

FROM SUBJECT TO CREATOR

How podcast and radio co-creation
empowers young people

Broos Claerhout · Medialab Quindo · 22nd of April 2026

quindo





Medialab Quindo

Kortrijk, Belgium, spin-off of Howest University of Applied Sciences

Formats: podcasts, webradio, live radio on events, video

Settings: youth work (non-formal), schools, youth care settings

Approach: 100% hands-on:
concept development → distribution

Media co-creation as a method (development, research...)



Who we work with

- **Young people** aged 9–30
- Youth in **care** and special **welfare** settings, newcomers, young refugees, young people with fewer opportunities
- **Volunteers** and aspiring journalists and media creators in spare time

TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Young people as SUBJECT of communication

Gives young people a voice when it suits adults.

Keeps editorial control with professionals.

Talks about young people and risks reinforcing stereotypes.

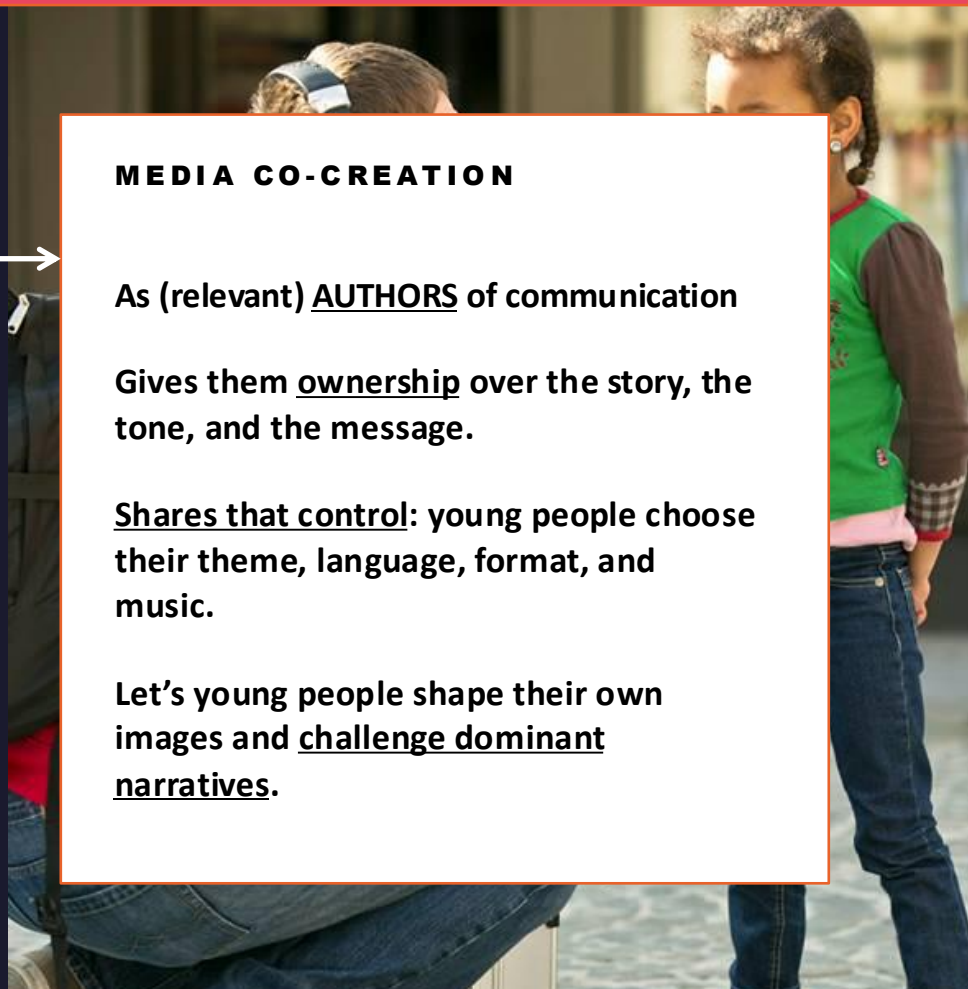
**MEDIA CO-CREATION**

As (relevant) AUTHORS of communication

Gives them ownership over the story, the tone, and the message.

Shares that control: young people choose their theme, language, format, and music.

Let's young people shape their own images and challenge dominant narratives.



Media production logic

Storytelling
Audience oriented
Professional (product)
Crew (collective effort)
...

Social work interventions

Empowerment oriented
Inclusion
Professional (process)
Individual growth
...

Couldry, N. (2012). *Media, Society, World: Social Theory and Digital Media Practice*. Polity Press.

The media production methodology: 4 pillars

1

CO-CREATION

Story and product emerge WITH young people, not for them. They choose themes, formats, and perspectives.

2

PRODUCTION PROCES

The production process itself is the learning environment. Skills develop through doing, not listening.

3

MEDIA PRODUCT

Cross-sector collaboration to ensure quality of the media product.

4

PUBLICATION

Going public creates recognition, success experiences, and communicative relevance in society.

The magic of audio

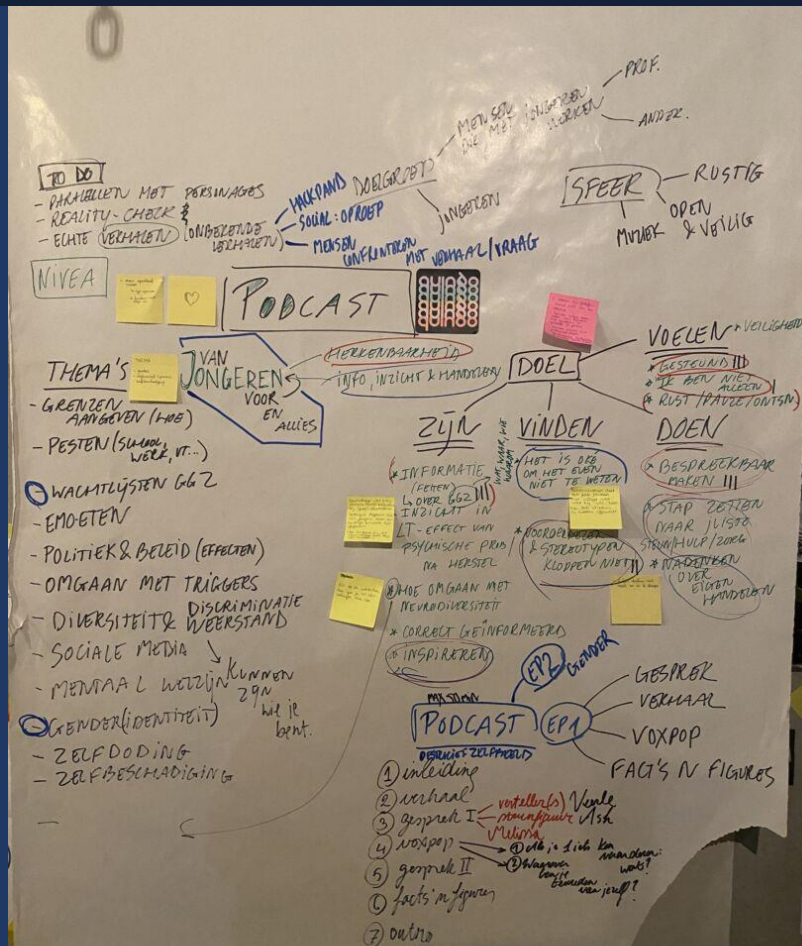
- You can't see it; but you can **receive** it everywhere. (You enter people's comfort zones (car, kitchen...))
- Audio taps into your **imagination**: every listener creates their own personal images from what they hear.
- Your voice reaches into the mind of a stranger. It is low threshold, with high intimacy. (The mic strips away appearance).
- The studio as a safe space: professional studio, psychologically safe.

#HACKtisch

Who 6 young people with lived experience of mental health struggles, connected to youth care settings

What Co-created podcast series on psychological wellbeing through personal stories

How 10 sessions combining editorial co-creation, professional media coaching, and psychological support



How #HACKtisch works: CMO

CONTEXT

Mental health is taboo among peers;
young people are rarely heard on their own terms.

Safe space (#HACKpand) where young people already come voluntarily. Trusted youth workers with existing relationships.
+ psychologist

Story often told, rarely on own terms and in own language.

MECHANISMS

Own story as starting point:
each episode begins from personal experience.

Co-creation and editorial power:
young people choose theme, structure, tone, and agenda.

Audience interaction:
vox pops with peers create dialogue beyond the core group.

Publication:
transforms private story into public, recognised expression.

OUTCOME

Narrative agency:
young people see themselves as authors, not objects.

Transferable skills:
digital, communication, collaboration, reflection.

Identity shift:
from experience expert to communicator.

Broader impact:
taboo-breaking content reaches a wider audience.

What makes it work

Trust the process

Accept slower workflows. Let go of the 'polished' product in favour of editorial ownership by young makers.

Cross-sector partnership is key

Media professionals + youth workers together.
Care logic and media logic in one process.

Ownership drives engagement

Young people choose their own themes, formats and music.
Real decisions = real ownership.

Shift the role of media professional

From author to facilitator.
Expertise as enabling factor, not a directive force.

Publication is not optional

Public exposure is where empowerment and inclusion becomes real: visibility and recognition.
But also: consent is a process!

More sessions = stronger impact

2 sessions vs. 8 sessions: the data confirms intensity and continuity matter significantly.

**Media co-creation
empowers both
storytellers and
audience.**



Broos Claerhout · broos.claerhout@quindo.be · www.quindo.be

