

A.R.C. Challenge Malaysia

Pitching Session

Youth, Climate Change and Cultural Rights

25 March 2021

Report by Carolyn Hong

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Introduction

The A.R.C. Challenge Malaysia aims to encourage dialogue and collaborative projects in the arts, education and science between youths in Malaysia and the UK. It provides a platform for young people from diverse backgrounds and cultures including marginalised communities to engage in the exchange of ideas on the impact of climate change on their future.

A.R.C. stands for 'Awareness, Resilience and Collaboration'.

The programme is organised by the British Council Malaysia in support of the COP26 climate change summit to be held in the United Kingdom.

The 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26), to be held in Glasgow from 1–12 November 2021, will be the largest international climate change summit to be hosted by the UK. It will bring together over 30,000 delegates — including heads of states, climate experts and campaigners — to agree on coordinated actions to tackle climate change. COP26 will be supported by a build-up events programme hosted by Italy, which will include a major Youth Event and the Pre-COP Summit in September 2021.

A.R.C. Challenge Malaysia aligns with one of the five priority themes of COP26, 'Adaptation and resilience' — helping people, economies and the environment adapt and prepare for the impacts of climate change.

The programme comprises:

- Seed funding grants to kick-start joint UK-Malaysia responses to a shared climate change challenge involving young people aged 18–35
- The Youth, Climate Change and Cultural Rights Forum focusing on climate change and cultural rights specifically from the youth perspective held on 4 February 2021
- A Grants Pitching Session for the seed grant award winners to present their projects to experts, potential funders and collaborators held on 25 March 2021

A.R.C. Challenge Malaysia Grant

The A.R.C. Challenge Malaysia seed funding grants were offered for collaborations between stakeholders in the UK and Malaysia which respond to a common challenge in the field of climate change with shared solutions that empower young people to take positive action which can cascade awareness and create greater resilience among those in their generation, as well as influence policy making.

The British Council Malaysia awarded three grants of up to £10,000 each to three collaborations to kick-start innovative, joint UK-Malaysia responses involving young people aged 18–35. Cross-sectoral collaboration were encouraged. Calls for applications were made from December 2020 to January 2021.

The three successful grantees were announced during the first A.R.C. Challenge Malaysia Forum held on 4 February 2021.

RIPPLE Responsible Innovation Plastics Project for Life & Environment



Biji-biji Initiative (MY) &
Falmouth University
(England, UK)

Weaving Hopes for the Future



Klima Action Malaysia
(MY) & Students for
Global Health (UK)

VISION - Virtual Impact Story Telling in our Network



neOOne Associates (MY)
& SEA International CIC
(Scotland, UK)

The three grantees are:

Project 1: Weaving Hopes for the Future

Lead: Klima Action Malaysia (Malaysia)

Partner: Gerimis Art Project (Malaysia) and Students for Global Health (UK)

Project 2: VISION – Virtual Impact Storytelling in Our Network

Lead: neOOne Associates (Malaysia)

Partner: SEA International CIC (UK)

Project 3: RIPPLE – Responsible Innovation Plastics Project for Life and Environment

Lead: Biji-Biji Initiative (Malaysia)

Partner: Falmouth University (UK)

The three project teams were invited to pitch their projects at the A.R.C. Challenge Malaysia Pitching Session to an audience of diverse stakeholders including potential funders, policy makers, research, academic and youth organisations, in the hopes that their project will spark further interest that may lead to scaling-up and sustainability.

A panel of six specialists / funders provided feedback and advice to the project proponents on developing their ideas further. The panel comprised:

- Romy Cahyadi (Indonesia) – Co-founder and CEO of Instellar
- Zainariah binti Hj Johari (Malaysia) – Lead of Arts, Culture and Public Spaces at Yayasan Hasanah, a foundation of Khazanah Nasional Berhad
- Dr. Hjh. Yatela Zainal Abidin (Malaysia) – Chief Executive Officer of Yayasan Sime Darby
- Florence Lambert (Malaysia / UK) – Head of British Council Malaysia's Arts and Creative Industries
- Malcolm Spence (UK) – Investment Director at Global Innovation Fund
- Matteo Chiampo (US / Singapore) – Technical Director at SecondMuse Singapore

Opening Remarks

Prachi Seth, who leads the climate action platform at the Asian Venture Philanthropy Network (AVPN), presented the opening remarks where she spoke about AVPN's climate action initiatives. AVPN, a network of funders and resource providers with over 600 members across 32 markets, launched its Climate Action Platform in 2019. Through this, it has convened climate-focused discussions and leadership dialogues, created publications on climate, and showcased 50 climate-focused deals.

Prachi said cultivating a sense of environmental and social stewardship is a crucial aspect of sustainable development. This initiative, in partnership with the British Council, aimed to do that by providing young people with a platform to share their ideas on some of the most pressing issues such as climate change and cultural rights.

Projects Pitching Session

The three grantees were invited to make a five-minute pitch presentation each to the panel.

Weaving Hopes for the Future

Lead: Klima Action Malaysia (Malaysia)

Partners: Gerimis Art Project (Malaysia) and Students for Global Health (UK)

The Weaving Hopes for the Future project is an arts and cultural response to climate degradation with a focus on empowering Orang Asli youths and women on climate action locally and globally. The indigenous communities (Orang Asli) of Malaysia are some of the most vulnerable to climate impacts as they live and depend on the Malaysian rainforest which has been severely degraded by deforestation and affected by the changing land use and weather patterns.

The project is rooted in four principles: education, activism, empowerment and creative art.

It will take a mentorship approach with eight Orang Asli (OA) youths, aged 18–35, and will culminate in the commissioning of an art installation on climate change, and other creative physical/digital outputs for exhibition in Malaysia and/or the UK including at the COP26 venues.

The aims:

1. Educate OA youths on their indigenous rights, land rights, climate change and climate action, and how this can be used as a leverage to policy makers
2. Capacity building to create creative output and/or documentation that can be used to inform the public and/or influence policy makers
3. Exposure for OA youths to connect with the world for their voices to be heard and supported
4. Foster collaboration across Malaysia and UK
5. Promote the inclusion of women and indigenous communities in climate action
6. Employ alternative media to reimagine transdisciplinary responses to a sustainable and just world and provide space for these perspectives within the sustainability discourse.

The activities of the project:

1. Physical/Digital Climate Workshop – a grounding class on climate justice, running campaigns, indigenous and land rights, and formation of an OA youth group and indigenous youth caucus
2. Power of Art Workshop and building art installation – women weavers will create a large mat from mengkuang or bertam fibres, on which the youths will embroider the 'cuci mangkuk' (deforestation) patterns. The weaving process will be documented via film and writing, and the art installation will be exhibited in Malaysia and/or UK including at COP26 venues.
3. Storytelling Sessions – the OA advisory board members will guide activities with the community and youth in workshops, sharing sessions, and focus groups.

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4. Workshops, sharing sessions, focus groups – participants to discuss the voices they want to collect and document. Sharing sessions and focus groups will gather the elders and youth for primary data collection.
 5. Documentation – participants will take a hands-on role in documentation in the form of creative outputs i.e. video essay, booklet, zine.
 6. Editing and publishing – KAMY and Gerimis Art Project will guide the OA youth in the process of editing and publishing.
 7. Exhibition and Communication – KAMY, SfGH and Gerimis Art Project will lead the planning on the exhibition of the art installation and deliverables (e.g. documentation) for communication to audiences (e.g. public).

The deliverables are:

1. Physical/Digital Climate Workshop covering six topics
2. Art installation production comprising a weaving artwork that combines two contrasting patterns: symmetrical patterns of their traditional craft vs cuci mangkuk / clear cut deforestation patterns left behind from logging. Creation of communication material through the documentation of the weaving process
3. Art installation exhibition in UK and/or Malaysia
4. Creative storytelling material that encapsulate the voices of OA youths' past and future. Communication material to be showcased
5. Monitoring and sharing of project impacts and outcomes

Ili Nadiah Dzulfakar from Klima Action Malaysia (KAMY) led the pitch presentation. She explained that the project is an arts and cultural response to climate degradation with a focus on empowering OA youth and women as constituents in the climate discussion in local and global spaces. Their working team includes women indigenous leaders who will guide the setting of standards for a meaningful and productive project.

She highlighted that indigenous people are particularly vulnerable to climate risks, with the impact made worse by the communities being denied of their rights to self-govern and sovereignty over their customary land, and a lack of indigenous land rights education which has led to an eroded understanding of their own culture and traditions. Although they safeguard critical ecosystems, they are often left out of meaningful participation in decision-making processes. All these factors have affected community resilience and led to a sense of identity loss among the community members. As such, OA stories are often told from an outsider's lenses.

To make a meaningful change, she said they must create a space for indigenous people in the climate movement.

Their project is based on the four pillars of education, creative art, activism and empowerment. Through education, they aim to ground the youths in climate change literacy, and through activism, to expose them to other initiatives and to connect to the world. Through the creative arts, they can reimagine the response and in empowerment, they seek the inclusion of young men and women in the indigenous community for climate action.

Throughout the project, the land will be the centrepiece focus. The youth will document the stories of the land, and the weavers will utilise materials from the land to produce an art installation to tell their story of loss and hope. This creative effort will be an important advocacy tool that emphasises solution and moves away from victimhood. It will be co-produced by the indigenous youths in Malaysia, guided by local and global partners, and will be flown to Glasgow to be displayed at a COP26 venue in November 2021. The related content on how this piece was made, materials and knowledge, and the people will be documented on a microsite.

Nadiah said the project team is seeking assistance to invest in digital devices such as laptops, cameras and external drives for the OA youths, and in editing, printing and a camera crew for VR filming.

“Apart from improving indigenous participation in climate negotiation spaces, this pilot project will help bridge the digital divide in these communities as well,” she said.

They also aim to negotiate the establishment of an OA youth caucus which can participate in local and international climate negotiation spaces. “Our long-term vision is to nurture meaningful collaboration between indigenous people and climate groups as well as art and culture groups,” Nadiah said.

VISION – Virtual Impact Storytelling in our Network

Lead: neOOne Associates (Malaysia)

Partner: SEA International CIC (UK)

The project aims to facilitate the sharing of methodologies between Scotland and Malaysia in storytelling, visioning and digital recording, as a powerful means of communicating change.

Groups of 12–15 young people each from Scotland and Malaysia, including academicians, environmental and community activists, social entrepreneurs as well as non-governmental bodies, will be guided to stand as their future selves, and to create and tell the story of their unique vision.

The activities will encapsulate these themes:

- a) Sharing of methodologies – in storytelling, visioning and digital recording. Storytelling is a traditional activity in both cultures which can communicate new approaches for tackling environmental issues.
- b) Interdisciplinary – participants from creative arts and natural science backgrounds, coming together to share perspectives and ideas. The sharing of tools is a key element; it is not just about people from different disciplines working together but also about becoming skilled in using each other's tools.
- c) Cultural dynamism – sharing perspectives on global environmental challenges, and challenging their cultural perspectives on life, living and planet.
- d) The Anthropocene – the concept that we are living in a new geological epoch called the Anthropocene. This helps frame our thinking around new ways of thinking, working and collaborating.

The deliverables are:

- 1. Recruitment of 12 Malaysian experts and 12 UK experts, with six from each country to have a science or environment background and the other six to have a creative background
- 2. Guide teams to create 6–10 projects related to climate change initiatives
- 3. Curate, organise and delivery of a 1-day, 5-session Virtual Global Impact Festival to showcase the projects, to inspire and engage youth in the subject of climate change
- 4. Monitoring and sharing of project impacts and outcomes

The pitch was jointly presented by **Jess Kemp from Social Enterprise Academy in Scotland**, and **Wan Dazriq from neOOne Associates Malaysia**.

Jess Kemp explained that the Social Enterprise Academy in Scotland is a global learning and development institution focusing on social enterprise and has a network of 13 country hubs across the world.

Wan Dazriq said the broad objective in this project is to support two fundamental sectors: the young people, and the environment and climate change. As youths will inherit a future of climate challenges, it makes sense for their voices, solutions, views and ideas to be heard.

The 30 young people from Scotland and Malaysia will be connected through a virtual learning experience. They will be introduced to storytelling as a tool and will also be given the tools to effectively communicate their key messages. Their stories will be amplified through an online platform, a Global Impact Festival, which will also create seed funding opportunities for their projects.

Wan Dazriq said the Global Impact Festival will be launched ahead of the COP26 event. They hope to reach 10,000 people, to have created 30 project initiatives with five projects obtaining support, and to have RM500,000 funding raised for the projects.

“We want you to be part of our mission by way of providing support, whether it’s through showcasing, connecting or even investing sponsorship to enable us to scale,” he said.

They are seeking sponsorship to scale across the Asia Pacific and globally, and to extend the programme to students, to create an on-going showcase of impact stories, seed funding to scale projects, and in-kind support and mentoring.

RIPPLE – Responsible Innovation Plastics Project for Life and Environment

Lead: Biji-Biji Initiative (Malaysia)

Partner: Falmouth University (UK)

The project aims to identify meaningful design opportunities to escalate the value of plastic waste through product innovation, behavioural shifts and novel manufacture. This collaborative partnership also helps to tackle the skills gap faced by Biji-Biji Initiative.

Students aged 19–30 from Falmouth University will work in collaborative teams to innovate new products, leveraging on the existing waste processing and material strategies utilised by Biji-Biji as part of their social enterprise initiatives. Biji-Biji will assist the young entrepreneurs to understand how to work with waste material.

The planned activities comprise:

1. **Discover Phase:** Students will meet online with partners from Biji-Biji to discuss and hear from their expertise in utilising waste plastic within social innovation and enterprise contexts. Students will review case studies from Biji-Biji's 'Beyond Bins' Initiative, and learn the design, development and production processes.

Students from Graphics and Products will conduct a beach cleaning exercise to identify and sort the waste, look at product narratives and histories to better understand the human behaviours which contributed to its disposal. First year Sustainable Product Design and Graphic Design students will create multi-discipline teams to fabricate, build and document the creation of a Precious Plastic recycling and production machine that replicates the facilities used by Biji-Biji to upcycle waste to new products.

2. **Define Phase:** Biji-Biji will share a range of their existing designs and new designs that require testing. Students will use these examples to better understand how to design successful 3D forms that can be moulded from waste plastic and will conduct research and development refinement on the prototype design. Biji-Biji will work with Falmouth academics and their community partners to identify specific design briefs that meet the challenge of increasing value perception and identifying new market opportunities for creating revenue from plastic waste.
3. **Develop Phase:** Students and academic staff at Falmouth will facilitate a design sprint to iterate a breadth of creative responses to the briefs. Students will present and review the outputs of the design sprint with the project partners in order to identify areas of shared interest to develop further. These will focus on both product innovations and behavioural engagement and communication strategies. Teams will refocus around shortlisted ideas and assist in the further development and testing of these prototypes.

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4. Deliver Phase: Final project presentation of ideas will be conducted with all participants invited to showcase and share knowledge, experience and learning gain. Digital design files will be shared as open source designs with Biji-Biji's identified community partners in order to receive feedback and testing.

The deliverables are:

1. A range of new product innovations that utilise upcycling of plastic waste streams developed by Falmouth University students.
2. Training and communication material documenting how to design products for the circular economy from waste, with young entrepreneurs and marginalised communities in Malaysia as target audience.
3. Eight knowledge and skills transfer sessions between Falmouth University students, academic staff and Biji-Biji Initiative through design hackathons, Design Brief sessions, and documented training outputs.
4. Two skills transfer workshops by Biji-Biji Initiative with two local marginalised communities, training on the design process and communications and marketing approaches.
5. Monitoring and sharing of project impacts and outcomes.

Drummond Masterton from Falmouth University and **Juliana Adam from Biji-Biji Initiative** jointly presented the pitch.

Juliana explained that the RIPPLE project stemmed from the idea of wanting to solve the plastics waste issue in a creative and innovative manner, by changing the perception of plastics as a low-value material to something that can be part of the circular economy model as well as using design solutions to trigger positive environmental behaviour.

"Through RIPPLE, we are basically challenging designers to shift their thinking from the end of life product design mindset, and to encourage a sustainable product design solution," she said.

Having created the RIPPLE project, they realised that there is a huge skills gap in making this vision a reality. "What we learnt was that we lacked the right people to develop the right solutions," she said.

She explained that Biji-Biji Initiative was able to resolve this issue by utilising the talent at Falmouth University who help to fill the skills gap, while getting valuable experience in solving actual real-world challenges.

To help bridge this skills gap on a wider scale, they are proposing the creation of Ecovator, a digital platform to connect entrepreneurs with creators to create eco-inspired solutions to climate emergency challenges. This app-based platform will enable entrepreneurs and social innovators to register challenges and opportunities identified from an environmental crisis, with skillsets requests. Creators from the educational environment, including graphics, fashion and product design students, will be matched to projects to collaborate on a brief. Project outcomes will be shared on this web platform to enable seed funding opportunities.

The platform will help entrepreneurs who often lack access to design skills to mature their ideas for production and provide real learning opportunities for students to apply their skills in collaborative challenge-based projects.

The project team is seeking technical skills assistance for web development and coding, input in Intellectual Property management and security, and financial assistance to build the platform and operations team.

PITCHING SESSIONS

WEAVING HOPES for the FUTURE

ISSUE: ORANG ASLIS...

- DENIED LAND RIGHTS
- LACK of LAND RIGHTS EDUCATION
- ERODED UNDERSTANDING of THEIR CULTURE, TRADITIONS & WAY of LIVING

SOLUTION:

EMPOWERING INDIGENOUS YOUTH AND WOMEN WITH KNOWLEDGE of THEIR RIGHTS AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS

IMPACT:

- BRIDGE the DIGITAL DIVIDE
- NURTURE MEANINGFUL COLLABORATION BETWEEN INDIGENOUS YOUTH
- OA YOUTH COLLECTIVISM IN CLIMATE ACTIVISM
- LONG TERM AWARENESS PLATFORM
- CREATIVE OUTPUT AT COP 26 / IN MALAYSIA AND DIGITALLY

VIRTUAL IMPACT STORYTELLING IN OUR NETWORK

AMPLIFY YOUTH VOICES ON CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGES

SOLUTION:

- CONNECT 30 YOUTHS IN SCOTLAND & MALAYSIA to FIGHT for CLIMATE JUSTICE THROUGH STORYTELLING
- VIRTUAL GLOBAL IMPACT FESTIVAL AHEAD of COP26

IMPACT:

- REACH 10K FOLLOWERS
- ENGAGE & OUTREACH
- AMPLIFY & INSPIRE
- CAPACITY BUILDING & DIGITALLY ENABLE

E.G. ECOVATOR PROJECT RIPPLE

RESponsible INNOVATION PLASTICS PROJECT for LIFE & ENVIRONMENT

ISSUES

- PLASTIC WASTE MANAGEMENT
- LACK of RESOURCES IN INNOVATION
- MINDSET

SOLUTION:

- NEW PRODUCT INNOVATION
- SHIFT to CIRCULAR ECONOMY
- INCREASE WASTE VALUE
- BEHAVIOURAL SHIFTS

IMPACT:

- MATURE STUDENTS' IDEAS for ENTREPRENEURSHIP
- CONNECT PROJECT SKILLS & CREATE NEW IDEAS VIA APP

Responses from the Panellists

Panellists:

- **Romy Cahyadi (Indonesia) – Co-founder and CEO of Instellar**
- **Zainariah binti Hj Johari (Malaysia) – Lead of Arts, Culture and Public Spaces at Yayasan Hasanah, a foundation of Khazanah Nasional Berhad**
- **Dr. Hjh. Yatela Zainal Abidin (Malaysia) – Chief Executive Officer of Yayasan Sime Darby**
- **Florence Lambert (Malaysia / UK) – Head of British Council Malaysia's Arts and Creative Industries**
- **Malcolm Spence (UK) – Investment Director at Global Innovation Fund**
- **Matteo Chiampo (US / Singapore) – Technical Director at SecondMuse Singapore**

Summary:

The three project teams were commended for their original ideas, and for their presentations which were relatable. The panellists highlighted the need for a sharper focus on outcome and impact, and long-term sustainability in all three projects. The project teams were also encouraged to think bigger and be more ambitious in their asks. It was also pointed out that the project pitches would have been more impactful if the teams undertook feasibility studies to identify the challenges on the ground as this would demonstrate to funders that the projects are grounded in reality.

The Weaving Hopes for the Future project was seen as having potential as art can be a powerful tool to highlight climate injustice. The project team was advised to be more focused on the desired outcomes in order to create a more powerful piece of work.

The VISION project was commended for its vision for cross-border connections, youth and learning. The project team was encouraged to look into the longer-term sustainability especially as they are relying on a sponsorship model.

The RIPPLE project has potential in its idea to create new markets for plastic waste. The project team was advised to study the existing challenges faced by current players as the value chain of plastic waste is fragmented.

Dr. Hjh. Yatela Zainal Abidin (Malaysia) – Chief Executive Officer of Yayasan Sime Darby

Dr. Hjh. Yatela Zainal Abidin commented that all three pitches were original ideas in tackling climate change. “Ideas coming from the young really mean a lot,” she said.

She commented that the presentations of the Weaving Hopes for the Future and VISION projects were particularly striking, colourful and engaging. She said the VISION project was commendable for clearly stating its impact, outcomes and scalability potential. As for the Weaving Hopes for the Future project, she said the presentation could have been improved by better explaining how climate change affects the rights of the indigenous communities, and by focusing more on the outcome and impact. On the RIPPLE project, she commented that it has great potential to make an impact, and the presentation could have been made more engaging with photographs and imagery.

Romy Cahyadi (Indonesia) – co-founder and CEO of Instellar

Romy Cahyadi commented on the longer-term sustainability of all three projects. He said while the project proponents may not have thought about the longer term as their projects were for a limited duration, it would be ideal if they had demonstrated plans to grow their projects and have a vision for the longer-term outcome. For instance, he noted that as the VISION project is using the sponsorship model, they would need to think about how to sustain that model. Romy offered his assistance and advice in this area.

Malcolm Spence (UK) – Investment Director at Global Innovation Fund

Malcolm Spence commented on the Weaving Hopes for the Future’s project aim, noting that art installations can be very powerful. He gave the example of an impactful art installation called Journey by the Helen Bamber Foundation which was placed in Trafalgar Square in London to raise awareness about human trafficking, and eventually led to the UK ratifying the *Convention against Trafficking in Human Beings*. As such, he advised the project team to be really focused on the outcomes that they would like, and actions which they hope the installation will spur.

“You have this potential in Glasgow for your art to be viewed by decision makers – what would you want them to know, what would you want them to feel, what would you want them to do as a consequence of interacting with your project,” he asked.

Zainariah binti Hj Johari (Malaysia) – Lead of Arts, Culture and Public Spaces at Yayasan Hasanah, a foundation of Khazanah Nasional Berhad

Zainariah binti Hj Johari commented that the three presenters had come up with ideas that were inter-connected with each other. On the VISION project, she commented that “you got me at story telling.” Noting that people like good stories, the project’s strength would be its content that could feed into the creative economy. She suggested that they look at the commonalities that might arise during the programme.

On the Weaving Hopes for the Future project, she asked about the basis of selection for the stories to be featured as there are 18 Orang Asli ethnic groups in Peninsular Malaysia. She also said it would be more impactful if the project included a focus on their livelihood as well.

On RIPPLE, she was interested to know how the Ecovator could be a model that could be applicable to the arts which are increasingly linked to technology.

Matteo Chiampo (US / Singapore) – Technical Director at SecondMuse Singapore

Matteo Chiampo commented that the three ideas are commendable as the creative movement has often been underplayed, yet it can spotlight issues that are extremely urgent but have not yet reached the consciousness of many.

He said he really liked the Weaving Hopes for the Future's aim of giving voice to the indigenous communities. "This idea of highlighting climate justice to this population is really powerful," he said.

On VISION, he liked the focus on youth and learning, as it is important to ensure that the next generation is aware of the urgency of the issues. He also commended its ambition to scale up in multiple areas.

On RIPPLE, Matteo offered a one-to-one conversation with the project team as this project is similar to his own project of reducing plastic pollution in the oceans. He would like to understand how they plan to structure this marketplace for upcycled plastic projects. Given that the value chain of plastic waste is complex and fragmented, he was interested in seeing how new markets can be developed to bring plastic waste into the value chain.

Florence Lambert (Malaysia / UK) – Head of British Council Malaysia's Arts and Creative Industries

Florence Lambert commended the three teams for the effort put into the presentations and the use of graphics to highlight their key messages. She noted that all three projects were relatable and touched people in a very personal way. She commented that it is rare to find an arts response to climate change as environmental initiatives are usually technology driven. "I think they have great potential for growing legs and arms," she said.

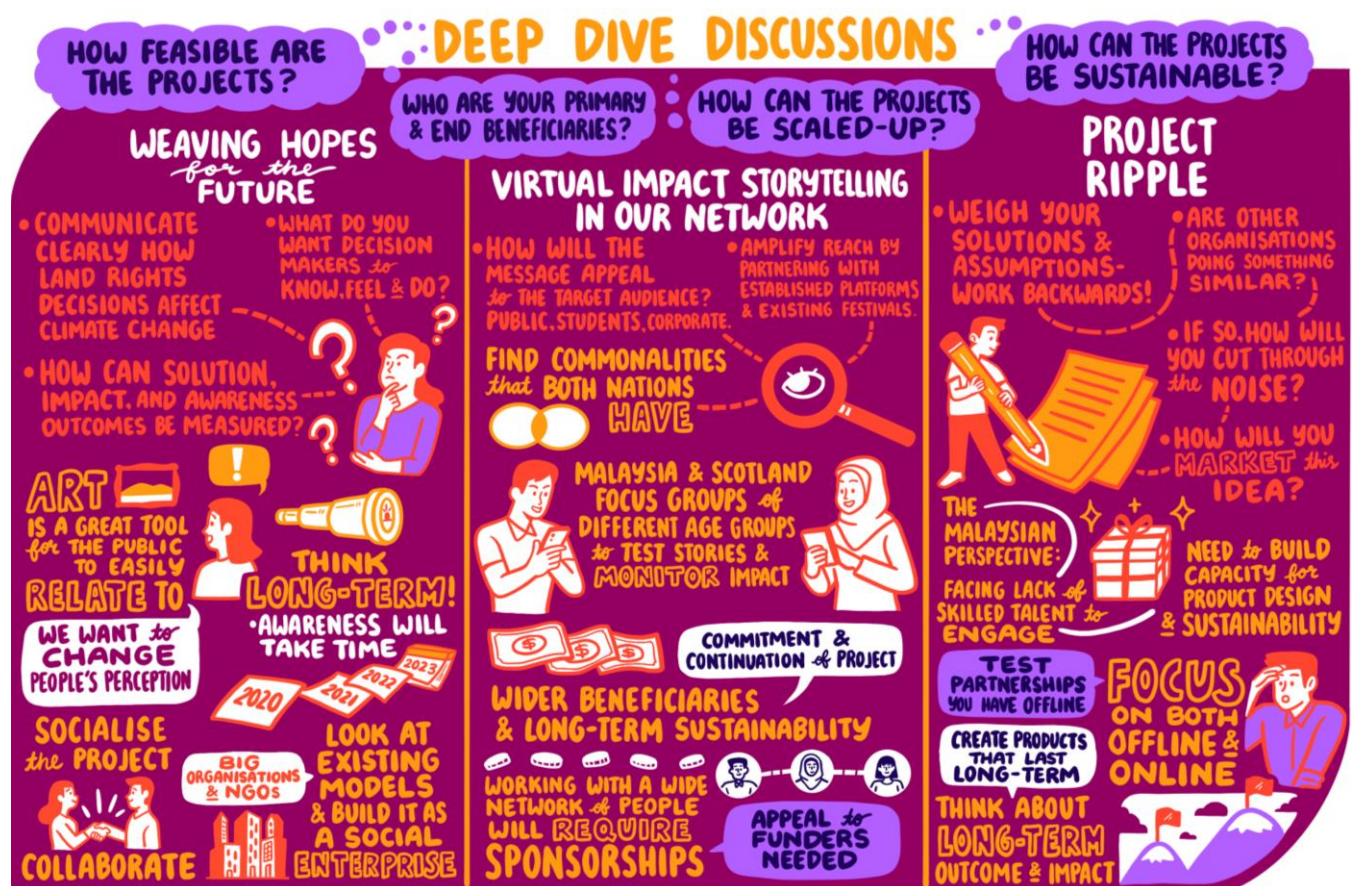
She commented that while the RIPPLE project was clear in its asks, it was not ambitious enough. The other two projects were also not ambitious enough, and also needed to be clearer in their asks.

On RIPPLE, she also asked if the project proponents had checked if other platforms similar to the proposed Ecovator already exist, and if they do, how will they compete?

Expanding on Florence's comments on ambition, Malcolm Spence agreed that it is important for the project teams to be very clear and specific in their long-run vision of success, and to work backwards to the assumptions that would lead to the achievement of this vision. Some of these assumptions will be clear but some will need to be validated. He said this mental model may be useful to the project proponents' thinking about how to create impact.

Also, on this point, Dr. Hjh. Yatela Zainal Abidin agreed that while all three projects did identify the impacts and outcomes, they could have done better by identifying the primary beneficiaries and how the projects could go forward with a wider set of beneficiaries. With more information on the outcomes and impacts, size and sustainability, the asks could have been bigger.

She added that the projects would have benefited from a feasibility study to identify the challenges on the ground and actions to tackle them. This would demonstrate to funders that the project was grounded in reality, and that they were aware of the issues on the ground.



Breakout Sessions

Separate breakout sessions were held for each of the three projects to deep dive into the details of their ideas with the panellists. Each breakout room had the participation of two panellists who offered in-depth suggestions on the project ideas as well as answered questions from the project proponents.

Breakout Session 1: RIPPLE – Responsible Innovation Plastics Project for Life and Environment

Matteo Chiampo (SecondMuse) and Malcolm Spence (GIF) joined the session with RIPPLE proponents Drummond Masterton (Falmouth University, UK) and Juliana Adam (Biji-Biji Initiative Malaysia).

Summary:

The project team clarified that their project comprises two parts: the first is the original RIPPLE plastics upcycling project and the second, the Ecovator platform/app which is a follow-up project after they realised the need to match design talent with entrepreneurs.

The panellists advised the project team to look into the common challenges faced by matchmaking platforms such as the high cost of customer acquisition and the difficulties in retaining them. It was suggested that they revise their idea towards creating a resource / design repository or a project collaboration platform.

It was also suggested that the project team look into the matchmaking potential in the original RIPPLE project to match demand and supply for products made from plastic waste. They were advised to develop products for long-term use rather than knick-knacks.

a) Revision of RIPPLE project

Matteo asked the project team if their plans had been drastically revised from the project sheet which had focused on the plastics upcycling project between Biji-Biji Initiative and design students of Falmouth University.

Drummond explained that there are actually two projects within the RIPPLE initiative. The RIPPLE plastics upcycling project is a project with Biji-Biji Initiative to help Falmouth students understand the new value systems for plastics. Ecovator is their follow-up project to provide scale by opening up the collaboration model to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. He said these are two separate projects, some of which will still deal with plastic waste but will also address the broader climate crisis.

b) Ecovator – matchmaking platform for designers/students and entrepreneurs

Drummond explained that many people who undertook social innovation programmes to respond to problems on the ground often hit a plateau which impede them from making a real impact. The Ecovator platform is about trying to remove this barrier by connecting people with skills and ideas so they can move onto the next stage. For instance, in his 21 years in higher education, he has seen many good student ideas left in portfolios as they had no route to market or the next step other than personal investment. At the same time, at the university, he has undertaken over 1,500 business assessments in the last five years from entrepreneurs seeking advice on how to take their idea to market.

“It’s about connecting these spaces and the educational model,” he said.

Juliana said the Ecovator will be different from other platforms as its focus is on environmental and social impact solutions, nurturing youth eco-designers and giving them a platform to work with other organisations and social entrepreneurs.

Matteo commented that it will be crucial to differentiate themselves from other platforms. The realm of digital distribution and apps has the advantage of low barriers to entry and an existing network. But it is often difficult to bring users to the platform. As this can be expensive, he asked if they had any plans of building a userbase without having to raise large sums of funding that could run into millions.

Malcolm commended the project team for their motivation in trying to find a way to leverage the creative marketplace to connect the demand for design. He noted that in circular economy solutions, the design component is only one part of it. The capital for the equipment and length to the market are equally crucial, and thus, it is necessary to have a real appreciation of what this proposed platform can and cannot do, and whether it would be enough to solve the problems for the entrepreneur.

He also said in his experience with market-matching platforms, the cost of customer acquisition can be high as well as the cost of operations. Marketplace platforms also often struggle to keep their customer base as once the initial connections are made, it often becomes easier for the parties to continue their dialogue on other channels. As such, he suggested that the project proponents reconsider if this should be just a matchmaking platform or also a platform to create projects for collaboration.

Drummond explained that given the speed in developing their idea, they had not thought through many of the points raised by the panellists such as the business aspects. He said the long-term sustainability of the project could potentially come from a share of the Intellectual Property. While this will not be a Falmouth-centric model, they could initially test it with the university’s incubation projects as proof of concept before scaling it. As for keeping the customer base, he said the panellists had made an important point about turning the platform into a design source.

Juliana agreed that while they had come up with the idea of a platform, they had not thought yet about how exactly it should work. She suggested a subscription model or a project management platform to manage projects created by matchmaking talents through their site.

c) Potential of the core RIPPLE project

Matteo said their original core RIPPLE project does have opportunities to make connections between demand and supply. For example, if the university building needs furniture, they can be connected to Biji-Biji which can manufacture them with waste material streams such as hard-to-recycle plastic or plastics in general. There is a potential here to create an embryonic marketplace to partially address the problem of plastic waste.

He advised the project team to avoid using waste material to produce items that will themselves become waste in a short time. Many initiatives working with waste streams often come up with products like knick-knacks that are used only in the short term. He suggested that they look for products which can capture the waste for the long term.

Drummond said their students have already produced a wide breadth of preliminary ideas, encompassing diverse products such as roof tiles and pipework as well as fashion-based items like sunglasses and bags. The next step is to build the Precious Plastics machines on site at the university, and to test and mould some of the products for viability and to finetune them. They can then look for a distribution market. He added that they hope to champion some of these ideas in COP26, to showcase what youths can bring to the table.

d) Malaysian dimension

The moderator, Shaarad Kuttan, asked about the Malaysian dimension of the project.

Juliana said from her personal experience through Biji-Biji Initiative, they do face a lack of skilled talent. As a result, they often fall short on the product design which then lowers the product marketability. They have been working with youth collaborators to fill this gap through their sister space Me.Reka which is a maker space, and through another maker space in a university in Kuala Lumpur.

e) Potential of the Falmouth-Biji Biji partnership

Malcolm commented that this partnership has vast opportunities. He suggested that the project proponents focus not only on the technological solutions but also use the next few months to test their partnership to see what else can be done. For instance, they can explore their vision for the Ecovator platform to see if it could become a resource or design depository rather than a matchmaking forum. He suggested they also explore further Biji-Biji's collaborations with the maker space movement.

Breakout Session 2: Weaving Hopes for the Future

The panellists, Romy Cahyadi (Instellar) and Zainariah binti Hj Johari (Yayasan Hasanah), joined the discussion with the project team members, Ili Nadiah Dzulfakar (KAMY) and Wendi Sia (Gerimis Art Project).

Summary:

The project team explained their plans for a consultative council (which includes indigenous leaders) to determine the selection criteria for the beneficiaries of the project, and the narratives to be featured. They were advised by the panellists to be inclusive, and to focus on long-term sustainability by mainstreaming their project and socialising their cause to the public. The panellists also suggested that the team collaborate with established festivals to showcase the creative works produced by the indigenous community.

a) The indigenous community as guardians of the rainforest

A question from Andy Hickson, via the chat forum, was put forward: “The Orang Asli are guardians of the rainforest not just for themselves but all of us. Helping them to help themselves is a way we may be able to help save the planet. Once we lose the rainforest, it’s goodbye to all of us. How can we share this concept with the wider public?”

Nadiah said the reason they chose an arts and cultural project is because the arts is a great tool for the public to relate on a personal level. “We want to rethink our narrative of how we respond to climate change, we want to change people’s perception,” she said.

One thing that they hope to change is how people relate to the natural world. She related an encounter with an indigenous leader in Kelantan after the severe floods in the state several years ago. He had told her that the great flood should make them realise that the forest is not just necessary for the continuity of the indigenous communities but also for all the people of Malaysia — and it is the Orang Asli who are there to safeguard it.

b) Baseline for selection of narratives and beneficiaries

Zainariah commented that issues relating to the environment are often challenging because it involves land, and the problem gets more complex when it involves indigenous communities. She said the Orang Asal make up almost 12% of Malaysia’s population, numbering around 3.6 million. She asked about the basis of selection of the narratives and beneficiary communities, and their plans to make it inclusive, and secondly, their plans for mainstreaming the idea for wider public support.

Nadiah explained that they have set up an advisory board which includes indigenous women leaders and indigenous artists and are currently in the consultation process from which they will come out with a selection criterion. They have also been in touch with the organisers of the Freedom Film Fest which supports a group of youths using film to talk about issues in their villages, land rights and other issues.

“We are in active discussion with the community. It would have been great if they could have been here today, but we don’t have the platform for that,” she said.

The selection will be made after these discussions, and at this stage, it is likely the weavers will come from one particular village where their livelihood has been impacted by the loss of weaving material from the forest.

On mainstreaming their project, Wendi said they will undertake public engagement events to gain public support similar to the exhibition which her Gerimis Art Project group held at the George Town Festival a few years ago.

“That’s one way to connect the public to the issues. By giving a platform to the youth, and by doing public engagement events,” she said.

Nadiah added that the documentation of the community’s stories will also be made available to the public. They also hope to seek collaboration with other groups, for instance the indigenous communities in South America who are very vocal and a regular participant at the COP summits.

Zainariah commented that it is important to socialise the cause to the public. If the intended method is through public engagement events, she advised them to collaborate with established festivals such as the Yayasan Sime Darby Festival or Yayasan Hasanah’s Season for Arts. She would be happy to discuss this further with the project proponents.

c) Balancing business and art

Wendi asked about balancing business considerations with the arts as many people / funders do not consider climate change issues or art to be a worthwhile investment.

Romy suggested that they think long term as public advocacy movements often take several years at least to create enough awareness to spur action. As for the business considerations, he suggested that they study the existing models for ideas on how to go forward. There are many big international NGOs which work in different areas, and in most cases, the model of support is duration-based. Another avenue they can consider is a social enterprise. Romy shared two resources with information on the different models:

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- i. Cockpitarts – a social enterprise in the UK and a business incubator focusing on arts and creative works
 - ii. Weenu.com – a social enterprise in South Korea whose mission is to showcase the works of young artists. They combine environmental issues and art works to showcase their cause and at the same time, earn revenue using sponsorship models

d) Clear communication

A question was posed by Rosanna Lewis (Belgium) via the chat forum: “Lots of richness in the project: creative practice, indigenous heritage, addressing climate change, challenges and solutions. How do you ensure clear communication around the message you would like to get across, and the impact you would like to achieve?”

Nadiah agreed that clear communications will be critical. They will have a social media structure as well as a microsite, both of which will also be long-term campaigns. As for the impact, they plan to use social media analytics as one measure of response. As the art installation will be displayed at a COP26 venue, they are striving to ensure that it evokes the feelings of climate loss and damage, so that it will have an impact on the policymakers and people with influence.

Breakout Session 3: VISION – Virtual Impact Storytelling in Our Network

The panellists, Dr. Hjh. Yatela Zainal Abidin (Yayasan Sime Darby) and Florence Lambert (British Council), joined the discussion with the project team members, David Bryan and Jess Kemp (Social Enterprise Academy, Scotland) and Wan Dazriq (neOOne Associates, Malaysia).

Summary:

The panellists advised the project team to consider longer-term plans for a wider range of beneficiaries, and to look into the project and financial sustainability. The team said they are looking towards a sponsorship model to continue the programme in the longer term, and potentially for the festival to become a bigger crowdsourcing platform.

The project team was also advised to test the impact of their projects on small focus groups, with different age groups, to ensure that the messaging is clear and appealing.

a) Wider beneficiaries

The project team was asked about the potential for a wider set of beneficiaries in the future. David explained that they hope to roll out similar programmes to school pupils and students. The Social Enterprise Academy runs a school programme in Scotland, Malaysia, Egypt, South Africa and elsewhere, as well as a university programme in Pakistan and Southeast Asia. They work with partners like neOOne Associates in different countries and see this as a way to roll out this programme to wider beneficiaries.

Jess added that beyond the direct participants, the wider beneficiaries will be their communities. These young people will become leaders and role models who can have an impact on their communities when other young people see what they are doing and that it can be done.

b) Project and financial sustainability

Florence commented that they would like to see this collaboration between Malaysia and the UK become sustainable and asked if the project team was depending on receiving additional funding to continue.

David said work with young people can be a challenge because very few will be able to pay to participate in projects. They are thus considering a sponsorship model as they see this programme as a great opportunity for corporates to align themselves with these values. In the longer term if the festival evolves into a longer-term platform, it may provide opportunities to generate some income through crowd funding exercises.

“I see sponsorship as the way to do this, it’s a terrific way of directly engaging with young people,” he said.

c) Cultural connections, and creating appealing products

Dr. Yatela asked how the project team planned to facilitate collaboration between people from very different backgrounds, as the participants will come from different countries and comprise both artists and scientists. How would key decisions be made? Additionally, she asked how they would create projects that would appeal to young people while imparting a serious message on climate change.

Wan Dazriq responded that they hope the cultural differences, or cultural dynamism, will be an opportunity to learn from different countries and demographics. He said neOOne had run similar projects in Malaysia and Indonesia and explained that they don't plan for the projects to go into great technical detail on climate change. He gave an example of a project in Indonesia which focused on the simple message that 'Jakarta is sinking'. For technicalities which the youths will need to understand, they will be mentored and coached.

David added that the programme will focus on the sharing of methodologies, not just the sharing of academic disciplines but also the sharing of tools and techniques. He said storytelling is a tool which is common to both cultures, and visioning or dreaming is something which is shared by all humans. He said they will not direct the creation of the projects, rather they will allow it to happen naturally.

d) Test groups

Dr. Yatela asked if they will test the impact of the projects such as through test groups to obtain feedback on the clarity and appeal of the messaging. She asked if they would use focus groups that are not involved in the production process to provide feedback.

David said they will be checking in with their participants as they go along, through co-learning sessions to gather feedback. Wan Dazriq said they also plan to undertake community verification through a partnership with a crowdfunding platform. If people were to put money into a project, it would be one indicator of support.

e) Budget and finance

The moderator, Prabha Sundram, put forward a question received from the audience on budget and finance, and asked how the funds would be utilised.

David explained that the seed grant is being used to facilitate the bringing together of the participants, and the design of the virtual festival. Jess said any funding from the crowdfunding or other platforms will be utilised with advice from a panel of experts comprising investors and sponsors to ensure that the money is being well utilised.

f) Sharing of the projects

Dr. Yatela asked if the team is open to sharing the projects with other organisations such as Yayasan Sime Darby for its arts festival or school programme. She added (via the chat forum) that they may consider adding Bahasa Malaysia subtitles for a better reach to Malaysian students.

Wan Dazriq said the projects will be the output of their programme. Ideally, they would like to get them to COP26 but are open to ideas on democratising the projects coming out of the programme. He added that institutions like Yayasan Sime Darby may have youth programmes which they can collaborate with.

To Dr. Yatela's question on whether the projects will be for different age groups, David said they are exploring that. Dr. Yatela said the focus groups must also include the target age groups such as primary school students, to ensure that they can understand the messaging.

Closing Remarks

Prabha Sundram, Head of Education of British Council Malaysia, presented the closing remarks in which she said the COP26 event to be held in Glasgow from 1 November 2021, will demonstrate the urgency and opportunities of a zero-carbon economy and the power of international cooperation to address the gravest challenge faced by the world.

The UK is taking steps to tackle climate change including being the fastest country in the G20 to decarbonise its economy since 2000 and is the first major economy to pass laws for net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

The British Council is working with partners around the world to support the success of COP26, and to create opportunities for cooperation that addresses the shared challenge of climate change. The A.R.C. Challenge Malaysia, as part of these efforts, aims to encourage dialogue and collaborative projects in the arts, education and sciences between youths in Malaysia and the UK.

As heirs to the future, the youth are at the forefront in combating climate change and protecting cultural rights through raising awareness, creating spaces for debate, driving activism and advocacy, as well as leading the way in creating innovative and sustainable solutions. The British Council recognises the importance of providing a platform for youth to present their views to leaders, policymakers, academics and the general public.

Appendix

Questions from the Registration Form

Weaving Hopes for the Future

1. What does the word 'empowerment' mean to you?

VISION

1. How would the funding be distributed, and can there be continuous seed funding to create more expansion of projects?
2. How can we make the learning of climate change more interactive and engaged?
3. Will the shift towards electricity as fuel towards aviation industry possible?
4. (Question received via the chat forum) Roshan Kubbaen: How do you envision the acceptance of biodegradable substitutes perceived by the masses through the pitched idea?
5. Response from David Bryan: This is part of the circular economy, and reengaging with what used to come naturally. So, it's part of a wider shift in our thinking, a shift to a global mindset.

RIPPLE

1. How would you measure impact throughout the delivery of your project and how would you respond to challenges along the way?
2. Individual responsibility, to reduce consumption of various goods/foods at individual level.
3. With the recent unprecedented pandemic, the new normal has been followed by a sharp increase in the use of disposables (e.g. PPE, plastic products, etc.). Even companies that encouraged the use of reusable cups had to temporarily make a U-turn on their policy. How do you think the new normal is going to affect the waste trends in the country and what can be done to reverse any permanent implications from this?
4. I'm interested to know how will the UK/Malaysia teams address the countries' specific cultural norms/cultural sensitivity and differences towards recycling or upcycling when the training is conducted that will later state in the brief that it will upscale to a wider community anywhere in the world. Have the challenges in waste management been identified due to different cultural perception or behaviour towards waste management?
5. How do you plan to collect these plastic wastes for upcycling? And how do you plan to get the public's interest into buying these new product innovations?



WEAVING HOPES for the FUTURE

ISSUE: ORANG ASLIS...

- DENIED LAND RIGHTS
- LACK of LAND RIGHTS EDUCATION
- ERODED UNDERSTANDING of THEIR CULTURE, TRADITIONS & WAY of LIVING

SOLUTION:

EMPOWERING INDIGENOUS YOUTH AND WOMEN WITH KNOWLEDGE of THEIR RIGHTS AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS

IMPACT:

- BRIDGE the DIGITAL DIVIDE
- NURTURE MEANINGFUL COLLABORATION BETWEEN INDIGENOUS YOUTH
- LONG TERM AWARENESS PLATFORM
- ON YOUTH COLLECTIVISM IN CLIMATE ACTIVISM
- CREATIVE OUTPUT AT COP 26/ IN MALAYSIA AND DIGITALLY

PITCHING SESSIONS

VIRTUAL IMPACT STORYTELLING IN OUR NETWORK

AMPLIFY YOUTH VOICES ON CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGES

SOLUTION:

- CONNECT 30 YOUTHS IN SCOTLAND & MALAYSIA to FIGHT for CLIMATE JUSTICE THROUGH STORYTELLING
- VIRTUAL GLOBAL IMPACT FESTIVAL AHEAD of COP26

IMPACT:

- REACH 10K FOLLOWERS
- ENGAGE & OUTREACH
- AMPLIFY & INSPIRE
- CAPACITY BUILDING & DIGITALLY ENABLE

E.G. ECOVATOR

PROJECT RIPPLE

RESPONSIBLE INNOVATION PLASTICS PROJECT for LIFE & ENVIRONMENT

PLASTIC WASTE MANAGEMENT

ISSUES

- LACK of RESOURCES IN INNOVATION
- MINDSET

SOLUTION:

- NEW PRODUCT INNOVATION
- SHIFT to CIRCULAR ECONOMY
- INCREASE WASTE VALUE

IMPACT:

- MATURE STUDENTS' IDEAS for ENTREPRENEURSHIP
- CONNECT PROJECT SKILLS & CREATE NEW IDEAS VIA APP
- BEHAVIOURAL SHIFTS

DEEP DIVE DISCUSSIONS

HOW FEASIBLE ARE THE PROJECTS?

WEAVING HOPES for the FUTURE

COLLABORATE

- COMMUNICATE CLEARLY HOW LAND RIGHTS DECISIONS AFFECT CLIMATE CHANGE
- HOW CAN SOLUTION, IMPACT, AND AWARENESS OUTCOMES BE MEASURED?

WHAT DO YOU WANT DECISION MAKERS to KNOW, FEEL & DO?

ART IS A GREAT TOOL for the PUBLIC to EASILY RELATE to

WE WANT to CHANGE PEOPLE'S PERCEPTION

SOCIALISE the PROJECT

LOOK AT EXISTING MODELS & BUILD IT AS A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

BIG ORGANISATIONS & NGOS

THINK LONG-TERM!

• AWARENESS WILL TAKE TIME

2020 2021 2023

WHO ARE YOUR PRIMARY & END BENEFICIARIES?

VIRTUAL IMPACT STORYTELLING IN OUR NETWORK

- HOW WILL THE MESSAGE APPEAL to the TARGET AUDIENCE? PUBLIC, STUDENTS, CORPORATE.
- FIND COMMONALITIES that BOTH NATIONS HAVE
- AMPLIFY REACH BY PARTNERING WITH ESTABLISHED PLATFORMS & EXISTING FESTIVALS.
- MALAYSIA & SCOTLAND FOCUS GROUPS of DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS to TEST STORIES & MONITOR IMPACT
- WORKING WITH A WIDE NETWORK of PEOPLE WILL REQUIRE SPONSORSHIPS
- APPEAL to FUNDERS NEEDED
- COMMITMENT & CONTINUATION of PROJECT
- WIDER BENEFICIARIES & LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

HOW CAN THE PROJECTS BE SUSTAINABLE?

PROJECT RIPPLE

WEIGH YOUR SOLUTIONS & ASSUMPTIONS- WORK BACKWARDS!

THE MALAYSIAN PERSPECTIVE:

FACING LACK of SKILLED TALENT to ENGAGE

TEST PARTNERSHIPS YOU HAVE OFFLINE

CREATE PRODUCTS THAT LAST LONG-TERM

THINK ABOUT LONG-TERM OUTCOME & IMPACT

ARE OTHER ORGANISATIONS DOING SOMETHING SIMILAR?

IF SO, HOW WILL YOU CUT THROUGH the NOISE?

HOW WILL YOU MARKET this IDEA?

NEED to BUILD CAPACITY for PRODUCT DESIGN & SUSTAINABILITY

FOCUS ON BOTH OFFLINE & ONLINE