

Co-creating innovations in digital storytelling with older adults

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“In order to ensure there is a place for every story, we must ensure that all people can be storytellers, and that all audiences can experience their stories.”
(Australia’s Cultural Policy; Commonwealth of Australia, 2023, p.38)

Autobiographical storytelling, or life story work, is known to be valuable in later life, promoting **intergenerational communication** and fostering **social engagement** for older adults. With innovations in technology constantly evolving, there are opportunities to extend autobiographical storytelling through various digital forms. In this project, we aim to co-design **innovations in digital storytelling with older adults**. We will explore various digital storytelling formats, including hybrid games, mixed reality and AI-enabled storytelling.

HYBRID GAMES

This workstream will:

- work with older adults to design and customise hybrid board or card games;
- connect physical game components to digital story, provide an interactive and playful entry point to the storyteller’s digital life story.

MIXED REALITY

This workstream will:

- co-create immersive & playful stories centred on people, places, events and objects;
- create digitised replicas of cherished objects which can be kept in a “memory chest” to share with family members.



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

This workstream will:

- examine the potential of human-AI collaboration to support collaborative storytelling between older people and intergenerational audiences;
- explore how AI can be used to translate oral histories, notes, old photos, and memorabilia into coherent narratives.



KEY PHASES

The project will progress through three interlinked research phases. Lessons will then be shared with older adults and aged care providers.



Mapping Current Practice

What storytelling practices are older adults currently engaging in?

Evaluation

What are the opportunities and challenges?



Co-Designing Innovations

How can we design technologies to enable storytelling?

Sharing Outcomes

What lessons did we learn and how can they inform future storytelling work?

NEXT STEPS

In 2024 we are establishing the project and beginning Phase 1 - mapping current practice - by conducting a literature review, survey, and interviews with aged care organisations, storytelling service providers, and older adults. Next steps are to begin recruiting groups of older adults (“technology explorers”) to engage in co-design workshops across each of the three workstreams.

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