



Fostering Young People's Creativity through Youth Work: A Mixed Method Study- Part 2 Story Circle Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Please read the following information carefully before you decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Purpose of the Study:

I am Saoirse Reynolds Conlon (Saoirse.reynoldsconlon@mu.ie), a doctoral student, in the Department of Applied Social Studies, Maynooth University and I am currently employed by the National Youth Council of Ireland. I have recently been awarded the Irish Research Council's employment-based scholarship which began September 2023. As part of the requirements for the doctorate in Social Sciences, I am undertaking a research study under the supervision of Dr. Sinead McMahon and Emeritus Professor Maurice Devlin.

This research entitled 'Fostering young people's creativity through youth work: a mixed method study' aims to find out if there are features in youth work (non-formal education, voluntary participation, etc.) that support young people to be creative. The goal is to help make these things better supported by policies and improve how they're done in practice. Read more about the study here:

<https://www.youth.ie/articles/research-fostering-young-peoples-creativity-through-youth-work/>

There are two parts within this study that involve participants:

- **Part 1** will consist of two online surveys with (a) youth workers/youth arts practitioners and (b) young people aged 18 to 24 years in Ireland.

- **Part 2** will consist of eight 'story circles' that will take place in person and online.

This information sheet is specific to part 2 of the research.



Part 2 Story Circles- further information:

What will the study involve? The study will involve participating in a story circle, which will take approximately 1hr 30min to 2hrs complete followed by lunch.

Who has approved this study? This study has been reviewed and received ethical approval from Maynooth University Research Ethics Committee. You may have a copy of this approval if you request it.

Why have you been asked to take part? You have been asked because you are currently involved in a youth work setting.

Do you have to take part?

No, you are under no obligation whatsoever to take part in this research- participation is voluntary.

What would I be asked to do if I took part?

You are invited to take part in a story circle. A Story Circle is a gathering of people in a relaxed social setting, where they share personal stories to address common community issues and express their experiences creatively. This story circle will consist of 6 to 8 people max and will be facilitated by the researcher.

In these story circles you will be invited to bring along a visual prompt, this optional item will act as a prompt to begin your story and should relate to one or all of the following:

- A story about creativity in youth work.
- A story about youth work fostering creativity in young people.

Before you attend the story circle, the researcher will direct you to the **NYCI website for further information on basic photography ethics and a guide on 'All you need to know about the story circle process'**. If you would like to use a disposable camera, you will be given one. You can use your own camera/mobile phone if you prefer.

It is entirely up to you to decide whether or not you would like to take part. If you decide to do so, you will be asked for written consent in advance of the story circle. You also have the option to withdraw before the study commences (even if you have agreed to participate) or discontinue after data collection has started. You are free to leave story circle at any stage. After your participation in the story circle, you also have the option to withdraw and destroy your data within two weeks of participation.

What information will be collected?

Your name, address, age, dietary requirement and contact details will be sought in advance of the story circle. The purpose of gathering this information is to allow the researcher to arrange an appropriate story circle for you, based on age and location. For example, 18 to 24 years will be grouped together in a setting in close proximity to them. Dietary requirements/ allergies will be asked for if you attend the in-person event because some light refreshments will be provided. If you wish to participate online an email address will be required to send consent forms and a link to the Microsoft Teams session.

The aim of this study is to explore distinctive features of youth work and ways in which young people are enabled to express themselves creatively in youth work settings. Things you say in your story circle may be used in publications from the study but your name will not be attached to them. We will use a pseudonym (you can choose this if you like) – this means we will choose a different name so if someone else reads what you have said, they will not know that it is you who said it but you will be able to identify your own words. Any images identifying people will also be censored. This means that people's faces or other identifying information will be deleted or covered up. All reasonable steps will be taken to protect the anonymity of the participants involved in this project.

In-person sessions:

- Audio will be recorded throughout the story circle session and transcribed after the session. The transcription will then be anonymised.
- If you provide additional permission, a copy of your image/ photograph/ object will be taken by photograph directly after the session. The original image/ photograph/ object remains your property and should be taken home after the session.

- No photographs or videos of participants will be taken in order to ensure anonymity.
- There will be an option to email the researcher a photograph of your image/ photograph or object in advance of the session. The researcher will print this file and bring it along to the story circle. This photograph will also be downloaded onto the MU server and anonymised, then the email will be deleted in order to ensure anonymity.

Online sessions:

- The online story circle will be conducted via Microsoft Teams. Audio not video will be recorded by the researcher alone. Participants will be reminded in advance and at the beginning of the session that they do not have any permission to record images or sound.
- There will be an option to email the researcher a photograph of your image/ photograph or object directly after the session. This photograph will be downloaded onto the MU server and anonymised, then the email will be deleted in order to ensure anonymity.

Additional support:

- There will be 3 optional introductory meetings with the groups of young people in advance of their story circles (2 in-person in the same location agreed for the story circle and 1 online via Microsoft teams).
- They will consist of a short meeting with the group to ensure that they are fully informed and prepared for the story circle session.

Will I be paid for participating in the research?

No, this research is based on voluntary participation. However, the research will cover your transport to and from the story circle if required. Please bring a receipt for your public transport in order to be reimbursed.

Will your participation in the study be kept confidential?

The researcher will ensure all necessary steps are in place to ensure your anonymity and confidentiality within the study. However, if the researcher has a strong belief that there is a serious risk of harm or danger to either the participant or another individual (e.g. physical, emotional or sexual abuse, concerns for child protection, rape, self-harm, suicidal intent or criminal activity) or if a serious crime has been committed, then the researcher will need to break anonymity and confidentiality by following statutory law and NYCI child protection guidelines.

Your data will be stored on MU platforms as these are secure and regularly backed up. All data files will be encrypted and password-protected.

- Your non-anonymised data in the form of signed consent forms, contact details and audio recordings will be collected and retained as part of the research process. The data will be kept confidential for the duration of the study, available only to me and my research supervisors. It will be securely stored on password password-protected MU platform. On completion of the project, they will be retained for a minimum of ten years and then destroyed.
- Your personally identifiable information within the study will be anonymised for example, pseudonyms (fictitious name) will be used and identifiable references (location/ young person name, etc.) within audio and copied images/ photographs will be removed.

The findings of the research will be available to individuals upon request and will be widely shared within the sector. There will be no direct follow-up with participants after the study. However, participants will receive updates on the launch of research findings via membership email channels.

It must be recognised that, in some circumstances, confidentiality of research data and records may be overridden by courts in the event of litigation or in the course of investigation by lawful authority. In such circumstances the University will take all reasonable steps within law to ensure that confidentiality is maintained to the greatest possible extent.

What will happen to the information which you give?

As noted, all the information you provide will be stored on the Maynooth University server. The doctoral thesis, in accordance with MU's (2021) Policy on Open Access to Research, will be stored in MURAL–Maynooth University's Open Access Repository. Transcriptions, audio and copied images/ photographs data will be moved from proprietary platforms, anonymised and stored in more easily accessible software like word, jpeg and MP4 before being shared with the National Youth Council of Ireland and Irish Qualitative Data Archive repository.

Created artifacts based on the findings, anonymised audio, and anonymised photographs created by participants will be publicly curated and shared in an online, virtual exhibition using Artsteps and hosted on NYCI's website. On completion of the research, the non-anonymised data linked to the story circles will be retained on the MU server for ten years, after which all data will be destroyed by Dr Sinead McMahon. Any printed documentation linked to personal/ identifiable data will be shredded confidentially and electronic data will be reformatted or overwritten by Saoirse Reynolds Conlon in Maynooth University.

What will happen to the results?

The research findings will be presented as part of a doctoral thesis. There may be associated use by way of articles, book chapters, conference presentations and other outputs. A copy of the research findings will be made available to you upon request. I plan to share the findings of this research directly with the youth sector in a variety of fora, such as practice resources that will be nationally disseminated for free and open to the public through the NYCI website. If you give permission, I would also like the opportunity to re-analyse the data for future research projects. This is called secondary use.

What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?

I don't envisage any negative consequences for you in taking part. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and measures have been taken to ensure that your responses will be kept anonymous and confidential. Your insights are highly valuable and will contribute to the advancement of the research in a meaningful way. I have made every effort to make your participation in the story circle as safe, comfortable and beneficial as possible, with minimal intrusion and maximum benefit. However, it is possible that talking about your experience in this way may cause some distress, if that is the case please refer to the next section.

What if there is a problem?

At the end of the story circle, I will discuss with you how you found the experience and how you are feeling. If you subsequently feel distressed, you should contact The Samaritans on 116 123 or your GP. If you feel the research has not been carried out as described above, you may contact my supervisors Dr Sinead McMahon (Sinead.mcmahon@mu.ie) and/or Emeritus Professor Maurice Devlin (Maurice.devlin@mu.ie)

Any further queries? If you need any further information, you can contact me:

Saoirse Reynolds Conlon saoirse.reynoldsconlon@mu.ie

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

For further information about how Maynooth University processes personal data for research purposes and your data rights please visit our ethics webpage.

Ethics Webpage: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/research/research-development-office/research-ethics>

If during your participation in this study you feel the information and guidelines that you were given have been neglected or disregarded in any way, or if you are unhappy about the process, please contact the Secretary of the Maynooth University Social Research Ethics Committee at research.ethics@mu.ie or +353 (0)1 708 6019. Please be assured that your concerns will be dealt with in a sensitive manner.

For your information the Data Controller for this research project is Maynooth University, Maynooth, Co. Kildare. Maynooth University Data Protection officer is Ann McKeon in Humanity house, room 17, who can be contacted at dataprotection@mu.ie. Maynooth University Data Privacy policies can be found at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/data-protection>.