

The Youth Research Board are fundamental to Changing the Story. Their contribution to the project is remarkable, therefore it is only right that they get to say a few final words on their experience with Changing the Story.

Their reflections come in different forms, from poetry, to illustration and song, each carefully crafted to express what Changing the Story and meeting each other has meant to them.

Antonia

Reflection on the work with CIS

Working with Changing the Story was an experience that has opened my eyes to new opportunities and possibilities as a young person. Being part of the Youth Research Board made me realize that as a young person I can start to make changes in my community, because no one else will do it for me, but I also learned that my voice is important and that there are people and change makers willing to listen to me. Attending the final event in Leeds made me realize that there are a lot of people around the world with the same concerns and ideas for their communities and that we can learn from each other and bring back all this lessons to our countries, for example, as I learned about the importance of memory in different contexts like Kosovo or South Africa and how in Colombia we can learn about their experiences and vice versa. Finally, I'm just happy and hopeful of all the impact that young people can make in the world.



Arlinda

Hello everyone, my name is Arlinda.

I was born and raised in Kosovo. I'm currently studying Cultural Anthropology at the University of Prishtina.

I also had the opportunity to study for a semester in Germany at the Viadrina Universität- Frankfurt Oder.

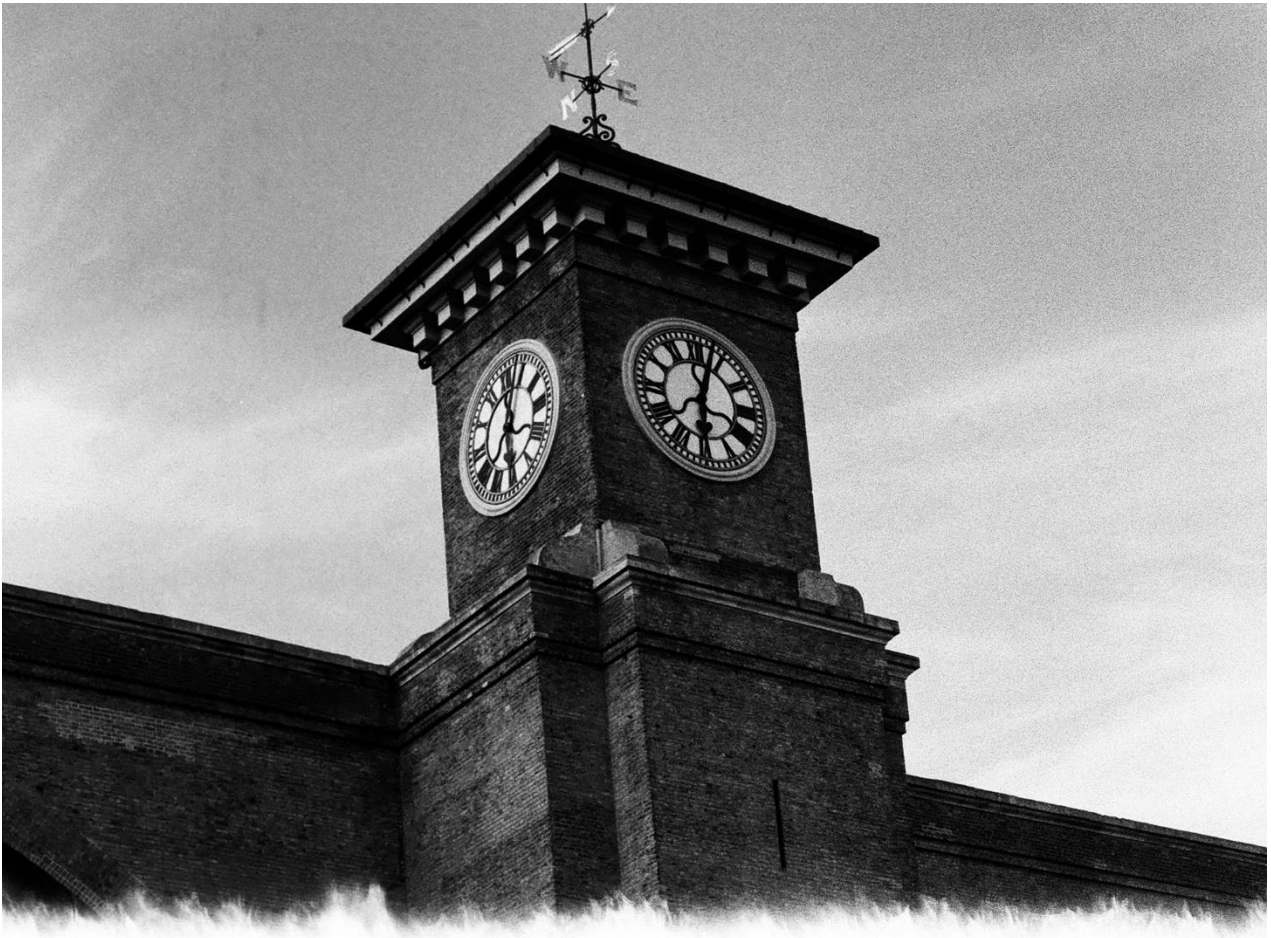
It was a big step for me to work with CTS, as it is already known for its best work in supporting youth to rebuild civil society in post-conflict settings worldwide. Working with different workshops to come up with the best ideas around how young people would like to change the world, it's beyond words. The support we had from all teams described best the work that is done by each group.

Also, the opportunity to build new areas of access to change in my country Kosovo made a new impact on me. Thanks to Nita Luci and Linda Gusia, with the help of Changing the Story we did an amazing job in schoolhouses in Prishtina, developing new ideas for internet access and future museums in today's technology.

With the help of the Changing the Story team, we developed new ideas of great success and gathered together to present them in person (unfortunately I wasn't there).

Nothing would have been done in such a great way without the help of every member of CTS, I'm beyond thankful for every bit of help and a change not only in my life but in my work and identity changing for the better. I encourage everyone to have such a great experience too.

David



Being in CIS has been an enlightening experience. I've learnt a lot, not only through the workshops we've done, but sharing with new ~~different~~ people from different places around the world. Above all, CIS has been the beacon which ~~its~~ light has given me the courage to prove that acts can change the world and can be helpful to improve our communities, creating memory, healing deep wounds and making links between people frightened and loveable.

- DAVID EPIFANIE

Eric

CHANGING THE STORY CHANGED MY STORY

Life is nothing without people. We survive because we help each other and that's why we never fall when we do. Back in 2021, I joined Changing the Story. I joined as a Youth research board member and my work was to make different researchers on the projects that have been working with Changing the story and make artistic campaigns out of the information got. This wasn't an easy work since I was not very familiar with such kind of work. I struggled on the way, but I got there. They say, "what doesn't kill you makes you stronger." I learned a lot of things that I never thought I could because of the environment that I grew up in. Changing the Story changed opened my eyes. Throughout the research I made, I came to realize that every place always has the privileged ones and the marginalized ones, and it will always stay like that if we don't act on it.

Changing the story gave me an opportunity to express and show the world my ideas. Throughout the campaigns, I took a part in encouraging young vulnerable people to stand up, move out of their comfort zones and do something that would make their lives better. Because of Changing the story, I got an opportunity to travel to England which was my dream country to visit and not only I visited but also met different people there who helped me get back on the track of my life through conversing.

As I conclude, I am not going to keep quiet and cover up the knowledge that I got from Changing the Story instead, I am going to help my fellow young people in different ways so as to pay tribute to Changing the story and as well fulfilling my heart feelings.

Jayden

Did you know the world is a beautiful place?
Did you know the world is a beautiful place?
Turquoise oceans, green forests, pretty people.
Pretty People?
Pretty hurts
Pretty destroys but...
"People" run the world
Did you know the world is a beautiful place ?
For some it is for most it's not.

In South Africa we had Apartheid
In Rwanda we had genocide
Kosovo and Nepal we had war
Venezuela we have hyperinflation
Colombia we had child soldiers
Did you know the world is a beautiful place

What world is this,
the world we see on TV, "Hollywood"
the land of the rich and famous.
The rich and famous
How dare they sport that title
as if its something worth celebrating.
Capitalism is crap no cap
It's disgusting, it's crippling.
Did you know the world is a beautiful place?

My album is releasing, \$20 a copy
Your favourite popstar is a capitalist too
Match this Sunday £250 a ticket
Yes mr hunky soccer player is a capitalist too
Movie premiering June don't miss
Shame Miss Hollywood too
Capitalist, Capitalist, Capitalist
Capitalism is the root of all evil
Did you know the world is a beautiful place?

"A beautiful place"
What we strive for
11 different pieces
One perfect puzzle
Shining bright shedding light
Poverty, low literacy, unemployment, crime
Different locations
Not so different backgrounds

Technology allowed for regular meeting.
At the end our repertoire grown:
Haiku poets;
Pocket book publishers;
Graphic designers;
Gender experts;
Photo Voice producers;
Data capturers
Marketing
Campaigning.

Physical meeting was scheduled and paid for,
Visas were declined.
I could not attend.
The UK immigration deemed me unworthy of a visit
to their country because,
I'm a poor boy from Africa
The Africa they impoverished
The Africa they continue to exploit
The Africa they supposedly civilised
Is enslavement civil?
Did you know the world is a beautiful place?
Well it could be, if this 11 young minds
Could be multiplied by billions.
Did you know the world is a beautiful place?

Jesùs

Título: Changing the story y las oportunidades otorgadas

Cuando comencé a trabajar con changing the story me sentí muy emocionado de poder ser parte de una organización internacional tan importante. Sentí que mi participación en ella a pesar de hablar otro idioma era muy apreciada y muy bien recibida por parte del equipo organizador y director. Tuve la oportunidad de conocer a grandes personas dentro de este proyecto, permitiéndome poder ampliar aún más los horizontes sobre las realidades de vidas de otros países, algo que me ayuda bastante dentro de mi trabajo como participar del Centro Juvenil San Isidro.

Estoy muy contento de que esta organización se enfocó tanto en poder ser un instrumento de paz y otorgarle la oportunidad a chicos como yo de ser capaces de vivir experiencias espectaculares en grupo y poder cultivar ese crecimiento intelectual en conjunto a otros jóvenes de diferentes naciones.

En pocas palabras, es una experiencia sumamente enriquecedora para la vida de las personas. Gracias por su atención.

Leonard

Leonard

I am glad to say a lot about changing the story;

Changing the story developed my critical thinking and teamwork, developed skills in art and to express problems and everything through arts, to me changing the story was home where I meet other youth board to work together, helping each other to make our research out:

I am happy to share haikus to stand for all my appreciations for changing the story.

A song of the tree

Sitting under the tree

Following the tree movements of the

Me, following the song.

A curious day

Not quite what I'd imagined

No longer single.

Among the two

It's greenish, huge, and sweet

It's greyish, thin, long, and bitter

I must use them all.

The next works better

Having no right arm

Makes left the best, strong at lift

Remember it makes vise vise

In my room

My bed is so cold

Under the bed is warm and silent

I could sleep under the bed.

Having no right ear

Makes the left hear best, deserve it

Remember it makes vice versa

To mean their life matters no matter.

The alarm

The Alarm I sated

Meet the sleep I am, on time

My ugly to my watch.

THE STORY'S YOURS, GO WRITE IT!

My time

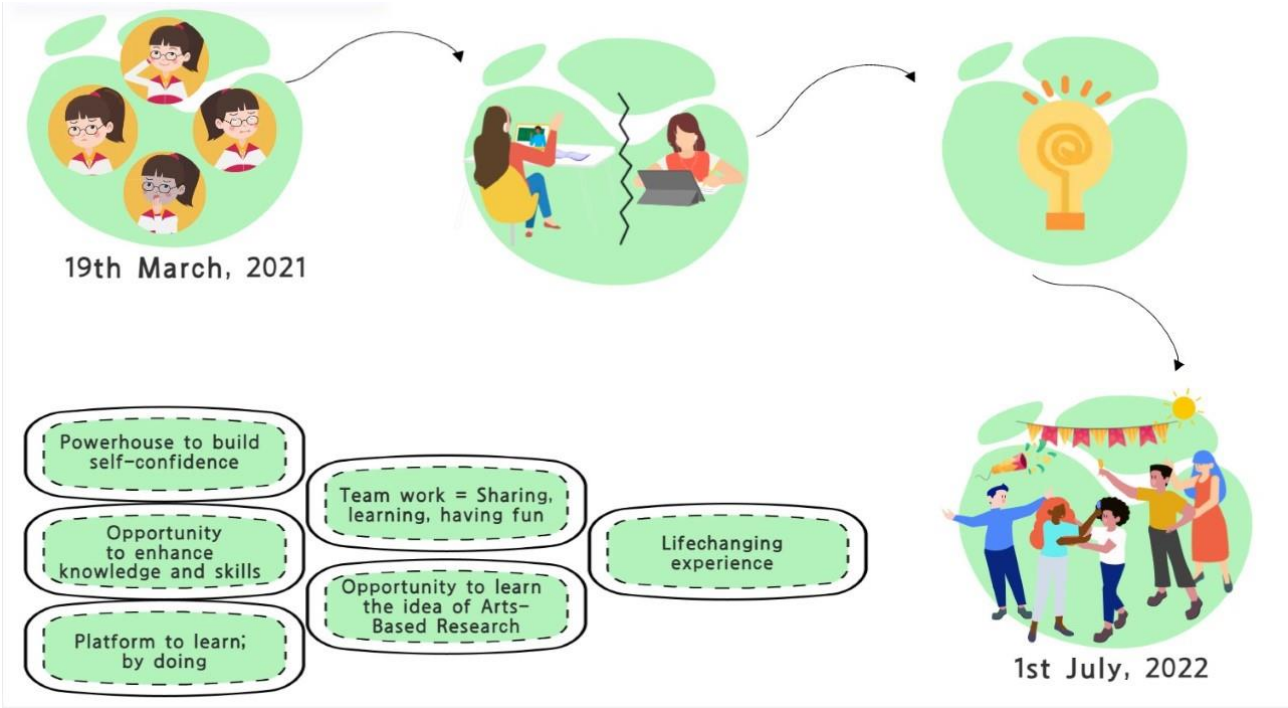
It's twenty-first

Two thousand twenty-one, yes

Date, year of standing.

Marriage

Samjhana



Taahirah

Reflections

The struggle continues

Parental advise

Non violent activities yet they're so vile

To you ×2

Only to you

You're threatened by what we do

Cuz of your capitalist agenda

Did you know peacebuilding is on ours?

And we will tell how hard that is given the reality of

What you caused ×2

But it's been great though

This journey

The people and the place..

Came as strangers and left as comrades

The driving force of sustainable disruption

L.o.v.e Y.R.B

Trina

How Changing the Story changed my story

I have always enjoyed participating in activities that contribute to social change and have shaped my personal development over the last 9 years. But what would be more unique if I discovered this passion among peers from all over the world, and what would be less unique during the COVID pandemic than working on these passions and goals remotely from Zoom?! This is what the Youth Research Board, which was created and supported by Changing the Story, in a few lines would look like.

I've had a joyful journey with the amazing team and spirit of collaboration with CtS for over nine months, and we've become a big family. I remember the first interview when Lauren was so excited and welcoming, the first Zoom meeting where it was stressed our importance as young people by leading a good amount of every step of the board's functioning, the first tweet of our YRB Twitter account, our first brainstorming discussions for what the zine would look like, our first draft of it and how happy we felt together with David, Antonia, and Leonard (my teammates), and our first in-person meeting in Leeds. These small moments added up to a large puzzle masterpiece that Changing the Story carefully maintained - networking with other young people, providing mentors during our research, connecting with various academics, and even giving us the floor to lead the un-conference. Changing the Story taught me the value of being appreciated and appreciating others, how art can be beautifully entrusted with social changes, and how the latter have multiple stories to be heard and told. Changing the Story helped me discover my interest in collective memory and opened the door to better understanding and practicing critical thinking not only for my country's context but also for other countries.

Changing the Story, I will be eternally grateful to you for changing the story from being bored into Zoom calls to attractive ones, you rock!

Rovithono

I want to start by thanking the CTS team for giving me this opportunity to learn and gain new perspective on how individuals across the globe collaborate and work for the betterment of the communities. Here I met people sharing similar circumstances that I do, and I also gain a lot of fresh insight from the YRB team throughout my time working with them. We were divided into groups and assigned to research and campaign on various topics, such as memorialization, art-based methods, and the everyday life and interaction with young people.

Working in a group with people from other cultures allowed me to get insight into the struggles that young people faces, which includes unemployment and socio-political situations. How similar concerns and problems exist in conflict zones across the globe fascinates me.

Along with the advantages, there are some drawbacks, such as network problems, time zone differences, and busy schedules. As a result, we must plan ahead, choose a time that works for everyone, hold an online meeting, and discuss our next steps.

Hopefully, we were able to overcome all of our obstacles and make our suggestions and thoughts into a reality.

Some of us were unable to meet in person due to travel constraints, but perhaps one day we can all get together and create something more useful and beneficial.

Working with the YRB team enables me to share my knowledge and gain new perspectives on various issues. People in conflict zones seems to discuss or relate their concerns in one way or another, which has helped me change my level of understanding.

I hope there will be more opportunities in the future. I'm privileged to be a part of YRB team.