

NARRATIVE DESIGN TOOLKIT

A FUTURE FOR ALL OF US

PART 2

BUENOS AIRES

for Immigrant
Narrative Strategy



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Table of Contents

51	Introduction
53	Our Terms and Definitions
55	Tools For Narrative Project Design
57	Design Star
58	Narrative Pyramid Worksheet
61	Audience Worksheet
65	Goals Worksheet
66	Form Worksheet
68	Design Star Strategy Alignment Worksheet
72	Narrative Hypothesis & Impact Measurement
75	Narrative Hypothesis Worksheet
76	Step-by-Step Narrative Project Design Guide
83	An Introduction To Narrative System + Ecosystem
87	Narrative System Worksheet

Introduction

WELCOME STORYTELLERS, DREAM WEAVERS, AND COMMUNITY BUILDERS,

/// **Cultural change precedes social change. Narrative drives policy. That is why we must be as strategic and rigorous in building narrative power as we are in building all other forms of power.**

This revised and updated toolkit, which was initially developed in the first phase of the Butterfly Lab for Immigrant Narrative Strategy, will help you get started in thinking about narrative, articulating your narrative strategy, and designing and implementing your narrative projects. By narrative project, we mean any activity that advances narrative goals, including messaging campaigns, social media campaigns, videos, art installations, street theater, deep canvassing, direct actions, mass mobilizations, and more. The tools here will allow you to analyze the narrative terrain, sharpen your narratives, identify and choose the most effective forms and platforms to win over audiences.

Narrative work is about meaning-making and transformation. Social movements have always been explicit about thinking and working to build power. We want to build and sustain power for narratives that enable us to make the world we want.



Winning is about making our narratives the dominant narratives and then defending them.

Transforming people's worldviews and belief systems, and creating the sustainable cultural conditions for them to choose, behave and act differently is the deep and rigorous work of building narrative power for social justice.

Before you embark on your journey, you may want to read [our Butterfly Lab reports](#). We elaborate on our theory, practice, learnings, and recommendations there. But you don't need to do that to get started. To make the best use of the toolkit, we recommend first grounding yourself in our [Key Definitions](#).

The **Narrative Design Star** will orient you to the process of aligning your narrative goals, impacts, audiences and forms, so that you can create nuanced and strategic projects that move your audiences towards pro-immigrant narratives. This toolkit also includes a set of worksheets to support your ideation and design, and a comprehensive step-by-step **Narrative Project Design Guide**. We then introduce you to our concepts of the **Narrative System** and **Narrative Ecosystem** to help you think about how you can collaborate with others to move your narrative work over time, across audiences, and at different scales through strategic alignment. In the second and last phase of the Lab, our work focused on building alignment within our movement, and so you will find additional tools that can be used to strengthen your strategy with the **Design Star Strategy Alignment Worksheet**, help you think about predicting and measuring your impact with the **Narrative Hypothesis Worksheet**, and help you build narrative alignment within your work and within the larger movement ecosystem in the worksheet.

NOW LET'S GET STARTED!

Our Terms and Definitions

LANGUAGE IS ALIVE – and as it transforms and shifts in response to emerging cultural conditions, it also helps us create new meaning and new connections. At the time of this publication, there are multiple organizations, networks, and leaders that are helping to define the field, practices, and frameworks of narrative and cultural strategy. There are several definitions and interpretations of narrative and cultural strategy; many of them are complementary, even though parts of our field use different words to describe similar or interrelated concepts. In the Butterfly Lab, we have leaned heavily on thought leadership and definitional work that came before us, and from collaborators and guides in the field. We define the following terms, concepts, and practices this way:

- MESSAGE** Hashtags, slogans, ideas, taglines that serve as reminders of what we think and how we might choose to act. They are most often used in the context of campaigns and strategic communications. The best of them become narratives.
- STORY** Stories have discrete elements and building blocks such as characters, setting, conflict and action that unfold through a plot, over an arc. Human brains are wired to interpret and create meaning through stories, so stories are the basic unit of change.
- NARRATIVE** An array of related and connected stories and messages on a particular subject, issue, or problem. They suggest causes, problems and solutions. We interpret stories and messages through them. Narratives evoke emotion, offer analysis, and suggest action; they tell us how we should feel, think, and act. Narrative is the level at which society moves.
- DEEP NARRATIVE** Narratives, in turn, are held together by underlying frameworks and values we call “deep narratives.” These deep narratives constitute worldviews, the ways in which people understand their world.
- NARRATIVE STRATEGY** Narrative strategy is the praxis of thinking and using stories, messages, and narratives in a purposeful way to move people toward the narratives, deep narratives, and worldviews we want to advance.
- CULTURAL STRATEGY** We like the definition used by the Center for Cultural Power — “*Cultural Strategy is a practice that leverages the catalytic and emotional power of culture and the arts to shift attitudes, behaviors, resources, narratives and power.*”

NARRATIVE SYSTEM

We define a *narrative system* as a set of deep narratives that together describe the worldview we want to activate at a majority level. A narrative system provides a “destination” to ground narrative projects ranging from rapid-response and policy campaigns to cultural strategies and longer-term narrative work. It sets our values, helps us to find alignment and consensus across projects and timelines, and allows us to connect our work with other social movements.

NARRATIVE ECOSYSTEM

We define a *narrative ecosystem* as a network of connected individuals and organizations that can share knowledge, expertise, skills, ideas, capacities, and work to advance a narrative system across a diversity of fronts along different timelines.

CORE AUDIENCE

A core audience is an audience whom we consider to be fundamentally in agreement with us already. Usually, our goal is to shore up and activate our core audiences to act in the ways that we need, and to lead others to do the same.

STRETCH AUDIENCE

A stretch audience is an audience whom we need to have on our side to win. Our goal is to make our stretch audiences into our core audience. We will often need to flex new muscles to understand, reach, and convert them.

PRIMARY AUDIENCE

This is what we call an audience who is the direct target of a narrative project. The project is specifically designed to engage, activate, and/or persuade them.

SECONDARY AUDIENCE

This is what we call an audience who is not the primary target of a project, but who might encounter it, and with whom there is some intention to engage.

OPPOSITION AUDIENCE

This is what we call an audience who we anticipate will resist or challenge a project or action. It is important to factor in the opposition’s reactions, which could prove strategically advantageous.

A FEW RESOURCES WITH ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS AND RESOURCES

- » Narrative Initiative’s Glossary of Terms in [Toward New Gravity](#)
- » Narrative Initiative’s [Resource Library](#), including webinars, worksheets, and case studies
- » Pop Culture Collaborative’s Key Definitions — [Pop Culture for Social Change](#)

Tools for Narrative Project Design

IN THIS SECTION OF THE TOOLKIT, we offer you a set of tools developed through the Butterfly Lab to guide you through the narrative design process.

If you can, we recommend you build in a process to test your work in a smaller prototype form. A prototype is simply a small test to see which parts of your project work. Narrative projects rarely achieve their desired reach, impact and activation in their first attempts. The value of narrative prototyping lies in being able to test new ideas quickly in a short amount of time. In the pro-immigrant movement, stakes often feel urgent and high, and risk is highly discouraged. But in a narrative design process, “failure” is as great a teacher as “success.”

Use these tools to design and implement narrative projects, pausing and returning to the drawing board to iterate, re-design, test, and adjust. Projects may need to be tweaked a few times before you can hit the four corners of the Narrative Design Star and land on the clearest, testable articulation. Adjusting your design based on your audience’s reactions and impacts (versus your anticipated impacts) can inspire changes of all kinds. Thoughtful prototyping requires your team to be clear, rigorous, focused, and aspirational in design, while also holding assumptions lightly and being open to learning and change.

Here you will find:

1. The **Narrative Design Star** to act as your design compass — a framework with correlated worksheets to make sure you have the most key elements of narrative design in place.
 - a. The **Narrative Pyramid Worksheet** to help you shape, refine, and align your narrative strategy.
 - b. The **Audience Worksheet** to help you get as concrete and specific as possible about your audiences.
 - c. The **Goals Worksheet** to help you clarify both your narrative and project goals.
 - d. The **Form Worksheet** to help you brainstorm what form your narrative project will take.
 - e. **Design Star Strategy Alignment Worksheet** to help you ensure your design elements are aligned and in service of your goals
2. An introduction to **Narrative Hypothesis & Impact Measurement**
 - a. The **Narrative Hypothesis Worksheet** to help you make informed predictions about how and why your narrative project will impact an audience.
3. The **Step-by-Step Narrative Project Design Guide** to bring all your design elements together, engage a last round of revisions and iterations, and finalize your project details.
4. **An Introduction to Narrative System and Ecosystem** to think strategically about possible collaborations and help you ground your work in shared deep narratives for the pro-immigrant movement.
 - a. **Narrative System Worksheet** to help you begin to identify the deep narratives that can form the basis of your own narrative system.

Narrative Design Star

OUR DESIGN STAR ILLUSTRATES THE KEY ELEMENTS YOU NEED for a strategic narrative project. You can start a design process from any point on the star. The starting point will guide the logic for making choices around the other points. For instance, if you start by knowing what audience you want to engage, then that choice will naturally lead you to choose a narrative, goals, and a project form that have the potential to reach and resonate with that audience.

We invite you to use this star as a compass for your design process. Choose where to start based on what makes the most sense for your priorities and context. Then use our worksheets to help you develop and iterate each point of the star.

We recommend gathering your team and going through this design process together. Once you have made your way through all of the Design Star worksheets, you'll have the essential elements you need for an effective narrative project. The final **Step-by-Step Narrative Project Design Guide** will help you bring it all home and turn your project design into a plan.

DESIGN STEP ONE

Use the Design Star and linked worksheets to clarify your key design elements.



DESIGN STEP TWO

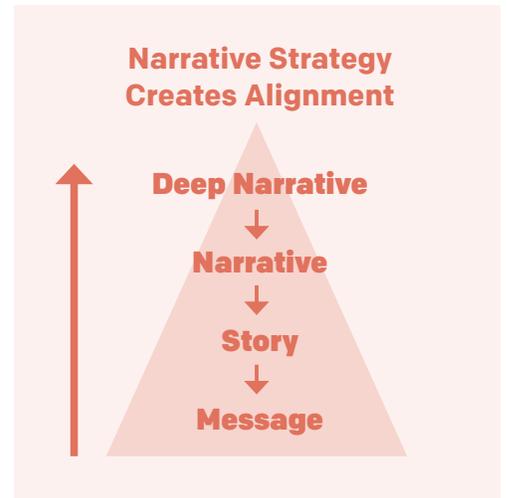
Use the [Narrative Hypothesis Worksheet](#) to make informed predictions about the impact your project will have on your audiences and to think about how you might measure success.

DESIGN STEP THREE

Use the [Step-by-Step Narrative Project Design Guide](#) to bring all your design elements together, finalize your design decisions, and map out the concrete details.

Narrative Pyramid Worksheet

THE NARRATIVE PYRAMID IS A TOOL to understand how messages, stories, narratives, and deep narratives work, and together produce and reinforce values, attitudes, emotions, and actions around a particular issue or problem. It helps us to see how the opposition stacks its message, stories, narratives, and deep narratives, and how we need to construct our own narrative pyramids to advance pro-immigrant narratives.



Aligning your messages, stories, and narratives with the selected deep narratives is important for moving people toward the world we want to make. For example, we want to avoid launching short-term messaging campaigns that may reinforce harmful narratives. **A robust narrative strategy links, aligns, and reinforces all four parts of the Narrative Strategy Pyramid from deep narratives down through messages.**

The following worksheet is designed to help you – along with your team and collaborators – to analyze the narrative terrain and identify gaps and opportunities for narrative strategy and alignment in your work.

STEP 1: FILL OUT THE NARRATIVE PYRAMID WORKSHEET

Complete the narrative pyramid worksheet. We recommend that you work through both sides of the pyramid tool to map your desired narrative against the opposition narrative. Also, you may want to reference our Narrative System to see if any of the deep narratives developed by movement leaders in the Butterfly Lab could be useful to you. We've provided a sample worksheet based on the "Love is Love" narrative from the Marriage Equality movement, in case that is helpful.

STEP 2: CHECK YOUR NARRATIVE ALIGNMENT

After you've filled out the Narrative Pyramid, use the guiding questions below to return to your side of the Pyramid and recheck each level in terms of alignment.

- ❑ Do your deep narratives, narratives, stories, and messages all align with the vision of the world you are trying to build? If not, how can you make your side of the Pyramid describe more of the future that you want?
- ❑ Might any part of your stories, messages, or narratives inadvertently reinforce harmful dominant narratives about immigrants, migrants, or refugees? If so, what adjustments can you make to eliminate or subvert those harmful narratives?

SAMPLE NARRATIVE PYRAMID

Marriage Equality Narrative

OPPOSITION	OURS
<p>DEEP NARRATIVES</p> <p><i>The underlying frameworks and values that form a worldview.</i></p> <p>Tradition Stability Scarcity</p>	<p>DEEP NARRATIVES</p> <p><i>The underlying frameworks and values that form a worldview.</i></p> <p>Equality Inclusion Love</p>
<p>NARRATIVES</p> <p><i>An array of related stories and messages that together evoke emotion, offer analysis, and suggest action.</i></p> <p>Marriage is a lifetime individual commitment between a man and a woman.</p>	<p>NARRATIVES</p> <p><i>An array of related stories and messages that together evoke emotion, offer analysis, and suggest action.</i></p> <p>Love is love Marriage equality</p>
<p>STORIES</p> <p><i>Stories have characters and a story arc. They create meaning and are the basic unit of change.</i></p> <p>Stories of love and commitment between a man and a woman</p>	<p>STORIES</p> <p><i>Stories have characters and a story arc. They create meaning and are the basic unit of change.</i></p> <p>Inclusive stories of love and commitment Stories of people supporting their LGBTQ friends' and family's desire for marriage</p>
<p>MESSAGES</p> <p><i>Hashtags, slogans, ideas, taglines that remind us of what we think and how we might choose to act.</i></p> <p>Marriage is between man and wife Rights aren't just handed out</p>	<p>MESSAGES</p> <p><i>Hashtags, slogans, ideas, taglines that remind us of what we think and how we might choose to act.</i></p> <p>Love is love</p>

NARRATIVE PYRAMID WORKSHEET

OPPOSITION	OURS
<p>DEEP NARRATIVES</p> <p><i>The underlying frameworks and values that form a worldview.</i></p>	<p>DEEP NARRATIVES</p> <p><i>The underlying frameworks and values that form a worldview.</i></p>
<p>NARRATIVES</p> <p><i>An array of related stories and messages that together evoke emotion, offer analysis, and suggest action.</i></p>	<p>NARRATIVES</p> <p><i>An array of related stories and messages that together evoke emotion, offer analysis, and suggest action.</i></p>
<p>STORIES</p> <p><i>Stories have characters and a story arc. They create meaning and are the basic unit of change.</i></p>	<p>STORIES</p> <p><i>Stories have characters and a story arc. They create meaning and are the basic unit of change.</i></p>
<p>MESSAGES</p> <p><i>Hashtags, slogans, ideas, taglines that remind us of what we think and how we might choose to act.</i></p>	<p>MESSAGES</p> <p><i>Hashtags, slogans, ideas, taglines that remind us of what we think and how we might choose to act.</i></p>

Audience Worksheet

REVISED February 20, 2023

If we are ultimately trying to build a pro-immigrant majority in this country, we need to be able to reach, engage, and move a large number of people. This will involve two goals: to shore up and activate our core audiences, and to reach and persuade stretch audiences.

Core audiences are audiences whom we consider to be fundamentally in agreement with us already. **Stretch audiences** are those who are not yet with us, but could be with some effort and intervention. Both stretch and core audiences exist amongst liberals, conservatives, independents and everyone in between. Every organization will have their own core and stretch audiences that they define based on the goals of their campaign, initiative, or strategy.

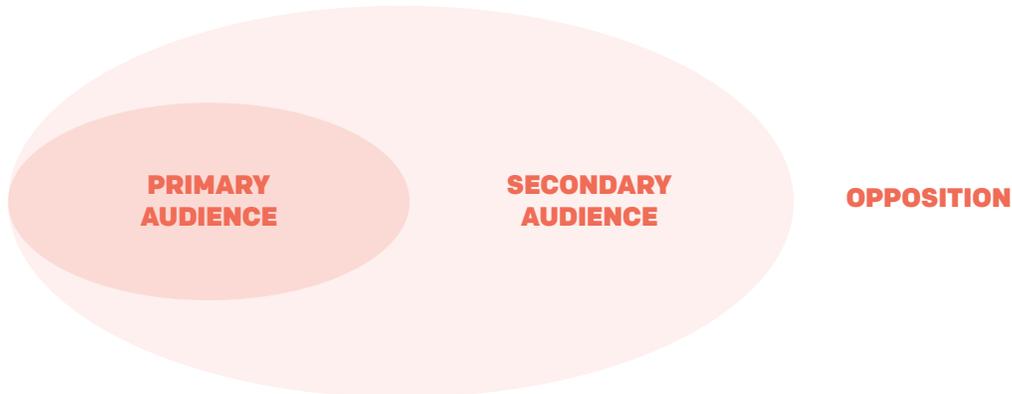
Among possible core and stretch audiences, you'll find a variety of people with different core values, cultural consumption habits, and worldviews. Different narratives, stories, and messengers will land differently with these different audience segments.

When you get to the point of designing a narrative project, you need to be very specific about who you are designing it for. This is your **primary audience**, the audience whom you most want to reach and move. You may also think about your **secondary audience**, the audience who might encounter your project and who you have some intention to engage, but who is not your primary target. You may also need to take into account your **opposition audience**, an audience who will resist or challenge your project. You may not target them directly, but it will be important and sometimes strategic to anticipate their reactions.

Understanding the audience your project is targeting (your **primary audience**) is one of the most important elements to be able to achieve narrative success. This worksheet will help you identify your audience(s), outline their characteristics, and figure out what narratives and content might resonate with them.

Identifying Your Audience

IDENTIFYING YOUR AUDIENCE



1 Who do you want to reach with your narrative project?

Describe your audiences:	
Primary Audience <i>This is the audience you are directly targeting with your project.</i>	
Secondary Audience <i>This is an audience who might encounter your project, and whom you have some intention to engage, but who is not your primary target.</i>	
Opposition <i>This is an audience who will resist or challenge your project. You will likely not target them directly, but it will be important to anticipate their reactions.</i>	

2 Why focus on this particular primary and secondary audience? What are the strategic benefits of reaching these audiences?

3 What do your audiences care about?

	CORE VALUES	WHAT MOTIVATES THEM	WHO OR WHAT INFLUENCES THEM?
Primary Audience			
Secondary Audience			
Opposition			

4 Where are they? Where will you reach them?

	Where do they spend time? (be specific about their places of engagement)	What do they do for fun/learning/improvement/spiritual experiences?	What media/art/culture/ influencers do they engage?
Primary Audience			
Secondary Audience			

5 What challenges do you foresee in reaching these audiences?

6 How might your audiences receive and react to your selected narrative?

	What about your narrative would resonate with them?	What confusion or disconnection might they experience? What might they not understand?	What criticisms might they have? (e.g. if dominant narrative is winning)
Primary Audience			
Secondary Audience			
Opposition			

7 How might your opposition react to your narrative?

8 How might your opposition's reaction to your narrative strategy help build your audience? How might you create narrative on-ramps or conditions to favorably activate your secondary audiences? (We're playing narrative chess here — anticipate the reaction to the reaction.)

Form Worksheet

THIS WORKSHEET WILL HELP YOU GENERATE IDEAS for what form your project will take. Developing the shape of a narrative project is part strategy, part creativity. We will provide some exploratory questions below to help you reflect on both.

Almost anything can serve as a vehicle to advance a narrative. Your project could take the form of a photography exhibit or YouTube video, a mixtape or a Tik Tok challenge, a science fiction series or a holiday-themed event. Or it could take the form of more traditional movement tactics such as direct actions, lobbying days, rallies, or marches.

Whatever form you choose, we invite you to use this worksheet to lean into your own creativity and have some fun brainstorming with your team.

BRAINSTORMING QUESTIONS

Feel free to explore any question in any order.

- ❖ What do you know about your audience? What do they like to do? Who influences them? What entertainment and media platforms are they on? What type of content do they typically like to experience or consume? What does this knowledge suggest about which forms would be likely to reach and resonate with them?
- ❖ If you already know your narrative, what would it look like to embody it? What symbols or models might boldly illustrate your narrative?

Example: To change the dominant narrative about people with criminal records, the People's Paper Co-op worked with returning citizens to make recycled paper out of their old criminal records, put their photos on it, and write a caption describing what people don't see about them when they look at their criminal records. They created murals with the resulting papers and used them as an advocacy tool.

- * What does your desired future look and feel like? What values are central to the society you are trying to build? What are the shared holidays, rituals, and celebrations that grow from those values? How would your society's institutions function differently than they do now? Is there anything from that future that you could "bring back" and manifest now?

Example: To build power for a narrative opposing a \$19 billion bank bailout, a group of Austrian architecture students created a scale model of a sustainable city that could be built for the same price tag as the bailout. They displayed the model in a public square and gave tours of the city to audiences.

- * Are any of your opposition's narratives successful enough that it's worth challenging them? Can you think of ways to satirize them? Can you think of ways to illuminate the harmful underlying deep narratives that drive the opposition's narratives? Are there specific media platforms, channels, or in-person activations that are more likely to be effective in helping audiences divest from opposition narratives?

Example: The Greater than Fear campaign in Minnesota invited social media audiences to put photos of their dogs into a digital frame that made their dogs look like "dog-whistle-fighting" superheroes. People would then post the photos on social media to call out racist dog whistles from politicians.

- * Are there any significant symbols, locations, or dates that would help you illustrate the stories you want to highlight?

Example: Activist Bree Newsome scaled a 30-foot pole to take down the Confederate battle flag that was displayed on the grounds of the South Carolina State House in order to draw attention to institutionalized white supremacy symbolized by the flag at the seat of power.

- * What creative assets do you have access to? Do you know a local band? Are you a poet? Does your organization have a relationship with an artist? List out all the creative assets that come to mind. Knowing that you have those relationships, can you imagine a way to collaborate and integrate any of those assets into your project?
- * What kinds of activities and connections bring you joy? Can you think of project ideas that build on what you would have fun doing?

Design Star Strategy Alignment Worksheet

REVISED February 20, 2023

NARRATIVE DESIGN IS AN ITERATIVE PROCESS, and it's important to refine your design elements until all are working in sync and are in service of your goals. Once you have gone through your design star worksheets and established your deep narrative, narrative, goals, audience, and form, you can use this worksheet to check each element of your project for alignment.

Fill out the worksheet on page 71 to see all of your design elements together. Below are questions you can then use to make sure that your project is narratively strategic. You should discuss and answer these questions collaboratively with your team involved in the co-design and implementation of your narrative project.

1 Are your Design Star points aligned?

- Does your **narrative** grow naturally out of your **deep narrative**?
- Does your **narrative goal** advance your **narrative**?
- Does your **project goal** describe the impact that you want your project **form** to have?
- Does your project **form** make sense for who your **audience** is and offer an opportunity to advance your **narrative**?

2 Will your project actually reach your audience? If you're not sure, what can you adjust to make sure that you do reach your audience?

3 Why do you believe your project will work on your audiences? What do you know about your audiences and what are your assumptions that lead you to believe your project will have the intended impact?

DESIGN STAR WORKSHEET: EXAMPLE

This example has been excerpted from the Muslim Futures Project's Design Star, completed for the Chrysalis Lab

YOUR DEEP NARRATIVE	YOUR NARRATIVE
<p>Abundance Belonging Mutuality/Reciprocity</p>	<p>Intersectional Muslim communities are also American communities / What is good for Muslims is good for all of us</p>
YOUR AUDIENCE	YOUR GOALS
<p>Culturally-literate liberal and moderate folks of all races who are susceptible to Islamophobic narratives.</p>	<p>NARRATIVE GOAL(S):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advance the view of Muslim communities as American communities. What is good for Muslims is good for all of us. 2. Dismantle the war on terror framing. <p>PROJECT GOAL(S):</p> <p>Create stories that manifest aspirational Muslim futures in the U.S.</p>
YOUR FORM	
<p>Part 1: Conduct a writers' room utilizing our unique collaborative world-building practice and develop story ideas based on values-driven aspirational Muslim futures.</p> <p>Part 2: Publish a prose fiction anthology and graphic novel anthology with stories developed from the writers' room.</p> <p>Part 3: Support writers to continue translating Muslim Futures stories into short films, features, and series pitches.</p>	

DESIGN STAR WORKSHEET

Use this worksheet to pull all of your narrative design elements together. This can provide a transparent, strategic view for your design process. Use the Design Star Strategy Check worksheet on the following page to check for alignment.

YOUR DEEP NARRATIVE	YOUR NARRATIVE
YOUR AUDIENCE	YOUR GOALS
	<p data-bbox="834 877 1133 911">NARRATIVE GOAL(S):</p> <p data-bbox="834 1121 1101 1155">PROJECT GOAL(S):</p>
YOUR FORM	

Narrative Hypothesis & Impact Measurement

ANYONE DESIGNING A NARRATIVE PROJECT OR CAMPAIGN makes informed predictions about how and why they will impact an audience. This prediction is called **a hypothesis**. In order to effectively measure your impact, it is essential to define your hypothesis. This also allows you to take a step back and look at the underlying assumptions that form the spine of your narrative strategy.



A hypothesis is your rationale for why your project is the solution to the problem you're trying to solve and a prediction for how your solution will work in the real world.

We have developed the following prompts that, once answered, form your narrative hypothesis:

- * **Our primary audience believes/does:** The problem you're solving for (i.e. problematic attitude, belief, behavior, or narrative)
- * **...because:** Narratives, experiences, values, influences, or mindsets
- * **Therefore, we believe the solution is to:** Broadly, what you believe needs to be done in the world or with your audiences that solves the problem (Note: your narrative goal should grow from this anticipated solution)
- * **We think that if we:** What you're doing to advance toward that solution (aka your project form)
- * **...then our audience will:** Predict the impact that your project will have on your audience: attitude shift, behavior change, etc (aka your project goal)

To find out whether or not your campaign or project has its intended impact, you can test whether your hypothesis was correct. Did your audience respond the way you thought they would? And does their response, whether or not it was as predicted, move you closer to the solution? When working from a hypothesis, even failure can lead to powerful learnings because it builds your understanding of what didn't work and why, and, based on that, what you might try next.

We also recommend you think about what your indicators of success might be. Success indicators can serve as milestones or checkpoints to help you know if you're on the right track. They could include a preferred answer on a content test survey; an observed reaction in an art exhibit, or an idea trending on social media or in the news. If you aren't meeting your success indicators, it may be time to revisit your hypothesis or reassess your approach. You can include success indicators in your hypothesis process by adding this prompt:

- ✱ **We will know our work is having its intended impact when we observe:**
Tangible indicators of success that you can measure; what reactions, responses, behaviors or actions you might observe from your primary audiences that will tell you that you're on the right track

There are many ways to test how your narratives impact audiences. If you want to learn more, we recommend Erin Potts' [*Current Evaluation and Measurement Techniques for Cultural Strategy*](#).

NARRATIVE HYPOTHESIS WORKSHEET: EXAMPLE

This example has been excerpted from Intelligent Mischief's Design Star, completed for the Chrysalis Lab

OUR PRIMARY AUDIENCE IS:	
Young African Americans	
OUR PRIMARY AUDIENCE BELIEVES/DOES:	BECAUSE:
Young African Americans see Black immigrants as competition for resources. Worries over reparations make them anti-immigrant. They feel that people are taking away something that belongs to them.	Their scarcity mindset and belief in a hierarchical system — they don't want to be at the bottom of it. Their fear due to historical erasure of Black Americans. Their awareness of a lack of sovereignty, lack of a homeland. "Home is here, but here's not really home". Feeling of being unmoored, not being able to claim a place of safety or true belonging.
THEREFORE WE BELIEVE THE SOLUTION IS TO:	
Strengthen or re-ignite a Pan-African narrative that builds deep narratives of interdependence, belonging, and abundance, which in turn serve as proxies of other assumptions beyond hierarchy like shared power, etc. Attaching this to positive affect (i.e. Black euphoria/afro-euphoria, Black joy, collectivity, happy feelings) creates the desire for further manifestations of this narrative in behavior and experience-seeking.	
FOR OUR PART, WE THINK THAT IF WE:	THEN OUR AUDIENCE WILL:
Build an immersive space that manifests a Pan-African narrative through multiple installations and experiences, each of which generates affects like Black joy...	...feel connected to a Pan-African identity, learn and create community with others, and develop into a base of Black folks who will be in solidarity with immigrants and other movements.
WE WILL KNOW OUR WORK IS HAVING ITS INTENDED IMPACT WHEN WE OBSERVE:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People go back to immersive space multiple times • People are posting pro-Pan African and pro-immigrant messages on Tik Tok, Instagram • People are pro-immigrant oriented in other parties, festivals (i.e. Wakanda parties, fan fiction, etc) 	

NARRATIVE HYPOTHESIS WORKSHEET

OUR PRIMARY AUDIENCE IS:	
OUR PRIMARY AUDIENCE BELIEVES/DOES:	BECAUSE:
<i>The problem you're solving for (i.e. problematic attitude, belief, behavior, or narrative)</i>	<i>Narratives, experiences, values, influences, or mindsets.</i>
THEREFORE WE BELIEVE THE SOLUTION IS TO:	
<i>Broadly what you believe needs to be done in the world or with your audiences that solves the problem (Note: your narrative goal should grow from this anticipated solution)</i>	
FOR OUR PART, WE THINK THAT IF WE:	THEN OUR AUDIENCE WILL:
<i>What you're doing to advance toward that solution (aka. your project form)</i>	<i>Predict the impact on your audience: attitude shift, behavior change, etc (aka. your project goal)</i>
WE WILL KNOW OUR WORK IS HAVING ITS INTENDED IMPACT WHEN WE OBSERVE:	
<i>Tangible indicators of success that you can measure; what reactions, responses, behaviors or actions you might observe from your primary audiences that will tell you that you're on the right track.</i>	

Step-by-Step Narrative Project Design Guide

REVISED February 20, 2023

THE STEP-BY-STEP NARRATIVE PROJECT DESIGN GUIDE is a multi-part worksheet to help you bring all of your project design elements together after you've completed the Narrative Pyramid, Audience, Goals, and Form Worksheets. Take the time with the previous tools so that by the time you sit down to develop your project timeline and budget, and advance into the more meticulous work-planning, your team feels confident and grounded in your project idea.

In this guide, questions will prompt you to plug in the results of your work from the Narrative Design Star worksheets. You will have a chance to dig a little deeper into your audience's experience, and then you'll move into project planning details.

LET'S GET STARTED!

Table of Contents

77	Narrative
77	Goals
78	Audience
79	Design Part 1: Project Description and Form
80	Design Part 2: Timeline and Work-Plan
81	Design Part 3: Collaborators and Implementers
82	Design Part 4: Project Budget

YOUR NARRATIVES

Plug in the results of your [Narrative Pyramid Worksheet](#) here:

a Your Selected Narrative:

b The Narrative(s) you are challenging (if applicable):

c The Deep Narrative you are advancing:

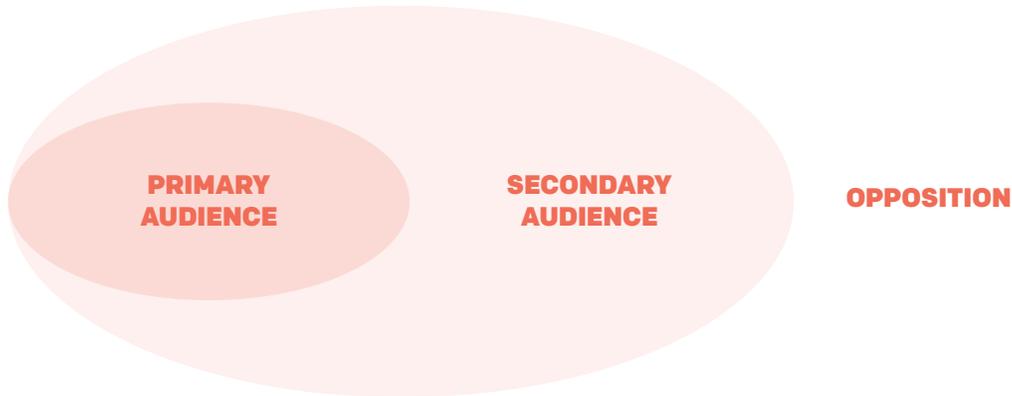
YOUR NARRATIVE & PROJECT IMPACT GOALS

Plug in the results of your [Goals Worksheet](#) here:

a Your project impact goal for this project:

b Your narrative goal for this project:

YOUR SELECTED AUDIENCE



Plug in the results of your [Audience Worksheet](#) here:

Describe your audiences:	
Primary Audience <i>This is the audience you are directly targeting with your project.</i>	
Secondary Audience <i>This is an audience who might encounter your project, and whom you have some intention to engage, but who is not your primary target.</i>	
Opposition <i>This is an audience who will resist or challenge your project. You will likely not target them directly, but it will be important to anticipate their reactions.</i>	

Take some time to reflect on your primary and secondary audiences and answer these questions.

- a** Your project will need to directly reach your primary audience. Do you have what you need to directly reach your primary audience? How and where will you reach them? How and where will you reach your secondary audience?
- b** What is your hypothesis that explains why you believe your project will work on your audiences? What do you know about your audiences and what are your assumptions that lead you to believe your project will have the intended impact?

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND FORM

- a** In a few short sentences, describe your narrative project idea here in a logline.
Example: (short description + audience + narrative + deep narrative) This video series for Instagram targets persuadable, non-immigrant millennials of color who have participated in Black Lives Matter protests through a variety of short, easily accessible stories. Our narrative is: just immigration is central to a racial justice agenda. We intend to advance deep narratives of mutuality and community—that we all belong to each other and that we need to look out for each other.

- b** Where will your project be implemented? Name your platform or venue. Use the final decisions from the Form Worksheet in the Design Star here.

- c** What will your target audience experience when encountering your project? Please be as descriptive here as possible, for instance: What will an audience member see or hear? What setting will they be in? What emotions are you hoping they will feel?

- d** How will your project move your audience? How may it help put your audience in their “stretch zone”?

PROJECT DESIGN TIMELINE

In this section, lay out the activities and steps involved in the design, implementation, and testing of your project. List dates where applicable.

Make sure in your activities you are documenting when you will be doing activities for the following:

- Project Design
- Project Implementation
- Project Testing

PROJECT PHASE	YOUR PROJECT ACTIVITIES	MONTH OF IMPLEMENTATION	STATUS AND NOTES <i>(*use this column to track your own progress)</i>
Design and Pre-Testing			
Project Implementation and Testing			
Results and Learning			

PROJECT COLLABORATORS AND IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

Use the grid below to list names of people and organizations who will be directly responsible for the success of your project, and who will help you design, implement and evaluate it.

Who will you collaborate with in order to make your project happen? Besides yourself, who will help implement your idea and evaluate the results?

Process	Names of Collaborators and Implementers	Engaged by When?
Project Design		
Implementing Your Project		
Evaluating Results/ Reactions to your project		

While completing this section, you may also want to look at our [Introduction to Narrative System and Narrative Ecosystem](#) to spark more thinking about the process of collaboration.

PROJECT BUDGET

Use this template below to share your project budget for your project design, implementation, and testing.

Activity and Expense Description	Projected Expense
Total Project Budget Required	
Current Amount Fundraised	

An Introduction to the Narrative System and the Narrative Ecosystem

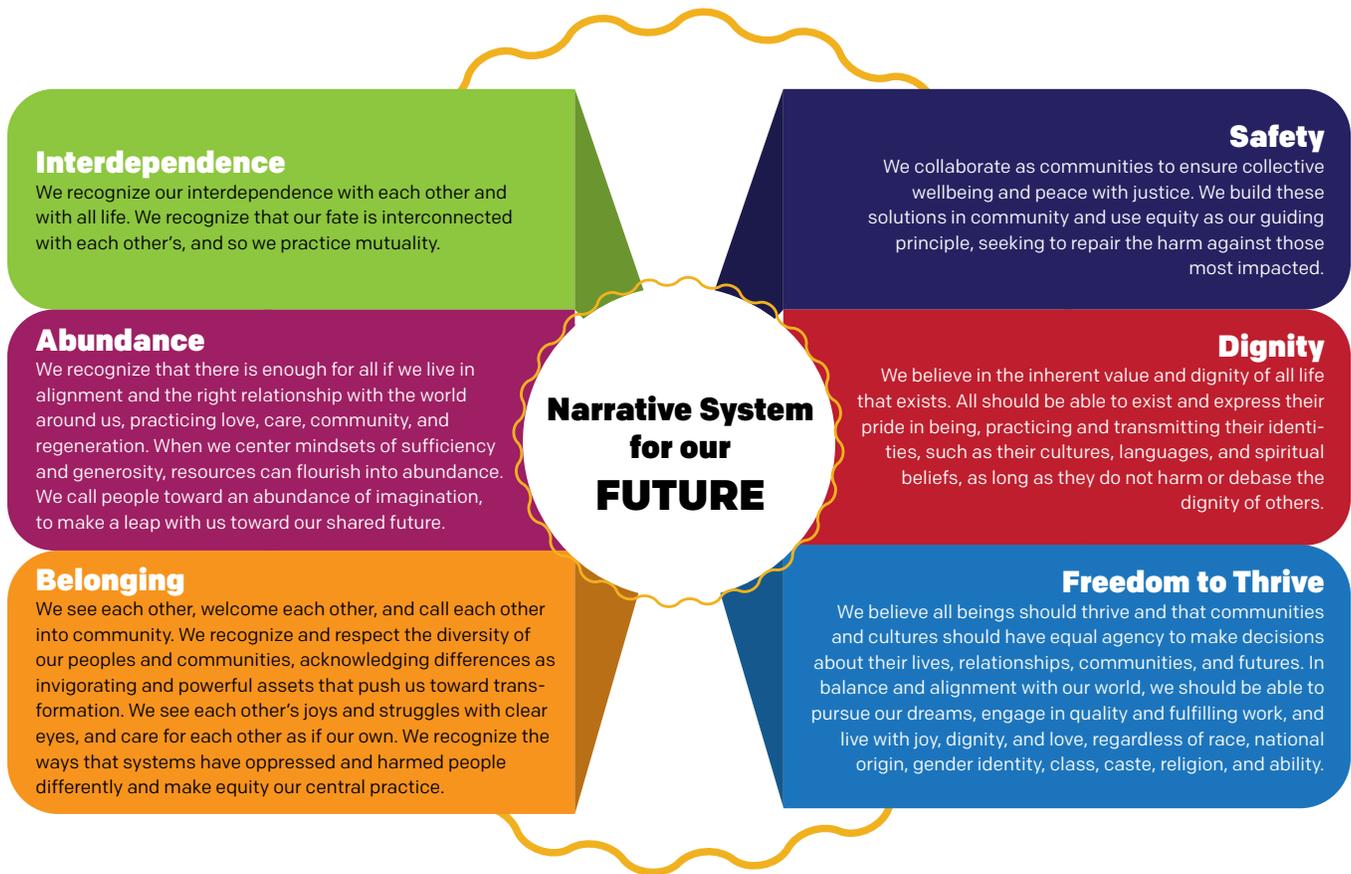
BECAUSE WE EACH HAVE A PART TO PLAY IN WINNING THE CULTURE, and because a multiplicity of narratives and approaches are necessary to ensure a thriving world for all, we introduce the frameworks of a narrative system and a narrative ecosystem.

People are moved and activated in different ways, along different timelines, and never just within the context of legislative, electoral, or policy campaigns alone. We have a better chance of building narrative power if we work with each other on different fronts and timelines to move different audiences in the same direction. As a movement, we should aspire to reach people all the time.

As you design your project, use the narrative system framework to help you choose the deep narratives with which your project will align. Use the narrative ecosystem framework to help you think about how your project relates to others' work to collectively move people towards our worldview.

NARRATIVE SYSTEM

We define a **narrative system** as a set of deep narratives that together describe the worldview we want to activate at a majority level. A narrative system provides a “destination” to ground narrative projects ranging from rapid-response and policy campaigns to cultural strategies and longer-term narrative work. It sets our values, helps us to find alignment and consensus across projects and timelines, and allows us to connect our work with other social movements.



The Butterfly Lab cohort developed a narrative system to challenge the status quo. This system is anchored in six deep narratives: **Interdependence, Abundance, Belonging, Safety, Freedom to Thrive, and Dignity** to inform the narrative strategy work our movements need now. After reading them, ask:

- What one or two deep narratives are most resonant with the work that you are currently doing?
- Which deep narratives would require that you stretch your practices and develop new stories?
- What aligned relationships might you build with partners, collaborators, and/or allies to extend the impact of your collective work?

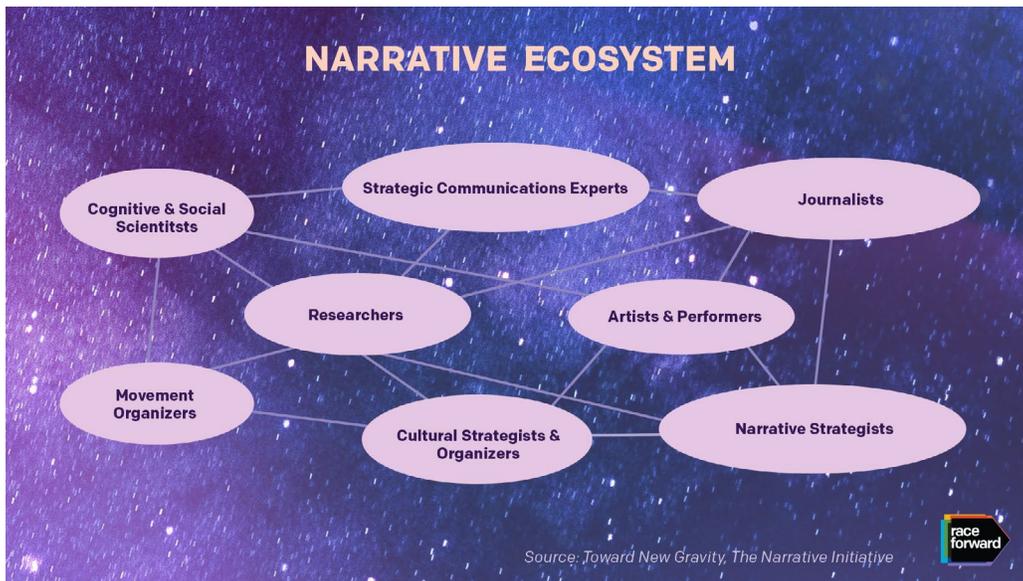
Narrative Ecosystem

OUR MOVEMENT HAS AN ABUNDANCE OF SKILLS, CAPACITIES, AND IDEAS.

Building bridges that facilitate the easeful sharing of visions, strategies, and resources is vital in our movements.

We define a narrative ecosystem as a network of connected individuals and organizations that can share knowledge, expertise, skills, ideas, capacities, and work to advance a narrative system across a diversity of fronts along different timelines.

The framework of a **narrative ecosystem** helps us imagine how we might be able to align ourselves with each other and work together in rapid-response and campaign timelines as well as longer timelines simultaneously.



To develop an ecosystem that prioritizes collaboration, relationality, and power-sharing, start by identifying your own role within it. The following are introductory prompts to which we encourage you to return at each step of your narrative design process. They can help you stay centered while thinking about how to forge stronger relationships.

- * **Who are you?** Think expansively and acknowledge how you arrived at this present moment. Who helped you? What has inspired and shaped you?

- * **Who are your people?** There is a Spanish proverb that goes, “Tell me who you walk with and I will tell you who you are.” Consider all of your human and other than human relatives. What are the places, peoples, communities, geographies, and experiences to which you feel connected?
- * **Where are you going?** What goals are you working toward—personally, culturally, and beyond? What vision of the world motivates you? What do you need to learn and what capacities do you still need to build?
- * **With whom will you build relationships?** Whose work and goals are complementary to yours? Who might extend your capacities or teach you new capacities? What aligned relationships might you build with partners, collaborators, and/or allies to extend the impact of your collective work?

The [Social Change Ecosystem Map](#) by Deepa Iyer at Building Movement Project is a useful tool for further identifying the texture of particular roles you might hold in building cultural and narrative power.

Narrative System Worksheet

REVISED February 20, 2023

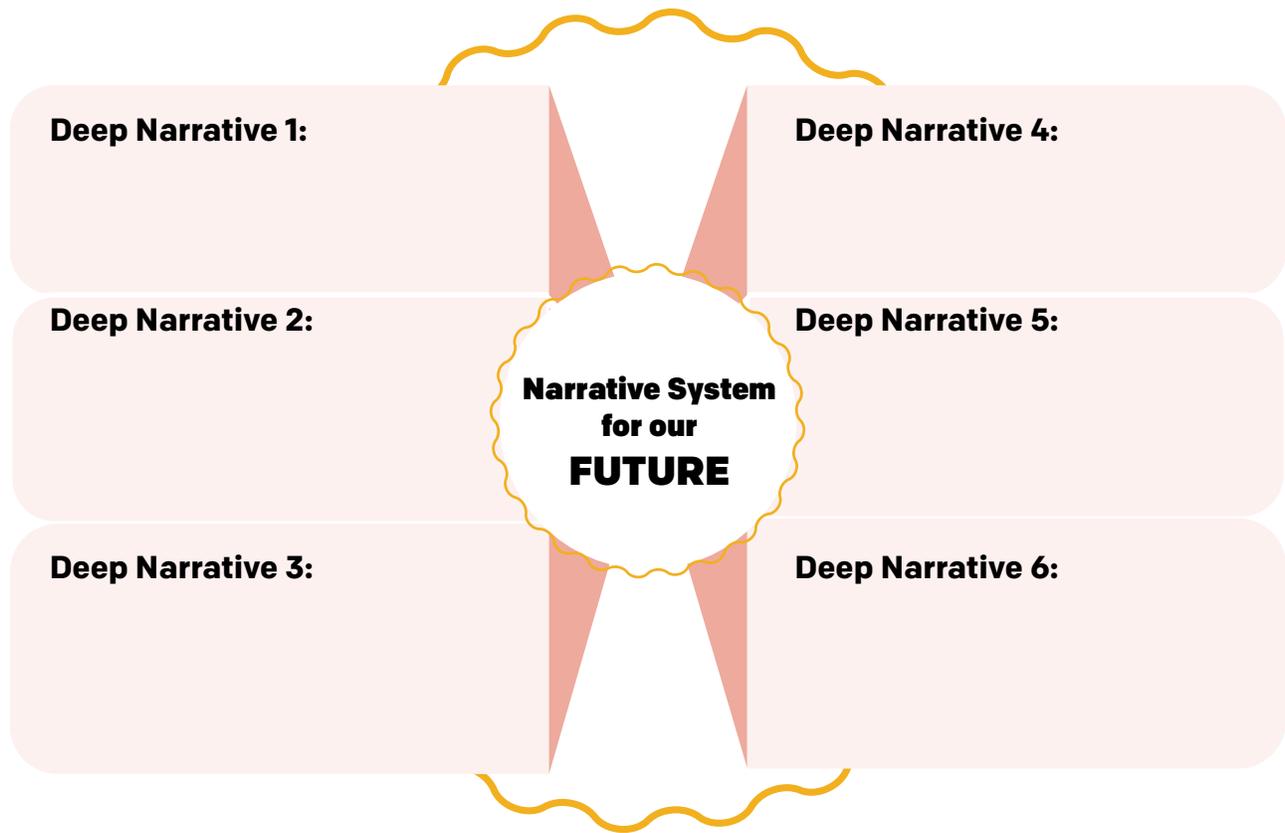
A NARRATIVE SYSTEM IS A SET OF DEEP NARRATIVES that together describe the worldview we want to activate at a majority level. It is the aggregate worldview that is generated through all of our deep narratives working in synergy and synchronization with each other. A narrative system provides a “destination” for our work. It sets our values, helps us to find alignment and consensus across projects and timelines, and allows us to connect our work with other social movements. The narrative system is a framework that can provide greater alignment in your field.

This worksheet will help you begin to identify the deep narratives that can form the basis of your own narrative system. We recommend doing this exercise with key stakeholders, whether in your organizations or in your communities, as a Narrative System sets the direction for your narrative strategy work into the future.

As you practice using this worksheet, consider pairing it with the narrative pyramid tool. All of your campaigns and projects should align from top to bottom on narrative pyramids. Your messaging and stories all reinforce and carry your narratives and deep narratives. Your narratives and deep narratives should align to reinforce your narrative system.

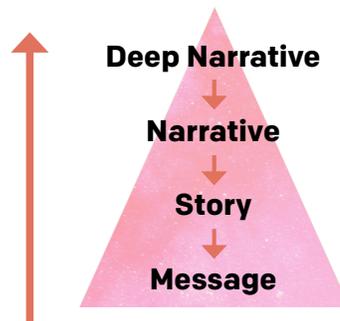
CONSIDER THESE TWO QUESTIONS TO START

- Q1.** Based on your work and values, which deep narratives would you include in your narrative system?
- Q2.** What worldviews and values would help advance a pro-immigrant future? What combination of deep narratives could produce liberatory cultural conditions for immigrant justice?



All campaigns, projects, activations, and partnerships should align from top to bottom on a narrative pyramid. There should be narratives and deep narratives at the top of each pyramid – which collectively create your narrative system.

Narrative Strategy Creates Alignment



These two frameworks and tools together (pyramid and system) can be used to iteratively check, strengthen and align your narrative work. Using these two frameworks with practice and rigor can also help you circumvent problems with having your messages and stories contradict your deep narratives.

Tip: As you develop your narrative system, be sure to get buy-in and input from your core stakeholders.