

FEEDBACK: FEEL, LISTEN, GROW

KEY ACTION **152** – Youth Exchange



DURATION	LOCATION	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
10 days (including arrival and departure) May 12 – May 21 2027	Silvi Marina - Pescara (Italy)	36 – 6 participants per country

WHO ARE WE?

STORYREC is an organisation created in 2022 in Pescara (Italy) with the aim **to raise awareness about critical social issues** and **empowering individuals to tackle these challenges**. Our work starts from storytelling - the belief that every story has the power to inspire change - and develops through the production of meaningful media content such as photos, videos, music, and innovative digital tools. By combining artistic expression with social awareness, StoryREC creates spaces where creativity becomes a tool for dialogue, inclusion, and transformation.

At the core of our mission lies a dedication to confronting these challenges with a cutting-edge detox approach.

We recognize the detrimental impact of smartphone overuse on cognitive processes and believe that a mindful and limited use of technology can accelerate connections and empower individuals. Through our projects, we have witnessed that **with a conscious and limited use of smartphones, people connect faster and more deeply**, thereby **enhancing their ability to actively engage in addressing social issues**.

Conducting non-formal education activities, **STORYREC** strives to equip individuals with the essential skills and knowledge needed to navigate complex social landscapes, including addressing education disparities, healthcare access, and human rights violations.

Established by a proficient team with expertise in media, photography, video production, storytelling, IT, digital marketing, and non-formal education methodologies, **STORYREC** is dedicated to crafting narratives that not only inspire positive change but also foster a profound understanding of the interconnected challenges confronting our society.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

“Feel, Listen, Grow” is a youth exchange designed to help young people strengthen their ability to receive and use criticism as a tool for personal, educational, and professional growth. Many young people today experience feedback as a personal attack, a perception that can hinder confidence, relationships, and opportunities. This project provides participants with concrete tools for emotional resilience, active listening, empathy, and constructive conflict management—fostering a positive and growth-oriented mindset toward feedback and communication.

The idea was born from a growing need to address emotional fragility and communication challenges among youth. Studies such as “The ‘snowflakes’ of modern society” (University of Oxford, 2022) reveal that many students react to feedback with anxiety or discomfort, fearing judgment or exclusion. Similarly, local surveys conducted by StoryRec at the University “G. D’Annunzio” of Chieti confirm that young people often see criticism as an obstacle rather than a developmental opportunity.

“Feel, Listen, Grow” responds to this need by creating a safe, intercultural space for reflection, dialogue, and growth—helping participants transform criticism into a tool for learning, empathy, and collaboration.

OBJECTIVES

The project aims to help young people:

- Recognize and understand their emotional reactions to criticism, developing emotional self-awareness and resilience.
- Strengthen active listening and empathy, improving interpersonal and intercultural communication skills.
- Learn practical techniques for constructive feedback and conflict resolution, promoting collaboration and respect in diverse settings.
- Foster inclusion by involving participants from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, including young people with fewer opportunities.
- Empower participants to act as ambassadors of empathetic communication and constructive dialogue within their local communities.

ACTIVITIES

The exchange will unfold across three interconnected phases—FEEL, LISTEN, and GROW—combining experiential learning, reflection, and creative expression.

- **FEEL – Emotional Awareness**

Participants will engage in experiential activities to explore their emotions and understand how these affect their reactions to feedback. Theatrical icebreakers will invite them to express emotions non-verbally, encouraging observation and empathy. A daily “reaction journal” will guide reflection on feedback received during the day. Mindfulness and body-awareness exercises will support stress regulation and emotional presence.

- **LISTEN – Empathy and Active Listening**

This phase focuses on communication and understanding. Through mirrored listening exercises, participants will practice capturing the essence—not just the words—of what others express. The “Three Circles” workshops (family, education/work, strangers) will promote reflection on listening challenges in different contexts, followed by collective discussions. Role plays will simulate everyday situations where active listening and empathy are essential for resolving misunderstandings or conflicts.

- **GROW – Constructive Feedback and Dialogue**

In this phase, participants will apply what they’ve learned through simulations of job interviews, family discussions, and social disagreements. The “Feedback Sandwich” exercise (positive → critical → positive) will help them build confidence in giving and receiving feedback. The experience will culminate in a collective session where participants reflect on their growth and collaborate on the creation of the final outputs: a digital toolkit and a role play handbook summarizing the key learning outcomes and exercises.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology is grounded in non-formal education principles—learning by doing, peer-to-peer exchange, and reflective practice. The program alternates between individual reflection, small group discussions, and full group activities, ensuring equal participation and inclusivity.

Participants’ personal phones will be used only after 8 p.m., promoting presence, interaction, and mindful disconnection during activities.

PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS

6 participants per country aged 18-25 years old. Ideally, they are active members of the partner associations. They should be youth workers or have an interest in the field. It's important to try to find a balance between genres in order to make the project more rich and equal.

RESULTS

“Feel, Listen, Grow” will produce both tangible and intangible outcomes:

- 30 young people with improved emotional awareness, empathy, and feedback management skills - key competences for personal and professional life.
- A digital toolkit and a role play handbook with exercises, techniques, and activities replicable by partner organizations and youth centers.
- Video testimonials documenting participants' transformations and spreading the project's message of constructive communication and emotional growth.
- Strengthened intercultural and social competences, fostering a network of young ambassadors promoting empathy, resilience, and active dialogue in their local communities.