HELP YOUNG PEOPLE FIND THEIR VOICE

The Facilitator's Unmuted Toolkit

GIRLRISING | UNMUTED | hp Foundation

WELCOME TO UNMUTED

Every young person has a story. Help them tell it.



Unmuted is Girl Rising's global storytelling challenge for young people aged 14-25, giving them a platform to share their experiences, question the world around them and imagine the future they want.

As an educator, mentor, school or community-based organisation, you can help young people discover their stories, find their creative voice and bring their ideas to the world.

You don't need to be a storytelling expert.

You just need to help them get started

WHAT THEY GET OUT OF IT

Learning to tell one's own story builds confidence, identity and purpose. And with Unmuted, their story could travel further than they imagine.

SELECTED STORYTELLERS COULD:



Be featured:

Have their work included in the Unmuted Annual, Girl Rising's story collection, and amplified across our platforms.



Reach the screen:

Be considered for a short film produced by Hollywood director, David Oyelowo.



Build their skills:

Join Girl Rising's 2027 virtual Story Lab to develop their storytelling and connect with mentors in media and technology.

Beyond these opportunities, their stories could spark conversations, challenge assumptions, help others feel seen and inspire change in their communities.

HELP THEM FIND THEIR STORY

WHAT ARE THEY DREAMING, QUESTIONING, CHANGING, CREATING OR IMAGINING?

Encourage young people to start with something that matters to them: a person, place, memory, experience, question, idea or a future they want to build.

Use these prompts to get the conversation going:

- What do you wish more people understood about your world?
- What would you change if you could?
- What experience shaped the way you see yourself?
- What future do you imagine for yourself and your community?
- What do you know, create or do that others could learn from?

Their stories don't need to be dramatic or deeply personal. They can be joyful, funny, creative, thoughtful or bold. What matters is that they're their own.

For more ideas, prompts, direction...

Here's a campaign toolkit filled with prompts for young people.

HELP THEM TELL IT THEIR WAY

Young people can speak, write, film, draw, photograph, illustrate or combine formats. Stories can be submitted **in any language**. Help them **choose the format that feels right**, develop their ideas and tell their stories in their own words.



SPEAK IT:

Record a voice note. Perform spoken word.
Tell your story to camera. Sing it. Talk about it while you walk.
Try starting with: "I want the world to know...", "Something people don't understand about...", "I used to think... but now...



WRITE IT:

Write a letter, poem, reflection, short story or list of things you wish people knew.
Try: "Dear world...", "If I could change one thing...", "Five things I wish people understood..."



FILM IT:

Make a Reel, mini-vlog, short film or day-in-the-life.
Interview someone who shaped you. Show us a place that matters.
Try: "Come with me to...", "This is what my day looks like...", "This is the moment I realised..."



DRAW IT:

Draw a comic. Sketch an idea. Illustrate a moment. Draw a dream.
Create a character. Paint the world you want to live in.



MAKE IT:

Create a photo series. Make a collage. Animate it. Design a poster. Make a zine.
Build a mood board of your future. Turn everyday objects into a story.



MIX IT UP:

Combine formats. Add sound to images. Turn writing into a film.
Make a photo essay. Create something completely new.

Your camera roll. Your playlist. Your screenshots.
Your neighbourhood. Your favourite object.
If it helps tell your story, it counts.

HELP THEM SUBMIT



CREATE Develop an original story in any format or language.



UPLOAD Visit girlrising.org/unmuted or the Unmuted submission platform to upload their story.



SUBMIT Complete the form, upload the story and check that everything is ready.

Before submitting, make sure they:

- ☐ Have created their own original work.
- ☐ Have uploaded the correct file and completed the required fields.
- ☐ Have disclosed any AI tools used.
- ☐ Are comfortable sharing their story.
- ☐ Have the required parent or guardian consent if they are under 18.

Submission dates:

26 October 2026 – 15 January 2027.

UNDERSTAND THE TERMS & CONDITIONS

AI, judging and eligibility explained.

Who can participate?

Young people aged 14-25, anywhere in the world.

How are entries judged?

On originality, storytelling, authentic voice and the ideas or feelings the story leaves with its audience. Using AI for spelling mistakes, language proficiency or simple production tools won't count against them.

Can they use AI?

Yes, but their story must remain their own. All AI use must be disclosed. Entries are judged in four categories: ages 14-19 and 20-25, each divided into AI-assisted and non-AI entries. Non-AI entries are preferred.

What about consent and permissions?

Help young people understand the submission terms, permissions and any parent or guardian consent required before they submit. Do not pressure anyone to share experiences they would prefer to keep private.

Refer to the official submission form and terms and conditions for the complete requirements on

https://unmuted.girlrising.org/

Log on our website for more details

girlrising.org/unmuted

YOUR ROLE CAN MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

You can help by:

- Sharing Unmuted with young people in your school or community.
- Creating a safe, encouraging space for ideas and storytelling.
- Helping them explore prompts, choose formats and understand the submission process.
- Supporting access to devices, internet or creative materials where possible.
- Encouraging originality, respecting their choices and helping them meet the deadline.

One conversation could help a young person discover a story they never thought the world would hear.

READY TO HELP THEM GET #UNMUTED?

Find their story. Help them tell it. Support them to submit.

If you're an educator, teacher, mentor or parent who has helped encourage 10+ young people to tell their story, we want to hear from you too! Send us your story and we'd love to feature you on our social media.

Visit **girlrising.org/unmuted**

Need help? Write to us at **unmuted@girlrising.org**

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