“Stories are the secret reservoir of values: change the stories individuals and nations live by and tell themselves and you change the individuals and nations.” Ben Okri, Nigerian poet & novelist

Contents

- About these guidelines 2
- About case studies 2
- Content 4
- Process 6
- Further information 7
- EXAMPLE: CASE STUDY RELEASE FORM 8
- EXAMPLE: CASE STUDY 9

About these guidelines

These guidelines have been produced for The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award Foundation, and for Award operators producing their own case studies or submitting them to the Foundation for publication. They are also a resource which Award operators can use at national and regional level, adapting where necessary to accommodate local requirements.

We want to increase the number of good quality, recent case studies we have available to support our new brand platform. We also want to ensure that the case studies we produce support our values and that we work with our subjects in a way which maintains their dignity.

About case studies

What do we mean by case studies?

- An example, based on a real person, of the impact of the Award on one young person and/or their community.
- They are usually about an Award holder, or a group of Award holders, but are occasionally from the perspective of a ‘facilitator’ such as a parent or an Award leader.
- They usually contain lots of direct quotations from the person featured, but distinct from a testimonial, which is one long direct quotation. Sometimes a testimonial is used to form the basis of a case study.

**Why do we need case studies?**

Case studies are individual stories which bring the Award to life through a real person’s experiences. While numbers, research and statistics are invaluable for identifying the scope of an issue, or for quantifying our impact, an individual story can provide more emotive and qualitative evidence which helps our audiences to connect with the power of the Award. As qualitative data, case studies form part of our impact measurement and reporting process.

**How do we use them?**

We use them across all of our communication channels, to communicate with all of our key audiences. For example, one story might be used on our website, on Facebook, in a video or audio file, and the person concerned might also speak at a fundraising event.

Specifically, we use them to:

- Persuade donors and potential donors to support the Award.
- Persuade other organisations to partner with us and become licensed to deliver the Award.
- Explain to the general public, via the media, what we do and how our work makes an impact.
- Persuade governmental bodies of the value of the Award, so that they endorse it and support its development on a national basis.
- Demonstrate to young people how the Award can help them achieve their goals and transform their lives.

**Current issues**

There are a number of issues that have led to us creating these guidelines:

- Use of case studies that are too old. As a general rule we should not be using case studies that are more than three years old.
- Use of case studies which don’t fit the Award’s brand platform and key messages, particularly for fundraising. This includes case studies which portray young people as victims or define them by their circumstances. It also includes an over-reliance on hard luck stories: “My life was terrible – then I did the Award and everything was great.”
- Use of case studies which depict need in economic terms, rather than alongside social and emotional issues – the Award is for all young people, and young people from all backgrounds and economic circumstances have development needs.
• A general lack of diversity in the range of young people being portrayed. As the Foundation has an explicit vision of enabling more young people from diverse backgrounds to do the Award, our case studies need to reflect this diversity.

• Use of case studies from units or countries that are not meeting basic operational Award standards. For example, participants who started the Award well before the age of 14.

• Poor cataloguing of case studies and related permissions.

• Not enough good quality case studies which fit under the Award’s target themes.

• Use of poor quality images or ones which do not fit the Award’s brand platform and values.

Content

What principles underpin how we portray people?

Case studies are the best way to demonstrate the impact of the Award in the lives of young people and their communities. We believe that every young person has the potential to become an active citizen if they get access to appropriate opportunities. We will portray young people as models of success, and the Award as a development tool, not an outcome or end in itself.

Award participants are individuals who make choices about their actions and behaviour. We will avoid language that implies a value judgement, and will not include information that is not essential to a story.

In addition, our portrayal of all individuals involved with the Award will be based on these principles:

• We will always portray people in a way which supports the Award’s values and the rest of its brand platform.

• We will portray individuals in a way that they would be happy with, and with dignity.

• We will communicate need where it exists, but we will focus on specific development needs and we will avoid sweeping generalisations. Where we are quantifying the development needs of a community or group of young people, we will use robust statistics from nationally or internationally credible sources.

• We will communicate emotion, but will not project emotion onto the person being talked about – any account should be led by how they describe their own feelings and experiences.

What themes are we looking for?

We are looking for case studies which fall into the following themes. Our thematic areas are taken from our impact framework, a tool with which we can measure the social impact of the Award.
1. Improved educational attainment
2. Improved employability and sustainable livelihoods
3. Improved health and well-being
4. Increased participation in civic life
5. Social inclusion
6. The environment
7. Gender equality and the empowerment of women
8. Reduction and prevention of violence, conflict resolution and peace-building
9. Reduced re-offending (recidivism) rates

Photographs and videos
As with written content, photographs and videos must always support the Award’s brand platform. We will source photos and video material in a number of different ways: by accepting direct submissions from the Award network, by commissioning Foundation staff to take photographs or footage, and by commissioning freelancers. Where necessary we will buy stock photography.

Wherever possible, photos of a real Award subject will be used. However, where there are none available, or where there are sensitivities around use of such photos (because they involve young people at risk, young offenders etc.), we may sometimes use stock photography.

As with other case study material, photos and videos should not generally be used if they are more than three years old, except where they are portraying historical events.

We will only use photographs of young people who are within the Award’s age range of 14–24.

Direct submissions of photographs from the Award network can be sent to the communications team at the Foundation. We will not be able to use photographs of less than 1MB in size.

We have produced a ‘brief for Award photographers’ as part of our best practice guides, which can be used by Award operators who are commissioning photos from their staff or freelance photographers.

Word guidelines
Words should always portray individuals as active participants in their own lives and communities. We will therefore use active sentences, rather than more passive alternatives.

We will be clear about the Award being an enabler, not a finite solution; dynamic rather than passive – the language we use will focus on continuous, ongoing action and change. Below are some examples. Further guidance on language can be found in the International Award Foundation’s style guidelines.
Helpful words/phrases  Unhelpful words/phrases

Enable, empower  Help
Engage, build  Give, show
Develop, grow  Provide
Affected by  Victim of
Opportunity  Chance
Learn  Teach

Length

Case studies will normally be no more than 600 words, as if they are longer than this they are likely to lose the attention of the reader.

Process

All potential case studies being used by the Foundation will be written or edited and catalogued by the communications team – they will not be used until this has been done. This is to ensure that the Award’s brand platform is maintained, and to ensure that appropriate permissions have been obtained. The communications team has ultimate responsibility for ensuring the brand compliance of any case study material being used.

We won’t use a case study until a release form has been signed.

Case studies older than three years will not be used unless there is substantial new material that warrants an update – in this case the case study will be updated and a new release form will be completed and signed.

We will capture all case studies in written form, even where there is other material available. The written case study forms the basis for any other media produced.

We will seek permission once, but not each time the case study is used, except in exceptional cases where agreed between the communications team and the person concerned. We will always seek permission before the person’s details are passed onto a member of a media organisation, and before a case study is passed on to an organisation outside the International Award Association.

Editing policy

Any case study material sent to the Foundation’s communications team may be edited to ensure that it is suitable for publication. Often a person’s own words are used, either as a short quotation, or as the bulk of a case study. We will try to edit sensitively so that we don’t ‘lose’ the person’s
voice, but will balance this with the need to ensure that the text can be easily understood. We need to be conscious that many people featured in and reading our publications, materials and website may speak English as a second language.

We will usually edit a direct testimonial to pull out the most powerful and emotive points, and will sometimes change the order in which content appears. However, we will always try to maintain the original meaning of the speaker.

If it will make video content easier to understand, we may consider using subtitles, even when the words being spoken are in English.

Further information

If you would like any further information or guidance on how to produce case studies, please contact any member of the Foundation’s communications team. You should also refer to the Foundation’s Brand Guidelines, Style Guide and Photographer’s Brief.
EXAMPLE: CASE STUDY RELEASE FORM

Name: ................................................................................................................

Date of birth: ................................................................. Male/female:.................................................................

Telephone number: ...................................................... Email: ........................................................................

Address: ........................................................................................................................................

Award holder?              Bronze   Silver   Gold (where possible, include year Award gained)
Award participant?       Bronze   Silver   Gold  (circle all that apply)

Interviewed by: .............................................................. Date interviewed: ........................................

Material gathered:        Written testimonial  Photographs  Film footage  Audio  (circle all that apply)

How we would like to use your story:

We (The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award Foundation) would like to use your story to support the promotion of The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award worldwide to various stakeholders, on behalf of the Foundation, The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award Association and its members. This means that it may be used on the International Award’s website and social networks, as well as in its publications and audio-visual productions. We may also send it to recognised media organisations who may use it for publication in order to promote the Award.

If we give your story to another media organisation, we will not agree to any press interviews or give out your personal details without seeking permission from you first. Each time we use your story, we would like to use your name and your photo with it. Copy, images and video footage may be edited without further approval being sought from you.

We will also keep our own, secure database containing your personal details (including your name and contact details) to help us to find your story more easily. Your story will be kept for up to three years, at which point we will contact you again if we would like to continue to use it.

Please sign below to show that you understand how we intend to use your story, and that you approve of the use of your story for these purposes. If the case study relates to a young person under 16 years of age, a parent or guardian or other legal representative should sign this form on their behalf.

Agreed by:

Signature: ................................................................................................................

Print name: ................................................................................................................ Date: ........................................................

Address (where being signed by a parent or guardian): ...........................................................................
EXAMPLE: CASE STUDY

Young mothers going for Gold

“I left school with hardly any qualifications and wasn’t sure what I was going to do with my life... when I became pregnant at 16 I was determined more than ever to be successful, be a good mum and break the stereotypical views people have of young mothers.”

Emily is 23 and has a six-year-old son called Luke. She is also a Bronze and Silver Award holder who is currently planning her Gold Adventurous Journey. For someone who says “I’ve never really been good at finishing things,” these are impressive achievements.

Adventurous Journey

Emily is part of a group of young mothers in the UK who are supporting each other through their Gold Award. Through a young mothers’ group called ‘Break 4 U’, they were introduced to the Award, and have since committed much of their free time to completing their Programme. In addition to the normal challenges that any participant undertaking the Award faces, these young women are juggling their Award journey with motherhood, a challenge in its own right.

On Bronze and Silver expeditions they frequently found themselves reading bedtime stories around a camp fire! Their Gold Adventurous Journey will take the form of a cycle ride on tandem bikes in the Netherlands, with their children in trailers. This will make them the first young mothers in Europe to take their children on a Gold expedition.

Positive role models

As part of their challenge, which they are calling ‘Change Together’, the group need £15,000 to enable them to embark on their journey. With over £12,000 already raised, they will soon be on their way. But the emotional journey they have embarked on is even more remarkable than the physical one.

“Completing my Bronze and Silver made things seem achievable. I became even more motivated and determined to do something positive in life and be a positive role model for my daughter,” says Emily’s friend and fellow Gold participant, Laura.

Another, Daniele, comments that “From doing my Bronze and Silver I have gained so much confidence in myself and boosted my self-esteem. I’m now confident to walk in to an interview room which is a big change.”

© 2013 The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award Foundation
Supporting young parents

The group are intending to use their time in the Netherlands to research sexual health, pregnancy prevention schemes and young parent support groups, to understand how a close European neighbour maintains such low rates of teenage pregnancy.

They believe that Change Together can play an important role in supporting and challenging other women. Harmony, one of the group, explains: “I hope that by achieving my Gold Award I can not only fulfil my own goals but show other young mothers that it is possible to commit to something constructive and achieve it regardless of how old you or your child is.”

To follow the group’s progress, visit their blog at www.changetogether.co.uk.

Further information

According to UK government statistics, around 40,000 women under 18 fall pregnant in the UK every year. This is the highest rate of teenage conception in Western Europe. Around 50% of these young women go on to have an abortion. Teenage pregnancy in the UK brings with it a high degree of social stigma, and is associated with lower levels of employment and educational achievement, and higher levels of poverty. In England, nearly 70% of young mothers are not in education, employment or training (NEETs), according to 2008 figures from the Department for Work and Pensions.

17 of the Association’s National Award Authorities are specifically targeting teenage parents, providing them with opportunities to undertake the Award.

- Visit the UK Award’s website.
- Visit the Change Together blog.
- Visit Change Together on Facebook.
- Sign up for more news about the Award.