

Adobe Youth Voices Career Toolkit

Developed in collaboration with Education Development Center, Inc.



Adobe
Youth Voices



Introduction: Finding Your Creative Path

“Once you think of yourself as a creative person, you make better decisions. If you think of yourself as creative, then you can create a new future.”

- David Kelley

A job is a moment in time, a career is a life's journey...

This toolkit is for you. It will give you strategies and tips on preparing for your future and making choices that are right for you. The resources in this toolkit were developed expressly to help you find your own creative path.

- » Will creativity really help me now and later in life?
- » How does someone become a creative professional?
- » What creative skills do I still need to learn?
- » How can I use creativity to make social change?

This toolkit is designed to help you think through your answers to these vital questions.

Exploring professional opportunities is a powerful way to act on the creative skills you are building. We are encouraging you to make choices not just about a career, but to contemplate your life's journey. Where are you now? Where would you like to be in five years?

In your creative projects you were encouraged to create with purpose. You had a message, audience, and reason to tell your story. Perhaps your goal was to make change in your local community or speak on behalf of those who could not speak for themselves. In your media work you made clear

choices and followed through on a specific goal or purpose.

With the same passion and focus we ask that you explore this kit and use it to help guide your thinking while you map a path for your life and future. You will have to make thoughtful choices and be honest about what you intend to do and why. The world is waiting.





One can do great things in all walks of life...

Our goal with Adobe Youth Voices has been to ignite your passion – to encourage you to invest in something you care deeply about and find the strength and value in your own voice. Through your hard work and dedication we are certain that you have made discoveries about yourself, your creative skills and abilities, and what matters most to you. What happens next, what you do with the skills you have gained from the experience, is up to you.

This kit is designed to help guide you to a path of your own choosing. We invite you to imagine a future and your role in it. You can use the kit to help uncover options and opportunities, consider your skills and potential, and prepare a creative portfolio that represents what you know and what you can do.

HOW TO USE THIS KIT

You are not expected to use this kit all at once. Parts of the toolkit can serve as a reference for different steps and stages along your journey. Take a look at the contents. Feel free to explore the resources, try out tips and suggestions, and return when you need to refresh or review. Each section includes activities, a video to watch and reflect on, and action steps you can take.





CONTENTS

- » Open your mind to a world of possibilities: In **Dream It**, you can take a real look at who you are and begin to map out the world around you. The activities are collaborative fun and you just might be surprised at what you learn about yourself.
- » Investigate options you may not have considered: In **Explore It** you can consider options and possible pathways inside and outside of the digital media art field that can help connect what you know with where you want to be.
- » Challenge yourself: In **Build It** you will can build skills and enhance your creativity. The section contains links to specific resources and challenging but fun activities you can use to test your level in skills such as those used in the Adobe Certified Associate (ACA) program.
- » Represent who you are and what you can do: In **Show It**, you will find tips and strategies for recognizing and confidently expressing your skills and abilities. This section also includes examples of creative portfolios.

Creative Pro Videos

These short videos feature creative professionals or AYV program alumni who have applied their creative skills in careers or pathways that have had an impact on local communities and the world. Watch and reflect on their thoughts and experiences. How might they relate to your own career decisions?



Dream It: Finding Your Path

Think of your life as a journey. We want you to be aware of what might lie ahead, knowledgeable about what you bring with you, and confident in the steps you must take to follow your chosen path.

The bags you are carrying on this journey represent the assets or skills you have gained through life, school, and experiences like AYV. Instead of focusing on barriers, obstacles, or the condition of the road ahead, try focusing on what you think you will need to prepare you for what lies down the road. We hope this toolkit will help you develop a clearer vision of where you would like the path to lead.

In this section you will find tools and strategies to guide you in the practice of looking within. The goal is to build the habit of documenting your own growth and development, which will help you determine the right path for you.

DEFINITIONS

Skills

Learned technical abilities acquired through creative experiences that make outstanding high quality media possible.

Creativity

A meaningful asset that can spark innovation and open doors.

Purpose

Cause, meaning or motivation to take action in your own community.



ACTIVITY

Writing Prompts for Self-Reflection



JOURNALING

Journals are great places to log your observations and story ideas or the questions you have been thinking about. Perhaps you already keep a media journal to comment on media you see or as a place to generate your own creative writing. Journals are where some of the best ideas for media projects develop. Journals are also great places to note and reflect on what you have learned about yourself during the process.

You can use the following prompts to start thinking about what matters to you. This kind of reflection is the first step in mapping out your life's journey. This is not a questionnaire or quiz. Choose just a couple of questions. Choose one that you like and connect with right away. Choose another question that challenges you in some way. If time allows ask a friend you trust or adult mentor to exchange what you've written and discuss it together.

PROMPTS

- » What good do you want to do for the world?
- » What is your passion?
- » What amazes or inspires you?
- » What social issue do you care about most?
- » What moves you?



ACTIVITY
Personal Asset Mapping

Yasmeen's Story: Skill & Determination

Another way to get to know who you are is by taking a closer look at who and/ or what surrounds you. Many AYV projects begin with a mapping activity of a community. The map is used as way to help illustrate what resources; support, knowledge etc. exist in that community. The map helps us see what we might have overlooked. We also learn something in the process about the community and the people that live there.

In this activity you will create a map placing yourself in the center. The goal is to understand who or what surrounds you. You can begin with home, school, and house of worship, etc. Think also about individuals not just institutions.

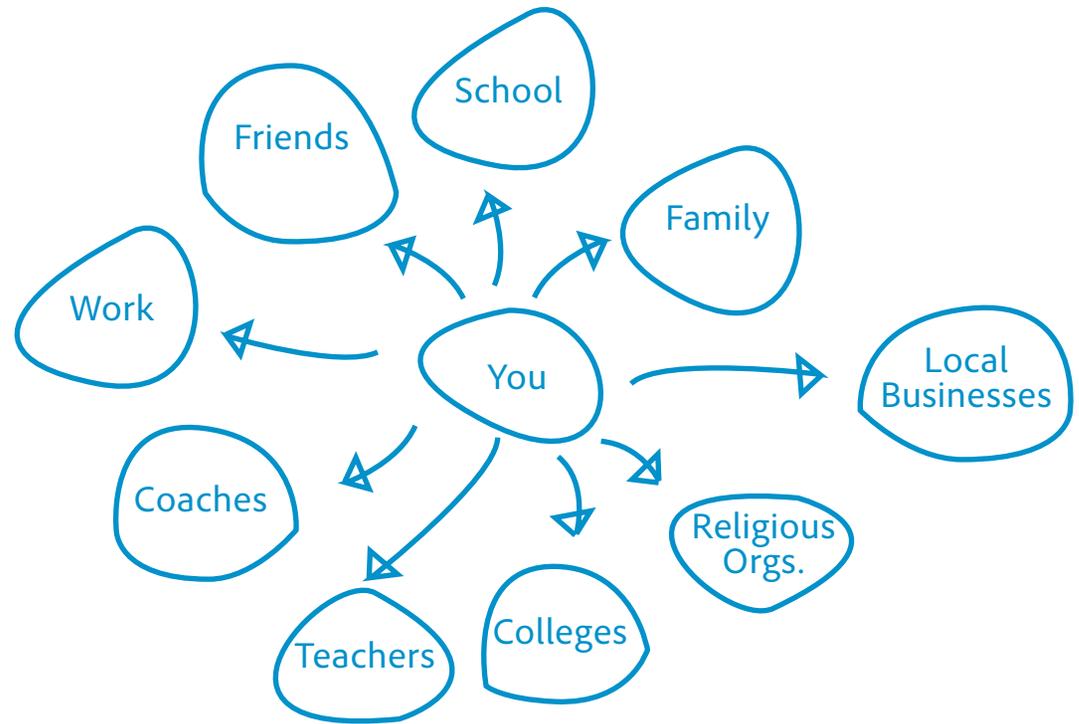


ACTIVITY

Personal Asset Mapping Continued

Once you have drawn your map and listed the assets that surround you, consider the following questions:

- » What relationship and connections are the strongest ones in your life?
- » Have these relationships shaped who you are? How?
- » What skills and experiences do you have that can serve you now or in the future? What knowledge, advice or support do these assets offer? What are their strengths?
- » What interests do you have that connect to experiences in your life?
- » What role do you see yourself playing in the community, where might you be on someone else's map?



ACTIVITY

Personal Inventory of Skills

This survey gives you a chance to reflect on what you know and what skills you have gained through creating purposeful media. It can help you see the options for applying what you have learned in meaningful ways.

What are the skills and experiences you learned through the media making process? Select as many as you have in each area:

Self-Expression: The ability to express a point of view. "I am able to..."

- convey message and connect with an audience through written oral or media presentation
- present/discuss concept of finished work
- present finished work that expresses clear message

Ideation: The ability to create new ideas. "I am able to..."

- generate original ideas (e.g. original script)
- offer new approaches or solutions
- use technology tools innovatively
- ask thoughtful or insightful questions
- create innovative projects

Collaboration: The ability to engage, work well and be inspired by others. "I am able to..."

- work well with others and finds common ground
- listen and consider other perspectives
- play different roles on a team and contribute your strengths
- complete work that represents multiple perspectives

Flexibility: The ability to adapt to changes and new situations. "I am able to..."

- find creative solutions to challenges
- receive criticism and feedback
- reflect on effectiveness of work and make necessary changes
- tolerate of ambiguity
- be comfortable with notion of "no right answer"

Persistence: The ability to stick with a challenge through completion. "I am able to..."

- demonstrate tenacity and resolve
- handle setbacks positively
- remain diligent and consistent
- demonstrate my commitment
- complete work

ACTIVITY

Personal Inventory of Skills Continued

What kinds of things do you enjoy doing the most? Describe not only what you like to do but with or for whom?

What are you passionate about? What motivates you to act?

Where could you apply your skills?



Creative Pro Video

Jose Saveedra



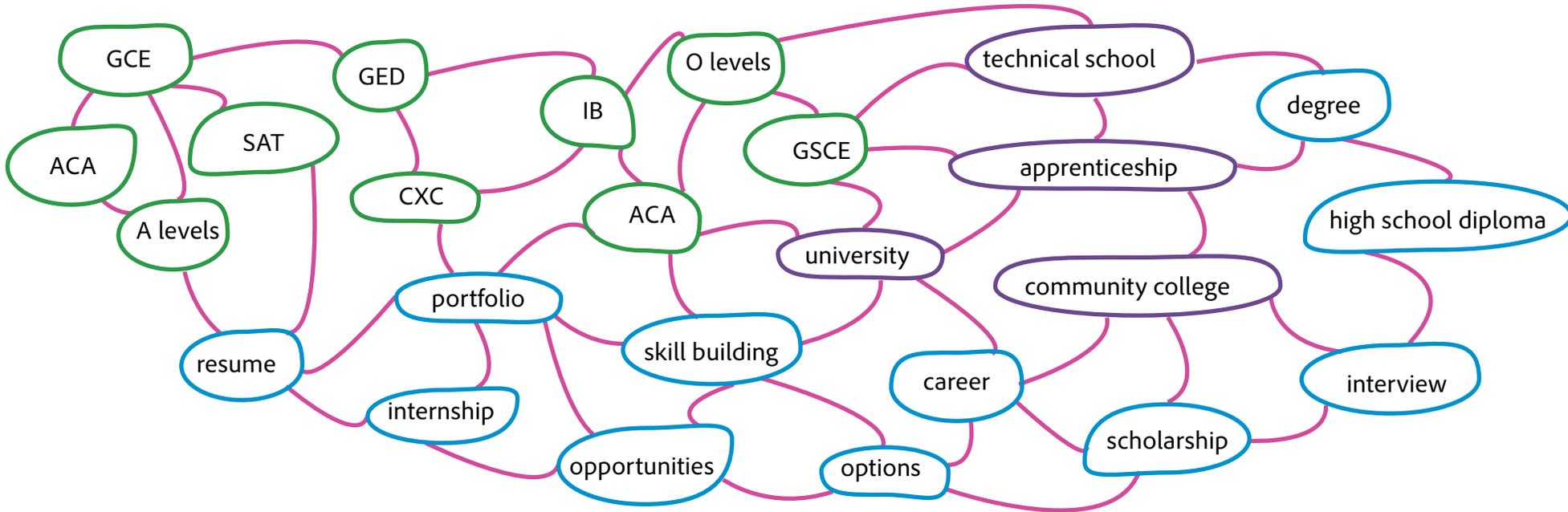
"At its core, creative confidence is about believing in your ability to create change in the world around you. It is the conviction that you can achieve what you set out to do."

- Tom and David Kelley, Creative Confidence: Unleashing the Creative Potential Within Us All

After you have completed the survey, take a moment to look over what you selected. What do you think this survey says about you? The skills you selected actually define and support what is at the core of Adobe Youth Voices, creative confidence. With creative confidence and the skills that help you become confident in your own abilities you have a strong foundation for what you need to be successful in any field or endeavor. How did you respond to the question, where could you apply your skills? Did you have an answer? If you are not sure yet, that's OK. As you work through this toolkit, take your time to imagine, dream and finally discover what you would like to do.

Explore It: Options and Opportunities

Has your experience making media inspired you to look at a specific media-related career? Although we provide resources for media and graphic art jobs, this toolkit is not just for those careers. The tips and strategies will assist you no matter what career path you pursue. The goal of this toolkit is to help you discover your strengths, skills, and abilities, explore various options that align with these abilities and interests, and follow through with confidence to pursue a career or entrepreneurial opportunity.



"I think that AYV experiences can often be the first steps on paths that students and youth may never have even considered or seen as an option. The great thing about that path is that it just keeps unfolding and revealing more."

- Jeff Larson, Educator, Balboa High School's CAST Academy

APPLY YOURSELF

Alyssa Chan, Director of Education Partnerships at Free The Children stresses the importance of recognizing your own gifts, "A gift may be any talent or skill, something that you excel in, if you use that gift to approach an issue you care deeply about you can make change happen." You may feel passionate about a local or global issue. Recognizing your ability to make a difference and applying your creativity towards problem solving may lead you to rewarding work in the public sector or other career choices in areas such as environmental science, civil engineering, public policy, or international development. Organizations like Free the Children provide resources and opportunities to take action. Youth participants find common cause with peers who seek to have impact.

"Passion can drive people anywhere they want and can make it possible if they put their minds to it."

-Youth Participant, Free the Children

WE DAY

"We Day" is an educational event held in 13 major cities across Canada, the United States, and United Kingdom, bringing young people together to hear inspirational speeches and watch performances in an amazing celebration of youth activism. We Day is part of Free the Children's year-long We Act program.

"We Day" is a way for young people to come together and celebrate their power to change the world, learn about new issues, and gain the motivation to take action. It creates a community of young activists who know they are not alone in their journey to make a difference.

"Young people are free to achieve their fullest potential as agents of change. We work to empower youth to remove barriers that prevent them from being active local and global citizens."

- Free The Children



"We have the ability to create change in our world... it does not matter the circumstances that we are in, we all are capable."

- Youth Participant, Free the Children

CAREERS

There are so many careers that AYV experiences can prepare you for. Some of them are the more obvious ones like video production, animation, and graphic design, but there is also audio production, broadcast communications, journalism, computer games, app development, business planning, advertising, programming, architecture, industrial design, education, human services, advocacy, and political science. Take a look at this chart showing career areas, sample careers, what you might need to know, and ways to get there. What are you most interested in? What additional skills or experiences might you need to get there?



MEDIA ARTS & COMMUNICATION

Journalist
Graphic Designer ←
Documentary Filmmaker

What they do

Graphic designers use layout, text, and graphics to creatively express visual ideas. They create artwork, style, a look, etc. that fulfills others' visions. They may create art and promo material for movies, video games, or branding and identity graphics, such as logos for companies.

What you need to know

- What you need to know
- The basics about color and perspective
- How to use creative tools effectively
- How to be an excellent listener and communicator able to figure out what your client needs and give them what they are asking for
- How to manage projects and time effectively, especially if working on several projects at once

How to get there

- Practice. Practice. Practice
- Develop your own unique style
- Continue study through training and apprenticeship.
- Consider a degree program

STEM

Software Engineer ↖
Website Developer
Technology instructor

What they do

Software engineers develop, create and modify software and systems that make computers or anything containing software work. Working individually or as part of a team they apply engineering principles and problem solving skills to work on cutting-edge technology. They may design software used in cell phones, MP3 players, video games, cars or planes.

What you need to know

- Science, lots of math and programming
- How to think outside of the box
- How to be a creative problem solver
- How to work well with others giving and receiving feedback
- Strongly consider a degree program

How to get there

- Seek a mentor, someone in the field
- Join a club with other hopeful designer and programmers you can practice with and learn from
- Educate yourself and stay on top of what's going on in this ever-changing field
- Challenge yourself to solve complicated problems in math and programming

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Director of Programs
Director of Development
Organizer ↗

What they do

Community organizers bring people together with purpose. They may organize community groups around social justice issues or hold rallies to inform and mobilize others to take action. Generally speaking, community organizers try to make the world a better place through direct involvement in a social concern that is important to them.

What you need to know

- What's going on locally or globally that impacts those you know and care about
- How to be great communicator with strong persuasive skills
- How to be great listener and truly understand the different concern and perspectives on issues
- How to be a strong and effective leader
- How to set goals and create action steps

How to get there

- Stay informed.
- Act locally or globally
- Volunteer for a cause you care about
- Consider a degree
- Study communications, public policy or non-profit administration or management
- Get to know members of your community by finding opportunities to work with them on community events or through community projects

BAVC Bridges

"I want to go to art school and do something with that but some people in my family don't think that I could succeed. Being at this event helped me be more confident about my future."

- Youth Participant, BAVC

CAREER TALK

Take advantage of career days and opportunities to hear from professionals doing work you're curious about. Keep in mind it may be more important to learn about the journey than hear the job description. AYV Partner BAVC (Bay Area Video Coalition) invites AYV youth and educators to attend career panels with post-panel breakout sessions where students have the opportunity to interact one-on-one with media professionals. Youth gain valuable perspective on future career opportunities in the media-arts and technology fields.

"I learned to not let anyone tell you, you can't do it, because if you really want it, you will find a way."

- Youth Participant, BAVC

APPRENTICESHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Are you unsure about whether you are looking down the right path? An apprenticeship or internship program gives you a window into a particular career and lets you learn through hands-on experience working alongside a high-skilled professional.

If you are considering this kind of opportunity, first ask yourself what you most want to learn, what you want to leave the experience with, and what you are truly curious about. Your goal is to gain the skills and experience that will help not only improve your skills and add to your resume but build your confidence about what you can do.

Through BPS (Boston Public Schools) Tech Apprenticeship program, students secure paid internships and have the opportunity to apply their media-making skills in the real world while building their portfolios.

"I always encourage students to embrace internship opportunities as a way to build their skill sets. I look to hire students who are able to think outside the box and bring their creative energy to work every day. Building a reputation as a creative individual who works hard will open doors for you in the future."

*- Felicia R. Vargas, TechBoston Director,
Boston Public Schools*



Creative Pro Video

Tae Kim



Build It: Creative Skill-Building Experiences

In this section you will find links to challenging media-related activities to try on your own and opportunities to build your creative skills. The goal is, as always, to engage you creatively but also to encourage reflection. To develop and refine your creative skills, you need to be asking yourself: What do I know? What do I want to learn more about? What skills am I missing? What part of this work interests me the most?

Here's a sampling of guides:

VISUAL COMMUNICATION USING ADOBE PHOTOSHOP

WEB AUTHORIZING USING ADOBE DREAMWEAVER

INTERACTIVE MEDIA USING ADOBE FLASH PROFESSIONAL

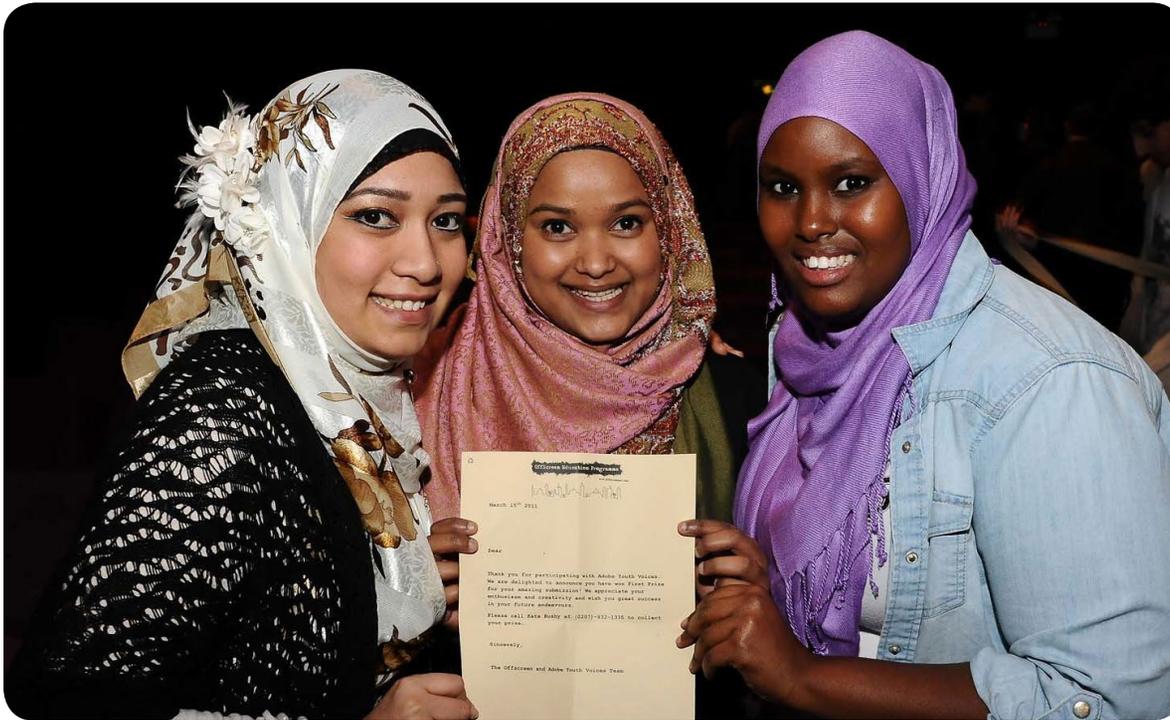
VIDEO COMMUNICATION USING ADOBE PREMIERE PRO

GRAPHIC DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION USING ADOBE ILLUSTRATOR

PRINT & DIGITAL MEDIA PUBLICATION USING ADOBE INDESIGN

THE ADOBE CERTIFIED ASSOCIATE (ACA) PROGRAM

If you find the study guides and activities helpful, why not take the practice exam for the ACA and consider getting certified? The ACA is an industry-recognized, entry-level credential that validates basic skills in digital communications. The exam is available in multiple languages and versions for four Creative Suite tools. Preparing to take the exam is worth it because it not only shows you how much you know already, it also helps you build new skills for careers in creative and technical fields.



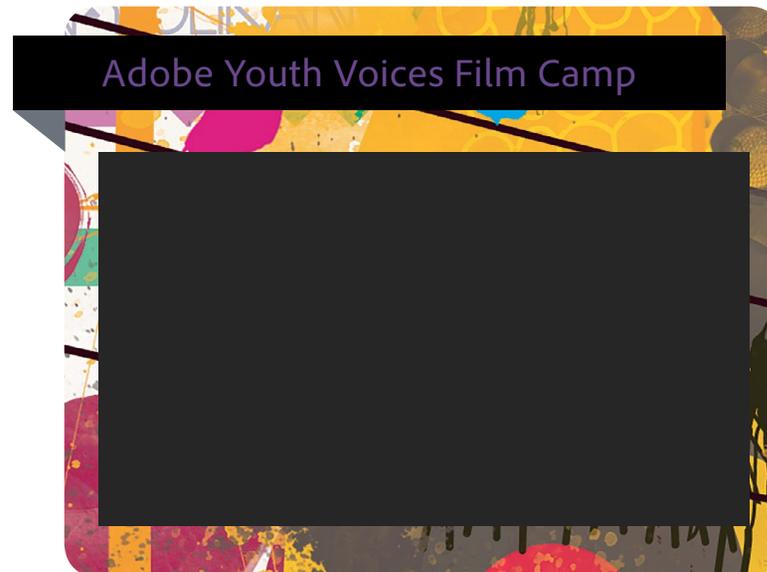
"I took the ACA exam because I think it will benefit me in the future and it is a way to prove myself to be a professional IT worker."

- Youth

FILM CAMP

Many youth media organizations sponsor a film camp, which is a great opportunity for you to connect with other young people who, like you, are interested in making media about their communities on the issues that matter to them.

Sign up for film camp if you can! You'll gain media expertise while working collaboratively in youth production teams, with the support of media professionals and volunteers, to create amazing, high quality media projects. You will leave the film camp as a stronger leader, more confident in your ability to make positive change in your community and the world.



CREATIVITY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Have you decided college is the next step in building your skills and preparing for a career? Recognizing that the cost of tuition is a huge barrier, the Adobe Foundation has created a scholarship program.

The Creativity Scholarships program was developed to support the next generation of creative thinkers and propel the future careers of those who create. The scholarships provide financial support to students who have participated in the Adobe Youth Voices program and is open to students in their final year of high school/upper secondary school or first year of post-secondary education. Applicants must be accepted into or continuing in an accredited post-secondary degree or certificate program in a creative field or in a field through which they will apply creative skills to advance global citizenship and social justice issues. Ask your educator for more information about the scholarship and how to apply.

"As an AYV alumni and a recipient of the Creativity Scholarship, to have the opportunity to socialize with other Adobe Youth Voices students has opened up doors to network with other artists who has the same interest as me and to build on my craft. The only direction to go from here is forward."

-Kevin Bernardez , Creativity Scholar

"Thanks to Adobe Youth Voices for this scholarship, which made it possible for me to start my college degree in engineering this year and learn such amazing and creative things here."

-Randhir Singh, Creativity Scholar

Esther Nazziwa: Creativity Scholar





Creative Pro Video

Adam Kennedy





Show It: Creating a Professional Identity

Creativity is addictive – it fuels innovation and brings great satisfaction at the same time. This is your moment to shine. In this section you will learn strategies for pulling together strong examples of your work that showcase what you have done and what you are capable of doing.

Why is it necessary to “create a professional identity”? It would be wonderful to walk up and introduce yourself to someone, talk about your interests and experiences, and receive a job offer or scholarship on the spot. But most people don’t get such an easy break. Usually your portfolio or resume has to stand in for you, speak for you, and represent you in the best possible light before you get an opportunity to make your case in person.

Just as you were asked to cultivate your own voice and tell your own story in AYV, you need to create a

clear professional identity that tells the compelling story of who you are and what you want to do.

There is only one you. You may have similar skills and abilities to others but you possess qualities and insights that make you unique.

- » What are your unique qualities? What makes your perspective distinct from others?
- » Why have you chosen the path you’re on?
- » What does your journey mean to you?
- » What do you want to learn or experience and why?

THE ARTIST STATEMENT

Writing an Artist Statement is a good first step in establishing your professional identity. The Artist

Statement is more than the name and the title of your work. It should reflect who you are and shed light on the uniqueness of your voice.

Artist Statements may appear on gallery walls next to an artist’s collection of work, inside program guides, or as the film credits roll, etc. These brief messages provide helpful background information to the audience, giving artists a chance to discuss the context in which they created the media piece. With your Artist Statement, you can also direct the audience to focus on something in particular or challenge their thinking in some way.

The act of writing the Artist Statement is valuable in itself as you pause to reflect on your media-making experience. You can create an Artist Statement for your latest media work on the next page.



ACTIVITY
Writing your Artist
Statement

Title of media project and format, your name and age.

Why did you choose this topic for your media work?

What is unique about your perspective on this subject? Where are you coming from?

How did you come to make the different artistic choices? What techniques did you use to achieve the effect(s) you were after?

What do you want others to understand about the piece? What would you want them to do as a result of seeing your work?

Write your Artist Statement. Look over your notes and highlight what you feel are the most important things to say about your work. Draw on the different ideas and sentiments from your notes to write 2-3 paragraphs that convey the key points you want to share.



AWARDS

Submitting your work to a media festival gives you a venue for showcasing your project and caps off your creative process. It also demonstrates that you are dedicated and motivated to make high-quality products. AYV sponsors its own media festival, the Adobe Youth Voices Awards, a global challenge that invites youth to creatively express their vision for driving positive change in local communities.

The AYV Awards accepts original work made by youth aged 13 through 19 which demonstrates the power of media to give voice to youth issues and concerns. The competition offers standard content categories representing various forms of visual storytelling. Participation is completely free and does not require the use or purchase of Adobe products.

Earning recognition as a finalist or winning an award would be a great feather in your cap as a youth artist, but even having your work submitted to a media festival demonstrates seriousness of purpose.





PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT

What are portfolios? Portfolios are collections of your work representing your growth and range of skills. They showcase your accomplishments and the work you are particularly proud of. A portfolio should not only include your best pieces but also your evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the pieces in your portfolio. It may also contain one or more works-in-progress that illustrate the genesis of a project, evolving through various stages of conception, drafting, and revision.

How do I get started? Educator Jeff Larson has used Behance as a place to research careers and demonstrate high caliber examples of design and digital media work. He asks students to research different professions and identify what type of work is involved and the skills required. One of the great features of Behance, he says, is that a user can create collections, and make comments. In addition to providing a platform to present a collection of your work, a portfolio enables discussion and feedback. His students use Adobe Acrobat Portfolio to develop their portfolios for

sharing. You may be interested in seeing how Behance can be used to showcase student work. [Check out the work of students in Bonaire and be sure to see their videos explaining what compelled them to create their work.](#) >>

What to keep? At some point a math teacher may have said to you, "Show your work." The purpose of your portfolio is not just to show what you've done but also to tell the story of how you got there. A college admissions officer, job recruiter, or potential client is just as interested in your process and how you think, as they are in what you completed. Keep storyboards, sketches, and rough cut versions of artwork as well as final media works.

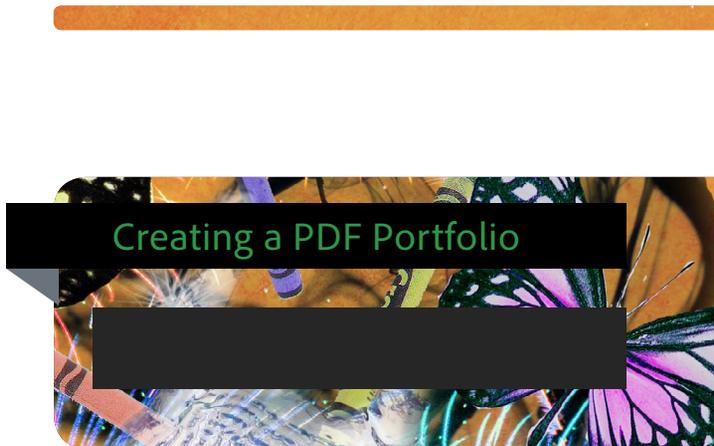
A portfolio introduction should include your Artist Statement and explain what you know about your skill set, training, projects included in the portfolio, career interests and goals, and any on-the-job experience you have such as internships or apprenticeships, etc.

You will need strong images or representative visuals of your best work to use on front pages or as reference images

for your body of work. Create a description for each project, explaining the ways the work highlights your skills.

Be sure to identify skills or concepts that might be lacking at this point but you want to learn more about or focus on. Be honest about the skills you have and the skills you want to develop.

How to keep? Explore how a PDF Portfolio allows you to collect all your work into one visual engaging package, useful to students who are creating multiple different kinds of work. Learn how to use Adobe Acrobat to create a PDF Portfolio. Utilize the sample assets to follow along with this tutorial and create your own PDF Portfolio.

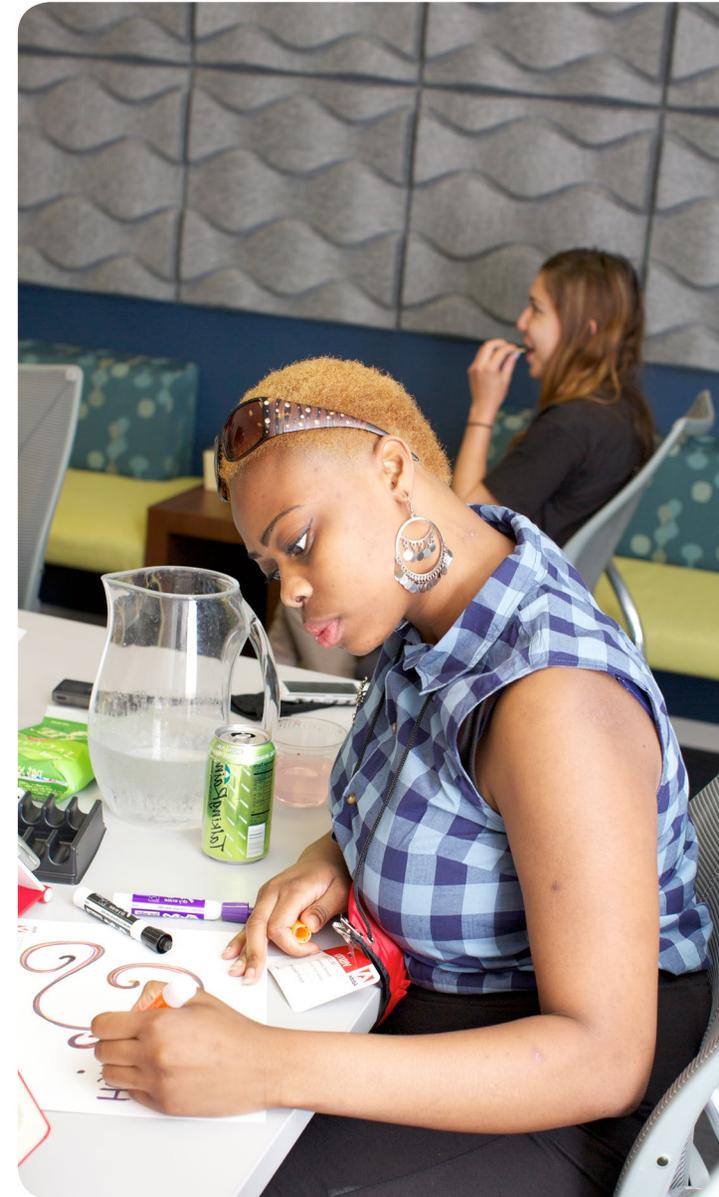


Creating a PDF Portfolio



Creative Pro Video

Bianca Giaever





Setting Off on Your Journey

In this toolkit we have shared how to create your own vision for your future, how to look for the best options and directions, and how to seek opportunities to extend your learning in various fields.

If you continue to build your creative skills and document what you know, you can present yourself with full confidence to anyone in the position to help you on your chosen path for learning, opportunity, and careers.



KEY THINGS TO REMEMBER

- » Identify your passions, interests, and goals as well as the resources and support networks you lean on.
- » Relationships matter. Seek out positive relationships and reach out to those who are interested in helping you succeed.
- » Think carefully about how you will present yourself to the world. Whether you are building a resume or portfolio, or completing a job application, it's important to know yourself and your passions, skills, and interests.

ACTION STEPS

- » What steps will you take in the next 3 months to reach your goals?
- » What can you do in the next year to learn a new skill, find a mentor, and meet a potential employer, client or customer?
- » What program (for example, Awards, Film Camp, Creativity Scholarship, ACA certification) can you participate in to gain more experience and move further along your chosen path?

