



Project Number: 2022-1-BG01-KA220-SCH-000085665



## **Live Action Role Play to Increase Youth Active Citizenship**

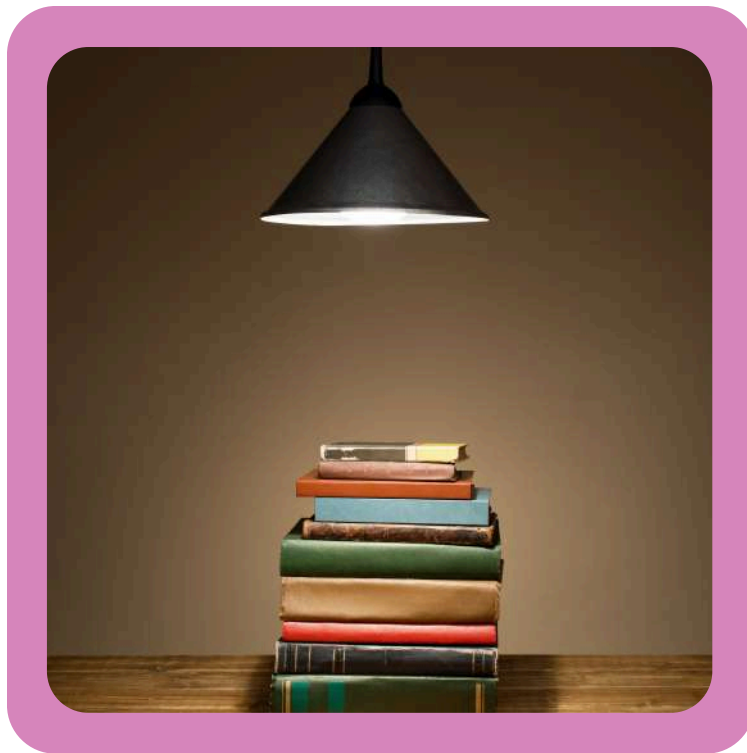
# **GUIDE MANUAL**

and visual materials how to do LARP at  
school and out-of-school environment



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**

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## SHORT INTRODUCTION

The Guide Manual for Implementing Life Action Role Play (LARP) on Civic Engagement is a comprehensive resource designed to assist educators and trainers in effectively utilizing LARP as a tool for promoting civic participation among young people. This manual provides step-by-step instructions, practical tips, and valuable insights to ensure successful implementation of LARP sessions.

The Guide will support teachers and other teaching professions through interactive open educational resources (OER) on the topics of non-formal methods in education, gamification in general and LARP in particular, facilitating, training and gamified methods in education in order to foster youths' inclusion, personal development and active participation in public life. With the help of the Guide educators will support students to develop their soft and transversal skills and later to turn their skills into actions.

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CHAPTER

1

INTRODUCTION

# BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The Live Action Role Playing for Civic Engagement (LARPIC) project is an innovative initiative that aims to leverage the power of Live Action Role Playing (LARP) method as an innovative educational tool.

The project aims to promote civic participation and active citizenship among students and young people aged 15-19 by integrating LARP methodologies into the educational environment.

The LARPIC project brings together a diverse consortium of 5 partners from 4 European countries, each contributing their unique expertise in education, gamification and civic engagement.

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the need for educational approaches that go beyond traditional classroom settings to engage students in meaningful and interactive ways. LARP, a form of role-playing game where participants physically act out their characters' actions, has emerged as a powerful tool for experiential learning. By immersing participants in realistic scenarios, LARP encourages critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork, and empathy, all of which are essential skills for active citizenship.

The LARPIC project builds on this potential by creating a structured framework for implementing LARP in educational contexts. The project seeks to address the gap in civic education by providing teachers and educators with practical tools and resources to integrate LARP into their curricula. Through this innovative approach, the LARPIC project aims to inspire young people to become more engaged and responsible citizens.



# BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The rationale behind the LARPIC project is rooted in the pressing need to enhance civic education and participation among young people and students 15-19 years old. Traditional methods of teaching civic education often fail to fully engage students or develop the practical skills necessary for active participation in society. LARP offers a dynamic and immersive alternative, allowing students to explore civic concepts in a hands-on, interactive manner.

By participating in LARP activities, students can experience firsthand the complexities of civic life, such as decision-making processes, community involvement, and the importance of diverse perspectives. This experiential learning approach not only makes civic education more engaging but also more impactful, as students are likely to retain and apply what they have learned in real-life situations.

The LARPIC project is designed to support educators in implementing these innovative methods. By providing comprehensive guidelines, practical tips, and a wealth of resources, this Guide Manual for Implementing Life Action Role Play (LARP) on Civic Engagement aims to empower teachers and trainers to effectively use LARP to promote civic participation. The guide is part of a broader effort to foster a more inclusive and participatory society by equipping young people with the skills and motivation to actively contribute to their communities.

## What is experience education or learning by doing?

Experiential education, often referred to as "learning by doing," is a hands-on approach to learning that emphasizes active participation and direct experience. Within the LARPIC project, this method is central to promoting civic engagement among young people. By engaging in Life Action Role Play (LARP), students don't just learn about civic duties and social issues theoretically; they experience them first-hand through immersive, interactive activities. This approach helps students internalize and retain knowledge more effectively by actively involving them in the learning process and allowing them to reflect on their experiences.

## Using non-formal and gamification methods in education

The LARPIC project leverages non-formal education and gamification to make learning about civic engagement dynamic and engaging. Non-formal education includes structured learning activities outside the traditional classroom setting, which are crucial for the flexible, learner-centered approach of LARP. Gamification, the incorporation of game design elements in educational contexts, further enhances this by making learning activities more compelling and motivating. Through role-playing, point scoring, and interactive storytelling, gamification within the LARPIC project transforms educational content into exciting, real-life scenarios. This not only makes learning more enjoyable but also helps develop critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and active participation among students.

# BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

## Importance of promoting civic engagement in education

Civic engagement is the cornerstone of a functioning democracy and a vibrant society. Promoting civic engagement in education is crucial for several reasons, particularly within the context of the LARPIC project, which aims to foster active citizenship among young people through innovative educational methods. Encouraging civic engagement in education empowers young people to become informed, responsible, and active citizens. By understanding their rights and responsibilities, students are better equipped to participate in the democratic process and contribute to their communities. The LARPIC project uses Life Action Role Play (LARP) to simulate real-life civic scenarios, enabling students to practice decision-making, leadership, and collaboration in a supportive environment.

Civic engagement activities, such as those incorporated in the LARPIC project, challenge students to think critically about social issues and develop practical solutions. This process enhances their problem-solving skills and fosters a deeper understanding of complex societal dynamics. By engaging in role plays and simulations, students learn to analyze situations from multiple perspectives and devise effective strategies to address them. Education that emphasizes civic engagement helps students develop a sense of social responsibility and awareness of community needs. The LARPIC project's focus on gamification and non-formal education methods encourages students to engage with local and global issues actively. This not only broadens their horizons but also instills a lifelong commitment to contributing positively to society.

Civic engagement requires effective communication and collaboration. Through the interactive and participatory activities promoted by the LARPIC project, students improve their ability to articulate their ideas, listen to others, and work as part of a team. These skills are essential for active participation in civic life and are highly valued in personal and professional contexts. Civic engagement education promotes inclusivity and appreciation for diversity. The LARPIC project's role-playing scenarios often involve diverse viewpoints and cultures, helping students to develop empathy and respect for others. This experience is vital for fostering inclusive communities where all members feel valued and heard.

By integrating civic engagement into education, the LARPIC project aims to create a foundation for lifelong learning and active citizenship. Students who participate in LARP activities are more likely to remain engaged in civic matters throughout their lives, continuously seeking to improve their communities and advocate for social change.

In conclusion, the LARPIC project recognizes the importance of promoting civic engagement in education as a means to empower young people, develop essential skills, and build a more inclusive and active society. Through innovative methods like LARP, the project aims to make civic education both effective and engaging, preparing students to be proactive and responsible citizens.

# BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

## LARP as a method

Live Action Role Play (LARP) is an innovative, participatory form of role-playing game where participants physically act out their character's actions within a structured scenario. Unlike traditional role-playing games that may rely on verbal or written descriptions, LARP allows participants to engage fully by embodying their characters, making real-time decisions, and interacting with others in a shared environment. This method blends elements of improvisational theatre, collaborative storytelling, and simulation, making it a dynamic and engaging educational tool, suitable for all ages and all educational settings.

In the educational context, LARP transcends conventional learning techniques by offering a powerful, experiential approach to education. It encourages active learning, where students are not passive recipients of information but are instead deeply involved in the learning process. This method supports the development of critical thinking, problem-solving, empathy, and social skills, all of which are crucial for personal and civic development.

LARP typically begins with a scenario or setting designed around specific learning objectives. Participants are assigned roles with particular backgrounds, goals, and perspectives that align with the scenario. As the scenario unfolds, participants interact with each other, make decisions, and navigate challenges that arise, all while staying in character. This interaction allows them to explore complex issues in a controlled environment that mirrors real-world dynamics.

For example, in a civic engagement scenario, students might take on roles as government officials, community activists, or local residents. They would then engage in discussions, debates, and negotiations to address a community issue, such as urban development or environmental conservation. Through this process, they gain a deeper understanding of civic responsibilities, the importance of dialogue, and the impact of collective decision-making.



# BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE



LARP is particularly effective in teaching civic engagement because it allows students to experience the consequences of decisions in a simulated yet realistic context. By stepping into the shoes of various stakeholders, participants gain insight into different perspectives, fostering empathy and a more nuanced understanding of social issues. This method also emphasizes the importance of collaboration and communication, as successful outcomes in LARP often depend on the ability to work together and negotiate differing viewpoints.

Moreover, LARP sessions are designed to be reflective, with debriefing sessions held after the activity to discuss what was learned, how participants felt, and how the experience can be connected to real-world civic responsibilities. This reflection reinforces the lessons learned during the activity and helps solidify the skills and knowledge gained.

LARP is a powerful educational method that transforms the way civic education is delivered in formal and non-formal educational settings. By making learning active, immersive, and reflective, LARP not only engages students but also equips them with the practical skills and understanding necessary for active citizenship. The LARPIC project leverages this method to foster a new generation of informed, empathetic, and proactive citizens who are prepared to contribute positively to their communities and society as a whole.

# OBJECTIVES OF THE GUIDE

The current Guide manual for implementing Life Action Role Play (LARP) on civic engagement is designed to equip educators, trainers, and facilitators with the knowledge and tools necessary to effectively integrate LARP into their educational practices. This guide aims to support the development of civic awareness, critical thinking, and active participation among young people through immersive and experiential learning methods. The main objectives of this guide are presented below.

## **EMPOWER EDUCATORS WITH LARP KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

This guide provides a comprehensive understanding of LARP as an educational tool, offering step-by-step instructions on how to design, facilitate, and debrief LARP sessions. By familiarizing educators with the principles and practices of LARP, the guide empowers them to confidently implement this method in their classrooms or educational settings.

## **PROMOTE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGH EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING**

LARP is a powerful method for teaching civic engagement by allowing students to actively participate in scenarios that mirror real-world civic processes. This guide aims to foster a deeper understanding of civic responsibilities and encourage students to become informed, active citizens who are capable of contributing positively to their communities.

## **DEVELOP STUDENTS' SOFT AND TRANSVERSAL SKILLS**

LARP activities are designed to enhance key soft skills such as communication, teamwork, leadership, negotiation, cooperation, creative thinking and empathy. The guide provides strategies for educators to focus on these skills throughout the LARP process, ensuring that students not only gain knowledge but also develop the interpersonal abilities necessary for effective civic participation.

## **SUPPORT TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN FACILITATING REFLECTION ON THE LARP**

The LARP Guide offers detailed guidance on how to plan, execute, and facilitate LARP activities in educational settings. One of the core components of LARP is the debriefing process, where participants reflect on their experiences, analyze the outcomes, and connect the activity to real-life civic responsibilities. This guide offers guidance on how to facilitate these reflective sessions, helping students to critically evaluate their actions and decisions within the LARP, and apply their learning to broader societal contexts.

## **SUPPORT CROSS-DISCIPLINARY LEARNING**

The guide emphasizes the use of LARP as a cross-disciplinary tool that integrates elements of social studies, ethics, communication, and creative arts. By promoting interdisciplinary learning, the guide helps educators to connect civic engagement with a broader range of academic subjects, making learning more holistic and relevant to students' lives.

## **ENCOURAGE CREATIVE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS**

The guide promotes the use of LARP as a way to create dynamic and inclusive learning environments that cater to diverse learning styles and needs. By encouraging creativity and active participation, LARP helps to engage all students, including those who may struggle with traditional, lecture-based methods of learning.



CHAPTER

2

LARP INTRO - GETTING  
STARTED

# LARP INTRO - GETTING STARTED



## PRESENTING THE LARP

The "Shadow City" scenario was developed in response to the growing need for educational tools that foster civic engagement and social responsibility among young people. Set in a city plagued by corruption, environmental degradation, and social injustice, the scenario reflects pressing real-world issues that demand collective action. By immersing participants in a narrative where they must strategize, communicate, and collaborate to effect change, the LARP provides a dynamic platform for exploring the complexities of civic participation. Through hands-on activities, problem-solving challenges, and reflective discussions, "Shadow City" empowers students to understand the impact of their actions on society, encouraging them to become active, informed citizens who recognize the importance of standing up for justice, equality, and sustainability in their communities. This scenario is designed to not only educate but to inspire a sense of agency and responsibility in the next generation, helping them realize that they have the power to make a meaningful difference in the world around them.

We deliberately chose to centre the characters in "Shadow City" as teenagers from the city to make the scenario as relatable and impactful as possible for our participants. Drawing from our previous experience with a similar LARP in Senegal, we recognized the importance of grounding the narrative in real-world contexts that resonate with the daily lives of young people. By avoiding fantastical or fictional settings, we aim to immerse participants in a world that mirrors the challenges they observe or experience themselves, such as political corruption, environmental issues, and social inequality. This approach not only enhances the relevance of the game but also deepens the participants' understanding of civic engagement by presenting them with the authentic difficulties and complexities of societal problems. We believe that by engaging with real issues in a simulated environment, students are better equipped to grasp the importance of their role in society and are motivated to experiment with civic participation in a space that feels both safe and empowering. In "Shadow City," participants have the opportunity to experience both success and failure, which are integral to the educational purpose of the game. Success allows them to see the tangible impact of their actions and decisions, reinforcing the power of civic engagement and collaboration. However, experiencing failure is equally important, as it teaches resilience, the complexity of real-world challenges, and the understanding that not all efforts lead to immediate or easy solutions. This method offers them a unique opportunity to practise problem-solving, collaboration, and activism in a way that is meaningful and directly applicable to their own lives.

# INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO ORGANIZE THE LARP

## STEP 1

To successfully organize "Shadow City," begin with thoroughly familiarizing educators with the game's structure, objectives, and rules, ensuring they are comfortable guiding students through the various stages of the LARP.

Educators should review the character cards, storyline, and reflection prompts in advance to facilitate smooth gameplay and meaningful discussions. It is crucial to create a supportive environment where participants feel safe to express their ideas and engage fully.

## STEP 2

## STEP 3

Prior to the game, set up the classroom or designated areas to resemble the city environment, using props, posters, or signage to enhance immersion. Please also note that the game will require some props to be placed in the corridors of the school or in other classrooms. Consider the logistical aspects, such as the duration of each game part, availability of materials needed for civic activities, and access to spaces for group work.

All the instructions you will find in the documents, more specifically in document Game Instructions.

## STEP 4

## STEP 5

Finally, prepare reflection sessions with guiding questions to help students process their experiences and connect them to real-world civic engagement. By addressing these considerations, educators can create a compelling and educational LARP experience that effectively promotes civic awareness and participation.



CHAPTER

3

HOW TO WORK WITH  
THE LARP

# HOW TO WORK WITH THE LARP



## SHORT VIDEOS DEMONSTRATING LARP SESSIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

The video section of the Guide aims to provide visual presentation and practical insights to complement each phase of the LARP game. These short videos present key aspects of the LARP, from introducing the game and brainstorming civic activities to reflecting on crucial moments and unravelling the mystery Lord of the Shadows.

Each video aligns with a specific phase of the game, offering a clear, engaging way to visualize the LARP process.

# SHORT VIDEOS DEMONSTRATING LARP SESSIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION



[Watch video here](#)

## VIDEO 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE GAME

This video presents the backstory of "Shadow City" and the central mission that drives the LARP experience. It introduces the citizens of Shadow City, a town struggling with corruption, environmental pollution, violations of women's rights and more. The role of the game master and the tasks of the players are introduced here, preparing everyone for the journey ahead.

## VIDEO 2: BRAINSTORMING

This video guides players through a collaborative brainstorming session where they plan civic activities aimed at raising public awareness about the issues that Shadow City faces. Creativity, strategy, and teamwork are the key components of this stage.



[Watch video here](#)



## VIDEO 3: CIVIC ACTIONS

Players execute their civic activities to attract supporters from Shadow City's population. The goal is to get at least 50,000 citizens to their side by organizing events, spreading information, and rallying support.



[Watch video here](#)





# SHORT VIDEOS DEMONSTRATING LARP SESSIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION



## VIDEO 4: CIVIC ACTIONS - ATTRACTING FOLLOWERS

In this video, players see the immediate impact of their civic activities and the resulting increase in supporters. The focus is on how successfully their actions have influenced public opinion.



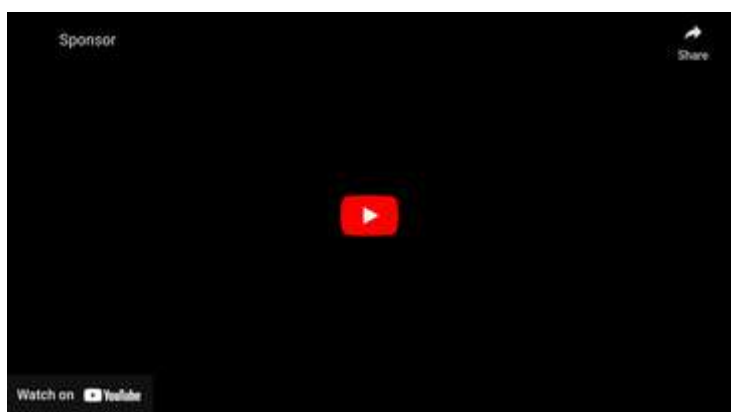
[Watch video here](#)

## VIDEO 5: REFLECTION N°1

During the first reflection, players take a step back to discuss what worked during their civic engagement efforts, what could have been done better, and how they feel about their progress so far.



[Watch video here](#)



## VIDEO 6: SPONSOR

Here, players work together to identify the core problems in Shadow City. They'll then secure a sponsor to help them tackle one major issue. The key is to prioritise and unanimously agree on which issue is most critical to address first.



[Watch video here](#)

# SHORT VIDEOS DEMONSTRATING LARP SESSIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION



## VIDEO 7: REFLECTION N°2

Players reflect on the process of securing a sponsor and the strategic decisions they made. The discussion is mostly focused on the complexities of problem-solving and teamwork.



[Watch video here](#)

## VIDEO 8: INVESTIGATION

Players begin the investigation into who is pulling the strings in Shadow City. Through analyzing witness interviews and solving puzzles, they slowly uncover the identity of the hidden antagonist—the Lord of the Shadows.



[Watch video here](#)



## VIDEO 9: REFLECTION N°3

Players discuss their investigation, focusing on the challenges they faced and what they did to uncover the antagonist. This reflection sets the stage for the final push to solve the city's biggest problems.



[Watch video here](#)



# SHORT VIDEOS DEMONSTRATING LARP SESSIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION



## VIDEO 10: FINDING THE KEY TO THE CITY

The final phase of the game. Players pool their resources—public influence, money, and information to solve Shadow City's problems. The goal is to work as a team, to discuss, to use their points wisely and unlock the key to the city, restoring order and justice for its citizens.



[Watch video here](#)

## VIDEO 11: FINAL REFLECTION

In this final reflection, players discuss the entire experience. The focus is on the importance of civic participation, teamwork, and how their actions within the game can inspire real-world change.



[Watch video here](#)

# FACILITATOR TIPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure a smooth and successful implementation of the Shadow City LARP, this section offers practical tips, recommendations, and advice for facilitators. It covers strategies to navigate challenging moments, manage group dynamics and encourage meaningful reflection. These insights are designed to help facilitators guide students through the game, ensuring both engagement and learning throughout the process.

Throughout the LARP, students may express strong emotions or disagreements, particularly in sensitive scenarios. **Encourage open dialogue** by reminding players of the importance of listening to each other's perspectives. If tensions arise, pause the game briefly to address concerns, ensuring that all voices are heard and respected.

Some students may be hesitant to engage fully in the game. Assign them roles that align with their comfort levels, such as data analysis, communication, or support roles within teams. Gradually **encourage them to step into more active roles** as their confidence rises.

LARP scenarios could evoke **strong emotional reactions**, especially when dealing with sensitive issues such as corruption, inequality, or environmental harm. Acknowledge emotions as valid responses and offer brief, calm reflections during or after intense moments to ensure the players feel supported.

The reflection phases are crucial for deepening the learning experience. Ask open-ended questions to encourage critical thinking and personal reflection. For example, "What challenges did your team face when trying to gain public support? How did you overcome them?" This will help students **connect the game with real-life civic engagement**.

If time becomes an issue during any part of the game, **focus on the key objectives of each phase**. Skip or condense less critical tasks, but ensure that the reflection portions are preserved as they are vital for reinforcing learning outcomes.

The game has competitive elements, but remind participants that **teamwork and collective problem-solving** are key to winning. If some teams become overly competitive, reframe the challenge by emphasizing the importance of civic responsibility and community impact rather than just winning.

As the facilitator, your role is to **keep the narrative moving smoothly**. Use time limits for activities and gentle reminders if a team is falling behind schedule. This ensures that all teams stay on track and no one gets stuck for too long in any one phase of the game.

Since the LARP touches on complex societal issues, such as inequality and corruption, be prepared to **facilitate discussions with sensitivity**. Offer additional resources or follow-up activities that allow students to explore these issues further, fostering a deeper understanding beyond the game.

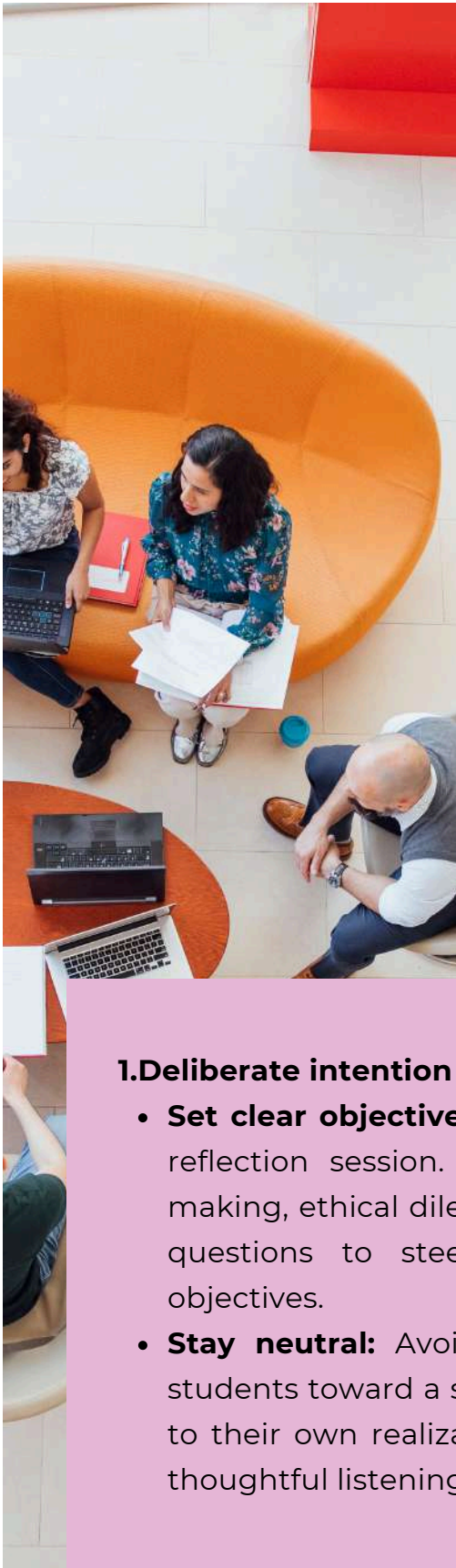


CHAPTER

4

FACILITATION GUIDE

# PRINCIPLES OF FACILITATION



## After performing the LARP

Facilitation in the context of LARP (Live Action Role-Playing) is a powerful tool that transforms learning into a dynamic and interactive process. As facilitators, educators guide students through reflective discussions, helping them to process their experiences, draw insights, and connect these learnings to real-world applications. This section provides strategies, techniques, and practical tips to enhance facilitation, ensuring that participants are actively engaged and encouraged to think critically about their experiences.

## Principles of facilitation

### 1. Deliberate intention

- **Set clear objectives:** Before facilitating, define the goals of the reflection session. Are you focusing on teamwork, decision-making, ethical dilemmas, or emotional intelligence? Tailor your questions to steer the discussion toward these learning objectives.
- **Stay neutral:** Avoid imposing your own opinions or leading students toward a specific conclusion. The goal is to guide them to their own realizations through open-ended questioning and thoughtful listening.

# PRINCIPLES OF FACILITATION

## 2. Creating a safe environment

- **Establish ground rules:** Begin by setting or reminding participants of the discussion rules. Encourage respect, confidentiality, and the idea that all opinions are valid. Rules like “agree to disagree” foster a culture of respect and inclusivity.
- **Confidentiality:** Assure participants that what is shared in the room stays in the room. This is crucial for building trust and encouraging honest sharing.
- **Non-judgmental attitude:** Show acceptance of all emotions and viewpoints without judgement. This creates a space where participants feel safe to express themselves.

## 3. Welcoming all opinions

- **Encourage participation:** Use techniques where each participant is invited to share their thoughts in turn. This ensures that even quieter members have a voice.
- **Valuing silence:** Allow participants time to think before they speak. Silence can be powerful and provides space for deeper reflection.
- **Respecting opt-outs:** While it's important to encourage participation, also respect when a participant chooses not to share. Participation should always be voluntary.



# PRINCIPLES OF FACILITATION

## 4. Asking the right questions

- **Use open-ended questions:** Questions like “What did you notice about the group dynamics?” or “How did the situation make you feel?” encourage deeper reflection and discussion.
- **Avoid "Why" questions:** Instead of asking “Why did you do that?”, rephrase to “What led you to make that choice?” This reduces defensiveness and opens up dialogue.
- **Sequential questioning:** Start with factual questions to ground the discussion, then move to feelings and interpretations. Finally, guide participants to think about future applications of what they’ve learned.



## 6. Addressing the “Pink Elephant”

**Acknowledge the unsaid:** If there’s an underlying tension or unspoken issue, bring it to light gently. For example, say, “I sense there’s some unease—would anyone like to share their thoughts?” This encourages transparency and can help resolve underlying conflicts.

## 5. Moderating the discussion

- **Linking ideas:** As a facilitator, connect participants’ responses to each other and to the overall theme. This helps to weave a cohesive narrative from diverse opinions.
- **Summarizing:** Periodically summarize the discussion to reinforce key points and ensure that everyone is on the same page.
- **Storytelling:** Share relevant anecdotes or experiences to enrich the discussion, but be mindful not to dominate the conversation or shift focus from the participants’ reflections.



# PRACTICAL TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE FACILITATION

## Do's

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### Encourage active participation

- Regularly invite participants to share their thoughts, especially those who may be quieter or more reserved. Use phrases like, "I'd love to hear from someone who hasn't spoken yet."
- When appropriate, use participants' names to engage them directly, creating a more personalized and inclusive environment.
- Encourage participants to take on different roles in group activities to experience diverse perspectives.

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### Foster open dialogue

- If a participant's point is unclear, ask for clarification rather than making assumptions. This shows that you value their input and want to understand them fully.
- When participants share, acknowledge their contributions by paraphrasing and validating their thoughts. For example, "It sounds like you felt frustrated when that happened—does that capture your experience?"
- Demonstrate active listening by nodding, maintaining eye contact, and repeating key points. This shows participants that their contributions are valued.

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### Create an inclusive environment

- Recognize that participants may process information differently—some through discussion, others through reflection or writing. Incorporate a variety of activities to cater to these differences.
- Be aware of and respect cultural differences that may influence how participants engage. Tailor your facilitation to be inclusive of diverse backgrounds.
- Offer alternative ways for participants to express themselves, such as through writing, drawing, or small group discussions, especially if they are uncomfortable speaking in large groups.
- If appropriate, use tools like digital polls or shared documents where participants can anonymously contribute their thoughts. This can increase participation, especially among those less comfortable speaking up.

# PRACTICAL TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE FACILITATION

## Do's

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### Encourage reflection and self-discovery

- Ask questions that prompt deeper thinking, such as "What does that say about how we work together as a team?" or "How might this situation be similar to real-life scenarios?"
  - Guide participants to make connections between the LARP experience and their personal lives, fostering a sense of ownership over their learning process.
- 

### Stay flexible and adaptive

- Be ready to change the plan if the group's energy or needs shift. If a particular discussion is resonating, allow it to continue rather than cutting it off to stick to a schedule.
  - Pay attention to the group's dynamics and be prepared to address issues such as dominance by certain individuals or conflicts that arise.
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## Don'ts

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### Don't judge or criticize

- Never criticize participants' ideas or feelings, even subtly. Phrases like "That's not how it is" or "You shouldn't feel that way" can shut down further sharing.
  - Avoid correcting participants during discussions. Instead of saying, "That's wrong," ask questions like, "What made you think that?" to explore their reasoning.
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### Don't dominate the conversation

- The facilitator should not be the main speaker. Focus on drawing out the participants' thoughts and reflections.
  - Don't explain concepts or ideas at length. Instead, allow participants to discover insights through guided questions and discussion.
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# PRACTICAL TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE FACILITATION

## Don'ts

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### Don't rush the process

- Give participants ample time to think and reflect before answering. Don't rush to fill silence—it's often when deeper insights emerge.
  - While encouraging engagement is important, never force a participant to speak if they are uncomfortable. Respect their choice to observe or listen.
- 

### Don't assume understanding

- Regularly check in with participants to ensure they understand the discussion or instructions. Avoid assuming everyone is on the same page.
  - Steer clear of using complex language or jargon that may be unfamiliar to participants. Keep your language clear and accessible.
- 

### Don't ignore different emotions

- If a participant becomes emotional, don't dismiss or ignore their feelings. Acknowledge them and provide space for the participant to express themselves freely.
  - If a conflict arises, address it rather than ignoring it. Use the opportunity to explore different perspectives and resolve the issue constructively.
-

# THE 4F METHOD

## Structure of reflection: The 4F method

The 4F Method is a structured approach to reflection used to guide participants through a comprehensive analysis of their experiences. 4F stands for Facts, Feelings, Findings, and Futures. This method is particularly useful in LARP (Live Action Role Playing) facilitation settings due to its ability to facilitate deep, reflective discussions that enhance learning and personal growth.

LARP activities often involve complex, dynamic scenarios where participants engage in role-playing and decision-making. The 4F method provides a clear, step-by-step framework to dissect these experiences, making it easier for participants to understand and learn from their actions.

By addressing the factual, emotional, evaluative, and future-oriented aspects of an experience, the 4F method ensures a well-rounded reflection. This helps participants connect their actions and decisions with their emotional responses and future implications, leading to more meaningful insights.

The method encourages active participation and engagement by guiding participants through each stage of reflection. This structured approach keeps discussions focused and productive, preventing the conversation from becoming unfocused or superficial.

The 4F method aids facilitators in guiding participants through a reflective process that promotes critical thinking, emotional processing, and practical application. This structured reflection helps consolidate learning and translate insights into actionable improvements.



# THE 4F METHOD

## The 4F method: Facts

### Purpose

The Facts stage serves as the foundational step in the reflection process. Its primary aim is to ensure that all participants have a clear and shared understanding of **what happened during the LARP activity**. This stage helps to ground the discussion in objective reality before diving into subjective interpretations or emotional responses.

- **Establishing a common ground:** By focusing on concrete events, this stage aligns all participants on the same narrative. It ensures that everyone's recollections are synchronized, preventing misunderstandings that could arise from differing perspectives.
- **Clarifying ambiguities:** This phase helps to resolve any uncertainties or gaps in the participants' recollections. Clarifying facts ensures that the subsequent stages of reflection are based on accurate and agreed-upon information.
- **Setting the context:** Understanding what happened provides a context for analyzing the experience. It frames the discussion for the emotional and evaluative stages that follow, making it easier to connect feelings and findings with specific events.

### Sample questions

- *What happened during the LARP activity?"*
- *"Can you describe the main events that took place?"*
- *"What were the key actions or decisions made during the activity?"*
- *"Who was involved in the key decisions?"*
- *"What were the major turning points in the activity?"*

### Practical tips

- Encourage participants to provide detailed descriptions of events.
- Use visual aids like timelines or event maps to clarify and organize facts.
- Address any discrepancies in recollections to ensure accuracy.

# THE 4F METHOD

## The 4F method: Feelings

### Purpose

The Feelings stage is designed **to explore and validate the emotional experiences of participants during the LARP activity**. This phase is crucial for understanding how emotions influenced their behavior and decisions and for processing those emotions constructively.

- **Validating emotions:** Recognizing and accepting participants' feelings as legitimate helps build trust and creates a safe space for open discussion. It is important to affirm that all emotional responses are valid and worth exploring.
- **Understanding emotional impact:** This stage helps participants articulate how their emotions impacted their actions and interactions during the LARP. It provides insight into how feelings like stress, excitement, or frustration influenced their performance and decision-making.
- **Facilitating emotional processing:** Discussing feelings allows participants to process their emotions, which can be essential for moving forward and making sense of their experiences. It helps in addressing any unresolved emotional issues that may affect their learning.

### Sample questions

- *“How did you feel during the different stages of the activity?”*
- *“What emotions did you experience when faced with specific challenges?”*
- *“Did you notice any changes in your feelings as the activity progressed?”*

### Practical tips

- Create a supportive environment where participants feel comfortable sharing their emotions.
- Use techniques like emotion charts or feeling wheels to help participants articulate their feelings.
- Be empathetic and non-judgmental when participants share their emotions.

# THE 4F METHOD

## The 4F method: Findings

### Purpose

The Findings stage focuses on analyzing the experience to draw lessons and insights. This phase helps participants **evaluate what worked well and what did not**, facilitating a deeper understanding of the activity's outcomes and their personal performance.

- **Evaluating effectiveness:** This stage helps participants assess the success of different strategies and decisions made during the LARP. It provides a platform for analyzing what contributed to positive or negative outcomes.
- **Identifying lessons learned:** By reflecting on what was effective or problematic, participants can identify key takeaways and lessons. This helps in understanding patterns of success and areas for improvement.
- **Fostering critical thinking:** This phase encourages participants to think critically about their experiences. It promotes a reflective mindset that can lead to more informed and deliberate actions in future situations.

### Sample questions

- *“What strategies or actions were successful during the activity?”*
- *“What did you find challenging or difficult?”*
- *“What were the strengths and weaknesses in your approach?”*

### Practical tips

- Use structured questions to guide participants in evaluating their actions and strategies.
- Facilitate group discussions to help identify common themes and insights.
- Ask participants to provide specific examples of what worked or didn't work, which can help in identifying actionable insights.

# THE 4F METHOD

## The 4F method: Futures

### Purpose

The Futures stage is about ***applying the insights gained from the previous stages to future actions***. This phase is crucial for translating reflection into practical plans and strategies, ensuring that the lessons learned lead to tangible improvements.

- **Planning for improvement:** This stage helps participants develop actionable plans for how they would handle similar situations in the future. It translates reflections and insights into concrete steps for enhancement.
- **Setting goals:** By setting specific, measurable, and realistic goals, participants can focus on continuous improvement. This phase ensures that the reflections lead to personal or group objectives that can be pursued and assessed.
- **Applying lessons to real life:** This stage bridges the gap between the LARP activity and real-world applications. It encourages participants to take the lessons learned and apply them to their everyday experiences and future challenges.

### Sample questions

- *“What would you do differently if you encountered a similar situation again?”*
- *“How can you apply the lessons learned from this activity to real-life situations?”*
- *“What strategies or approaches will you use in the future to handle similar challenges?”*

### Practical tips

- Facilitate goal-setting by helping participants define clear and actionable objectives and future steps.
- Encourage participants to develop strategies for applying their insights in real-world contexts.
- Plan follow-up sessions or activities to review progress towards the goals set during this stage.



# THE 4F METHOD



## The 4F method

While the 4F method offers a structured approach, it is important to recognize that the sequence of the stages is not rigid. Facilitators can adapt the order or focus of the stages based on the context and needs of the participants.

For example, if emotions are particularly strong, starting with the Feelings stage may be more effective. Alternatively, if specific outcomes need immediate attention, the Findings stage might be prioritized.

By incorporating the 4F method into LARP facilitation, educators can effectively guide participants through a structured and comprehensive reflection process. This approach not only deepens participants' understanding of their experiences but also enhances their ability to apply lessons learned to future situations.

# OTHER EXAMPLE STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGING PARTICIPANTS

## Think-pair-share

Ask participants to first think individually, then discuss their thoughts with a partner, and finally share with the larger group. This method promotes active engagement and helps shy students participate.

## Role reversal

Have participants switch roles or perspectives in the discussion. This can deepen their understanding of different viewpoints and enhance empathy.

## Fishbowl discussion

Select a few participants to discuss a topic in an inner circle while others observe. Rotate participants so everyone has a chance to contribute. This technique encourages active listening and reflection.

## Drawing or mapping

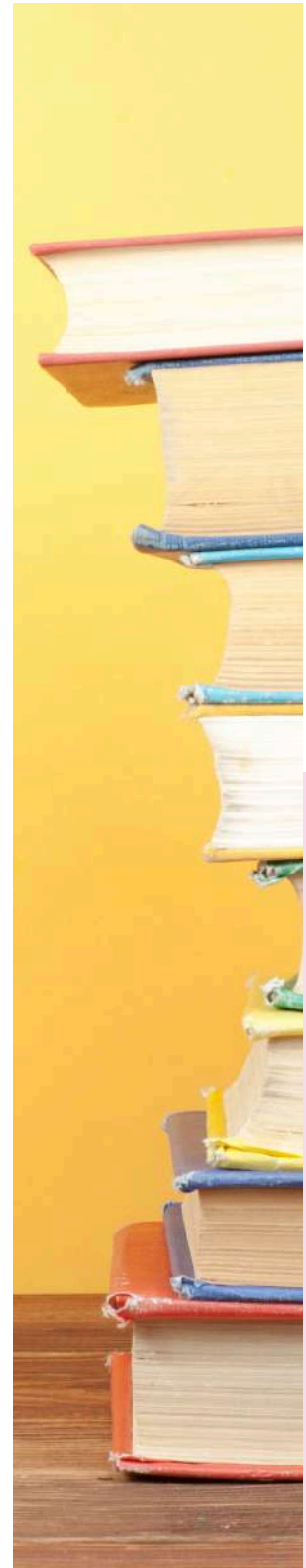
Encourage participants to draw their experiences or map out the dynamics of the LARP session. This visual approach can help students express thoughts they might struggle to verbalize.

## Storyboards

Ask participants to create a storyboard of key moments from the LARP session. This can help in sequencing events and understanding cause-and-effect relationships.

## Metaphor exploration

Invite participants to describe their experience using metaphors. For example, “The group worked like a well-oiled machine,” or “The decision felt like walking on a tightrope.” This can lead to deeper insights and richer discussions.



# ADDITIONAL TIPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1. Strategies for facilitating learning by doing

Relate the LARP activities to real-world situations that participants may encounter. This makes the experience more relevant and enhances the learning process. Start with simpler activities and gradually introduce more complex scenarios as participants gain confidence and skills.

After each activity, provide immediate feedback. Encourage participants to reflect on what they did well and what they could improve in the next round.

## 2. Techniques for encouraging open dialogue

Use a method of asking systematic, disciplined questions to stimulate critical thinking and illuminate ideas. This technique helps participants question assumptions and explore deeper meanings.

After asking a question, give participants time to think before they respond. This “think time” often leads to more thoughtful and considered answers.

Repeat back what participants have said in your own words to show understanding and to clarify their points. This can also help others in the group understand better.



# ADDITIONAL TIPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 3. Asking questions

Begin with broad questions to open up the discussion, then follow up with more specific ones to delve deeper into particular points.

Questions starting with "What" or "How" often lead to more insightful answers than those starting with "Why," which can feel accusatory.

Ask questions that encourage participants to explore multiple viewpoints, such as "How might someone else see this situation?"

## 4. Facilitating the learning by doing process

Always include a debrief after a LARP activity. This is crucial for helping participants process what they've learned and how they can apply it.

Continuously link the LARP experiences back to real-life situations. Ask participants how the skills or insights gained could be applied outside the LARP context.

Allow participants to repeat activities or roles to reinforce learning and allow them to apply new strategies based on previous experiences.

Effective facilitation is crucial for maximizing the impact of LARP activities. By adopting a guiding rather than instructive role, educators can foster an environment where students engage deeply with their experiences.

Key strategies include creating a safe space, encouraging open dialogue, and using techniques like the 4F method for structured reflection.

Remember, flexibility is essential—adapt your approach based on the needs of your participants. With thoughtful facilitation, educators can help students transform their LARP experiences into meaningful personal and civic growth.



CHAPTER

5

CONCLUSION

# Conclusion

LARP is so much more than a fun or recreational activity. It is a multilayered and profound learning experience that actively engages participants in critical thinking, leadership, empathy, and collaborative problem-solving. By immersing students in dynamic scenarios, we foster their ability to navigate complex social situations, understand diverse perspectives, and develop crucial skills for civic engagement.

The significance of LARP in promoting civic engagement cannot be overstated. In today's world, where civic participation is essential for a thriving democracy, but to great extent is lacking among young people, LARP provides a unique platform for individuals to experience the nuances of decision-making and ethical dilemmas in a safe environment. It empowers participants to connect with their community, reflect on their values, and explore their roles as active citizens. Through this engaging and interactive tool, students learn to appreciate the complexities of societal issues, paving the way for informed and responsible participation in civic life.

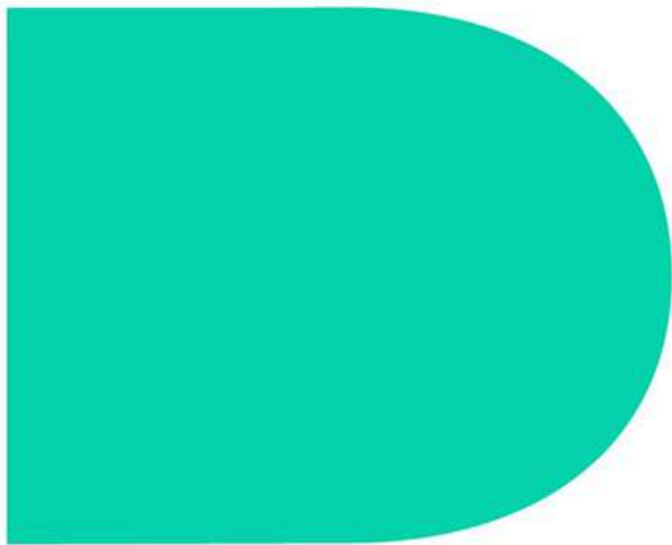
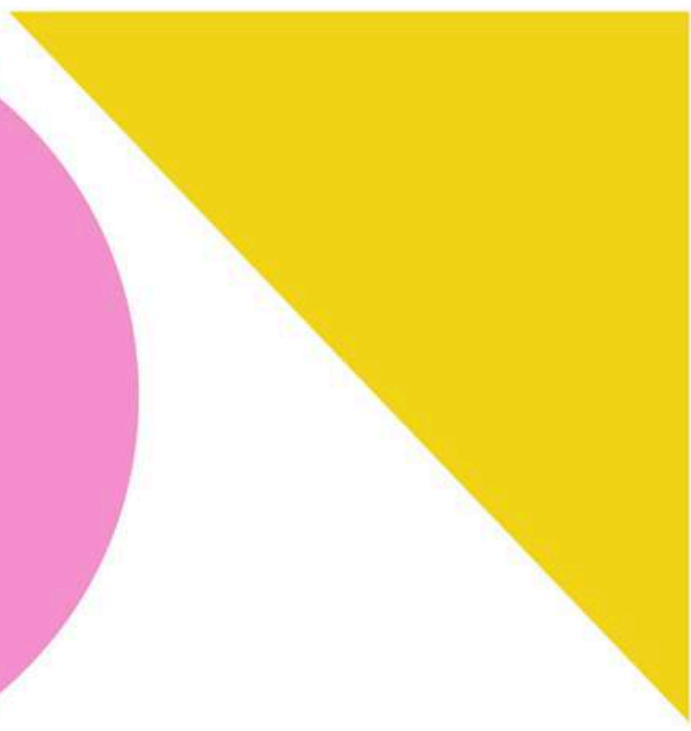
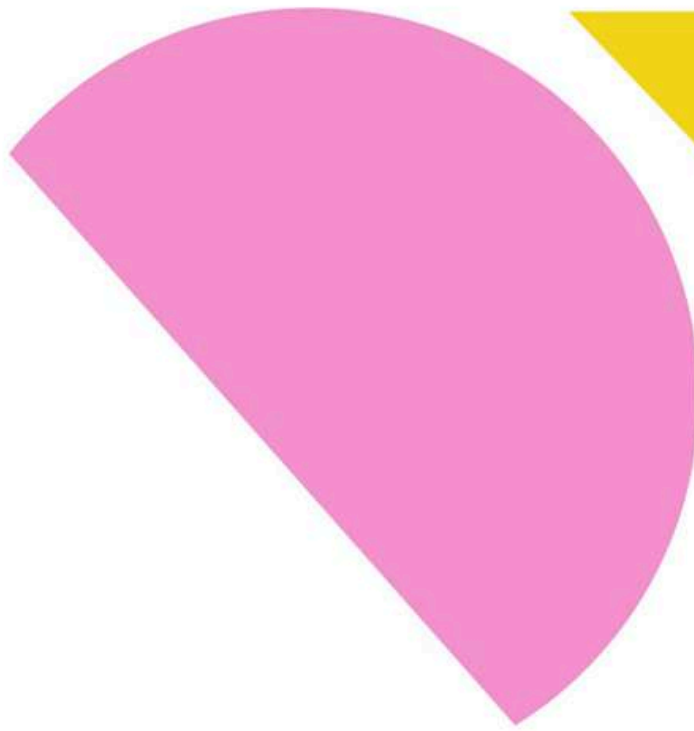


# Conclusion

To educators and facilitators, the call to embrace LARP is both an opportunity and a responsibility. Your role is crucial in guiding participants through this enriching experience, and your confidence in implementing LARP can significantly impact your students' learning journeys. Remember, the facilitation strategies and reflection techniques shared in this guide are designed to empower you in creating a supportive and engaging atmosphere. Embrace the flexibility that LARP offers, and trust in its potential to foster growth, understanding, and connection among your students.

The efforts you put in integrating LARP into your teaching can inspire the next generation of leaders and change-makers. The skills and insights gained through these experiences will not only enhance your students' personal development but will also inspire them to be more engaged in society. With enthusiasm and commitment, you can make a lasting difference in your students' lives through the power of LARP.





**Co-funded by  
the European Union**



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