts.

## Participants and agreement

Once you have filmed and edited your film, you should check with the people who took part that they are happy with it and feel it is an accurate description. If people are pleased with a film they're in, they are more likely to want to share it and show it to more people.

If your film includes children or vulnerable adults, you should get consent first from their parent or guardian. You should also get consent first from adults.

## Logos and branding

It's a good idea to have an introduction to your film where you give a title and short description to your case study and your logo and any funders logos. This helps people to know what they're about to watch. The end of your film is a good place to share where people can go to for more information.

## Sharing your film with others

Once your film is ready you can upload it online to make it available for people to see and share. Some of the websites you can upload your film too include YouTube and Facebook.

You could organise small film screenings to get people together to watch their film and talk about it. This is also good for people that don't have access to the internet or want to watch it on a TV.

## Local Trust

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