IMPACT

EDU CAMPAIGN

TOOLKIT

A training toolkint for **young activist,** to help them

realize **impactful campaigns**

INDEX

INTRODUCTION

The project

CoIMPACT is a transnational initiative designed to empower young people engaged in grassroots environmental activism. Funded by Erasmus+, and led by a partnership between Latte Creative (Italy), Xeración (Spain), and HIGGS (Greece), the project responds to a growing need: to equip youth with the practical, creative, and emotional tools required to face the climate crisis and communicate their causes effectively.

Across Southern Europe, countless young activists are working to protect the environment in their communities. Yet many of them lack the resources, skills, and networks needed to amplify their voices. CoIMPACT was born from the desire to address these challenges by strengthening the capacities of youth-led environmental organisations through collaboration, creativity, and solidarity.

This toolkit is one of the main outputs of the project. It is a practical and flexible guide for young activists, collectives, and organisations who want to build powerful campaigns, communicate complex issues clearly, and mobilise communities for change. The contents of this toolkit are grounded in real needs identified through research and dialogue with grassroots groups in Italy, Spain, and Greece. It includes methodologies, tools, and case studies focused on design for activism, artivism and guerrilla communication, and advocacy and lobbying—combining strategic thinking with cultural insight and creative energy.

Whether you're starting your first campaign or looking to refine your approach, this kit invites you to learn, adapt, and act. We believe that with the right tools, knowledge, and support, every young person can become a powerful agent of change.

DESIGN FOR ACTIVISM

Isacco Chiaf

1.INTRODUCTION

The Role of Design in Activism

Design is a powerful tool in the realm of activism. It shapes how messages are conveyed, ensuring they resonate with audiences and inspire action. Through compelling visuals, activists can highlight issues, mobilize supporters, and create a lasting impact. Design serves as the visual voice of movements, translating complex ideas into accessible and engaging formats. Whether it's a poster, a social media graphic, or a website, good design amplifies the reach and effectiveness of activist campaigns, making it an indispensable part of modern activism.

1.1 HISTORY: HOW DESIGN AND ACTIVISM

The collaboration between design and activism has a rich history, highlighted by significant movements that used visuals to drive change. Here, we examine seven notable instances where design was essential in promoting social and political causes.

Civil Rights Movement

In the United States, the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s was a significant and transformative period that aimed to end racial segregation and systematic discrimination against African Americans. This movement sought to secure fundamental rights and equality for African American citizens who had long been subjected to unjust laws and practices. Utilizing design to powerful effect, the movement used a variety of visual tools such as posters, pamphlets, and banners to convey strong and impactful messages of equality and justice. These visual aids played a crucial role in mobilizing communities, drawing national attention, and rallying support from diverse groups across the country.

One of the most iconic pieces from this era is the "I Am a Man" poster from the 1968 Memphis Sanitation Strike, which stands as a prime example of the movement's ability to encapsulate the dignity and demands of African American workers in a simple yet profound manner. This poster not only communicated the core values and urgent demands of the movement but also served to unify participants and garner wider support from both local and national audiences. Through these visuals, the Civil Rights Movement was able to effectively disseminate its message, inspire action, and foster a sense of solidarity among its supporters. The strategic use of these designs significantly contributed to the movement's successes and its enduring legacy in the fight for civil rights.

Atelier Populaire

The May 1968 protests in France were a series of student-led demonstrations and strikes that eventually grew into a nationwide movement against capitalism, consumerism, and traditional institutions. These protests were not just limited to a single city or demographic but encompassed people from various walks of life, all united in their demand for change. During these turbulent times, the Atelier Populaire (Popular Workshop) emerged as a significant hub for activist design. This workshop was especially notable because students and workers came together to occupy the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. There, they collaborated to produce striking posters that were not only visually compelling but also carried powerful and succinct messages. These bold designs were soon plastered across the city, serving to galvanize public support and effectively convey the urgency of their demands. The posters produced by the Atelier Populaire were more than just art; they became symbols of the movement, encapsulating the spirit and fervor of the protests. The Atelier Populaire's work remains a lasting testament to the power of grassroots design in revolutionary movements, illustrating how art and activism can intersect to create a profound impact.

See Red Women's Workshop

In 1974, amid the rapidly growing feminist movement in the UK, the See Red Women's Workshop was founded in London by a dedicated collective of women artists. These women came together with a shared vision and purpose, driven by a profound sense of urgency to address and challenge the pervasive societal norms of the time. Their aim was to create and distribute feminist posters that not only challenged societal norms but also highlighted pressing issues such as gender inequality, reproductive rights, and domestic violence. The workshop's designs were not just ordinary posters; they were vibrant, thought-provoking, and unapologetically political pieces of art that demanded attention and sparked conversation.

The posters produced by See Red Women's Workshop were characterized by their bold use of color and strik-

ing imagery, which were meticulously crafted to convey powerful messages. Each poster was a testament to the collective's commitment to using art as a means of activism. By intertwining their artistic talents with their political convictions, the women of See Red were able to produce works that resonated deeply with the public and fellow activists alike.

Through their relentless efforts, See Red Women's Workshop played a pivotal role in the feminist movement, demonstrating how design can challenge and transform cultural narratives. Their work showcased the potential of art to serve as a catalyst for social change, inspiring future generations of artists and activists to continue the fight for equality and justice. The legacy of See Red remains a powerful reminder of the impact that art, when combined with a passionate commitment to social issues, can have on society.

UK Miners Movement

The UK Miners' Strike of 1984-1985 was a significant and prolonged industrial action undertaken by the National Union of Mineworkers. The strike was a protest against the government's controversial plan to close unprofitable coal mines, a decision that posed a dire threat to thousands of jobs and the livelihoods of entire mining communities across the country. This period was marked by intense struggles and a deep sense of solidarity among the miners and their families.

To rally support and effectively communicate their plight to the broader public, miners and their supporters turned to creative design. They produced a wide array of posters, banners, and badges that poignantly

highlighted their struggles, unity, and determination. The striking imagery often featured powerful symbols such as clenched fists, coal miners hard at work, and compelling slogans like "Coal Not Dole." These visual elements became enduring symbols of resistance against the government's policies and resonated deeply with many.

The impact of these designs extended far beyond the local communities; they played a crucial role in mobilizing support on a national and even international scale. The visual campaign helped to draw attention to the miners' cause, attracting solidarity from various sectors of society and from supporters around the world. This creative approach to activism underscored the miners' resilience and their unwavering commitment to preserving their way of life.
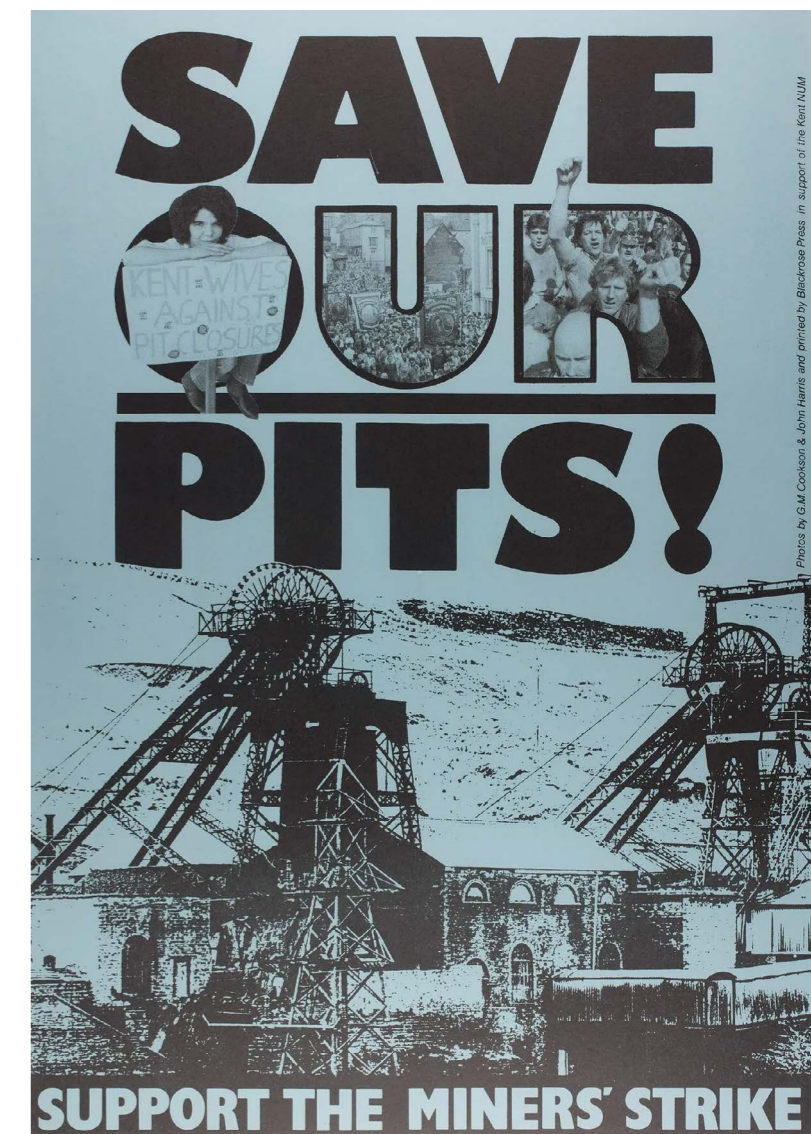
UK Punk Scene

The UK punk scene of the late 1970s and early 1980s emerged as a significant cultural and musical rebellion against the mainstream. This period was marked by its raw, do-it-yourself (DIY) ethos, characterized by a spirit of anti-establishment and defiance. Punk design played a crucial role in this vibrant movement, with influential bands like the Sex Pistols and The Clash using various mediums such as album covers, posters, and fanzines to convey their revolutionary messages and political stances.

The iconic work of designers like Jamie Reid, with his distinctive ransom-note style typography and shocking visuals, became emblematic of punk's anarchic spirit and outspoken political stance. Reid's creations were not just album covers or posters; they were visual manifestos that encapsulated the rebellious energy and social commentary of the punk movement. This visual rebellion was not an isolated phenomenon but complemented the music, contributing to a unified and powerful cultural phenomenon that transcended mere entertainment.

Punk's influence extended beyond the music scene, impacting fashion, language, and attitudes. It provided a voice to the disenchanted youth and challenged societal norms, creating a lasting legacy that continues to inspire new generations. The combination of visual art and music during this period created a rich tapestry of cultural expression that remains significant in the history of modern music and design.

Anti-Apartheid Movement

The global Anti-Apartheid Movement was a significant international campaign aimed at dismantling the deeply entrenched system of racial segregation and discrimination enforced by the South African government from 1948 to 1994. This movement was characterized by a broad coalition of individuals and organizations worldwide who were committed to the cause of justice and equality. Design played a critical and multifaceted role in raising awareness and building widespread international support for the struggle against apartheid. Various forms of media, including posters, flyers, and badges, were meticulously crafted to highlight the egregious injustices of apartheid and to call for robust measures such as sanctions and divestment.

The striking visuals often featured powerful and evocative imagery of resistance and solidarity, which were designed to resonate deeply with a global audience. Iconic symbols such as the raised fist and poignant images of leaders like Nelson Mandela became syn-

onymous with the fight for freedom and human rights. These compelling designs were not just artistic expressions but were instrumental in rallying global support, mobilizing activists, and applying relentless pressure on governments and corporations to withdraw their support for the apartheid regime. By amplifying the voices of those oppressed and galvanizing international action, the Anti-Apartheid Movement's use of design significantly contributed to the eventual dismantling of apartheid in South Africa.

Black Panthers

The Black Panther Party, founded in 1966 in the United States, was a revolutionary socialist organization that sought to address racial injustice and promote Black empowerment. This influential group emerged during a time of great social upheaval and was instrumental in advocating for the civil rights of African Americans. The party used graphic design as a central part of its activism, with its newspaper, The Black Panther, featuring bold illustrations by the talented artist Emory Douglas. His work depicted the struggles and resistance of African Americans, using powerful imagery and slogans to inspire and educate the masses. These illustrations not only highlighted the injustices faced by the Black community but also served as a call to action, encouraging people to join the movement. The Black Panthers' visual identity, including their iconic logo of a prowling black panther, became enduring symbols of Black empowerment and resistance against racial oppression. Their visual strategies were meticulously crafted to communicate their message of defiance and hope, resonating with both their supporters and the broader public. The impact of their design work continues to be felt, underscoring the power of visual art in social movements.

CONCLUSION

From the Civil Rights Movement in the United States to the global Anti-Apartheid Movement, the fusion of design and activism has repeatedly proven its power to drive social change. By understanding and harnessing the principles of effective design, contemporary activists can continue this legacy, creating visuals that inspire, inform, and incite action. This chapter delves into the principles and practices of designing for activism, equipping you with the tools to create impactful visuals that can propel your cause forward.

1.2 DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR ACTIVISTS

VISUAL HIERARCHY: IMPORTANCE AND APPLICATION

Visual hierarchy is a fundamental principle of design that organizes elements in a way that indicates their order of importance. This is crucial in activism, where the clarity of your message can determine the effectiveness of your campaign.

IMPORTANCE
Visual hierarchy guides viewers' eyes to the most important parts of your design first. It ensures that the main message or call to action is seen and understood immediately. By prioritizing certain elements,

Application:

- **Size and Scale**: Make your primary message or call to action the largest element on the page. Larger elements naturally draw more attention.
- **Color and Contrast**: Use bold colors or high-contrast elements to highlight key information. For example, a bright red background with white text can make a headline stand out.
- **Placement**: Position important elements where the eye naturally falls first, such as the top or center of the design.
- **Typography**: Use different font weights and styles to create a clear distinction between headings, subheadings, and body text. Bold, large fonts can be used for headlines, while smaller, regular fonts can be used for detailed information.

By carefully considering visual hierarchy, you can ensure that your audience receives the most critical information first, making your design more effective and engaging.

COLOR THEORY: COMMUNICATING MESSAGES THROUGH COLOR

Color is a powerful tool in design that can evoke emotions, convey messages, and influence perceptions. Understanding color theory is essential for creating designs that resonate with your audience and amplify your activist message.

IMPORTANCE
Colors have psychological effects that can enhance the emotional impact of your message. They can attract attention, create mood, and establish brand identity. In activism, the right color choices can
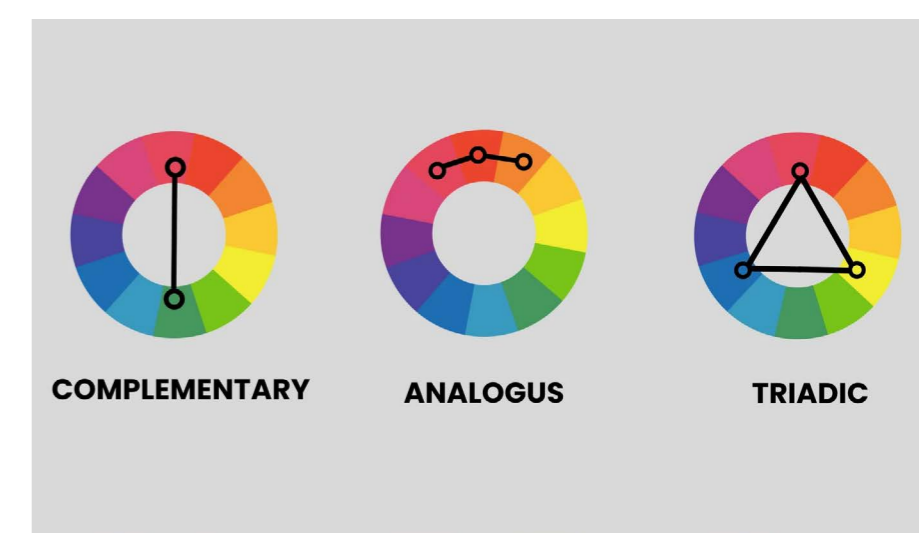
Application:

- **Choosing a Color Palette**: Select colors that align with the emotions and messages you want to convey. For instance, red can signify urgency and passion, while blue can evoke trust and calm.
- **Cultural Considerations**: Be mindful of cultural associations with colors, as they can vary significantly. For example, white symbolizes purity in some cultures but can represent mourning in others.
- **Contrast and Readability**: Ensure there is sufficient contrast between your text and background colors to maintain readability. This is especially important for accessibility.
- **Color Harmony**: Use harmonious color schemes, such as complementary or analogous colors, to create a visually pleasing design. Tools like Adobe Color can help you choose harmonious color combinations.

By leveraging color theory, you can create designs that not only look appealing but also reinforce your message and evoke the desired response from your audience.

TYPOGRAPHY: CHOOSING THE RIGHT FONTS

Typography is the art of arranging type to make written language legible, readable, and visually appealing. In activism, typography plays a critical role in conveying your message clearly and powerfully.

IMPORTANCE

The choice of fonts can affect the tone and readability of your message. It can convey professionalism, urgency, or emotion, helping to set the overall mood of your campaign. Good typography ensures that your message is not only seen but also understood.you can effectively communicate the urgency or significance of your cause.
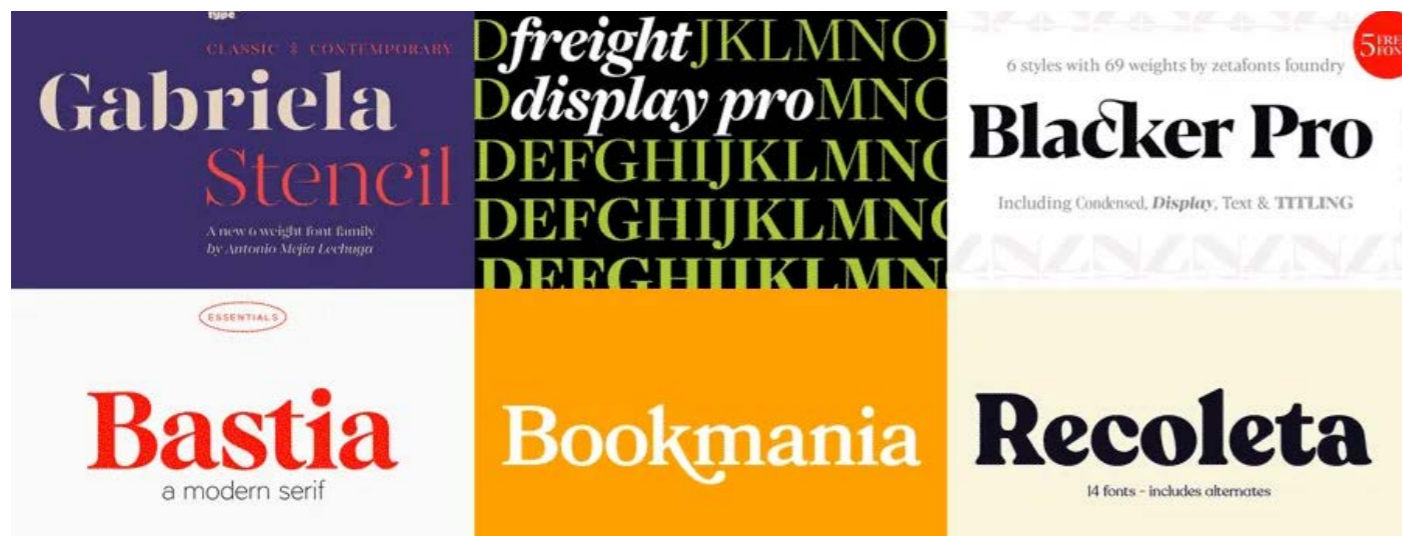
Application:

- **Font Selection**: Choose fonts that reflect the tone of your message. Sans-serif fonts like Arial or Helvetica are clean and modern, making them suitable for straightforward, impactful messages. Serif fonts like Times New Roman can convey tradition and seriousness.
- **Hierarchy and Structure**: Use different font sizes and weights to establish a clear hierarchy. Headlines should be bold and large, subheadings slightly smaller, and body text readable but not overpowering.
- **Readability**: Ensure your text is easy to read by choosing fonts that are legible at various sizes. Avoid overly decorative fonts for large blocks of text.
- **Consistency**: Maintain consistency in your typography choices throughout your design. Use the same font family for headings and another for body text to create a cohesive look.

By carefully selecting and arranging fonts, you can enhance the clarity and impact of your activist message, making your content more engaging and accessible.

COMPOSITION: CREATING BALANCED AND ENGAGING DESIGNS

Composition refers to the arrangement of visual elements in a design. A well-composed design is visually appealing and effectively communicates your message. For activists, good composition ensures that your designs capture attention and convey your cause effectively.

IMPORTANCE

Balanced composition helps create a focal point, guides the viewer's eye, and ensures that all elements work together harmoniously. It can make your design more attractive and professional, increasing its effectiveness.make your campaign more memorable and impactful.
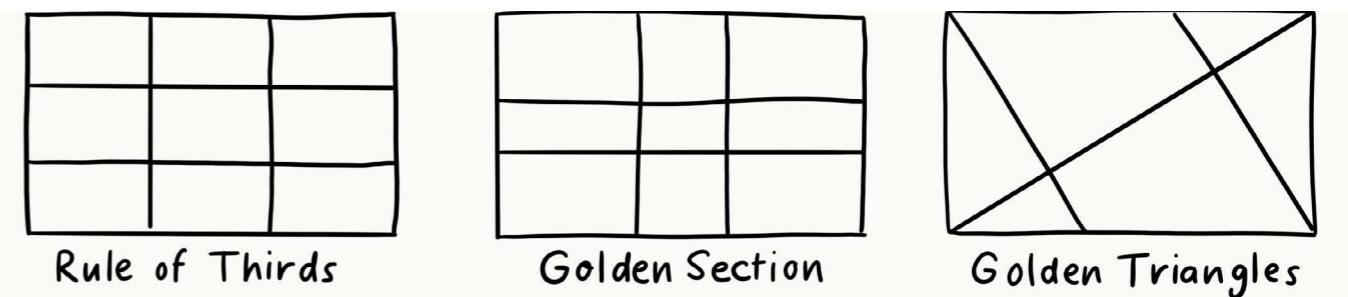
Application:

- **Rule of Thirds**: Divide your design into a 3x3 grid and place key elements along the lines or at their intersections. This creates a balanced and dynamic composition.
- **Alignment**: Align elements to create a clean and orderly design. Consistent alignment of text and images makes your design look more professional and easier to navigate.
- **Whitespace**: Use whitespace (or negative space) to prevent your design from becoming cluttered. Whitespace can highlight important elements and make your design more breathable.
- **Balance**: Ensure a balanced distribution of visual weight. Symmetrical balance provides stability, while asymmetrical balance can create a more dynamic and interesting design.
- **Focal Point**: Create a focal point to draw attention to the most important part of your design. Use size, color, and positioning to establish this focal point.

By applying these composition principles, you can create engaging and effective designs that communicate your message clearly and attractively.

CONCLUSION

From the Civil Rights Movement in the United States to the global Anti-Apartheid Movement, the fusion of design and activism has repeatedly proven its power to drive social change. By understanding and harnessing the principles of effective design, contemporary activists can continue this legacy, creating visuals that inspire, inform, and incite action. This chapter delves into the principles and practices of designing for activism, equipping you with the tools to create impactful visuals that can propel your cause forward.

1.3 CREATING EFFECTIVE ACTIVIST MATERIAL

WHAT IS OUR ONE DEMAND?

#OCCUPYWALLSTREET
SEPTEMBER 17TH.
BRING TENT.

CREATION OF A KEY VISUAL

What is a Key Visual?

A key visual is the primary image or graphic that represents your campaign. It encapsulates the essence of your message and serves as the focal point for all your promotional materials. This visual element is designed to capture the attention of your audience quickly and convey the fundamental principles and goals of your campaign. A strong key visual is memorable, impactful, and easily recognizable, making it an essential component of any successful activist campaign. It should be versatile enough to be used across various platforms, from social media posts to print advertisements, and should consistently reflect the core themes and values of your movement. By ensuring that your key visual is both engaging and representative of your campaign's mission, you can create a more cohesive and compelling narrative that resonates with a wide audience.

Elements of a Key Visual:

1

Visual:
The central image or graphic should be powerful and relevant to your cause. This could be a photograph, illustration, or abstract design that captures attention and evokes an emotional response.

2

Headline:
The headline is the main text that communicates the core message of your campaign. It should be concise, compelling, and easily readable. A strong headline grabs attention and encourages the viewer to engage further.

3

Subheadline:
The subheadline provides additional context or detail to support the headline. It helps to clarify the message and provide more information without overwhelming the viewer.

4

Call to action:
The call to action (CTA) directs the viewer to take a specific action, such as visiting a website, signing a petition, or attending an event. It should be clear, actionable, and easy to follow.

By combining these elements effectively, you can create a key visual that captures the essence of your campaign and motivates your audience to take action.

DISTRIBUTE AND PLAN: HOW TO ITERATE THE KEY VISUAL FOR DIFFERENT FORMATS

Once you have a strong key visual, it's important to adapt it for various formats to ensure maximum reach and impact. Each format, whether it be print, digital, social media, or out-of-home advertising, has its own unique requirements and best practices. These should be carefully considered when iterating and customizing your key visual to fit each specific medium. By doing so, you will not only maintain the consistency of your brand message but also enhance its effectiveness across different channels, ultimately leading to a more successful and cohesive marketing campaign.

POSTERS AND FLYERS

Key Elements of a Powerful Poster:

- **Bold Imagery**: Use high-quality images that capture attention from a distance. The visual should be striking and relevant to your message.
- **Clear Text**: Ensure that the headline and any other important text are large and readable. Use contrasting colors to enhance visibility.
- **Hierarchy**: Arrange elements in a way that guides the viewer's eye from the most important to the least important information.
- **Whitespace**: Avoid clutter by leaving enough whitespace around elements. This makes the poster more visually appealing and easier to read.

Tips for Layout and Design:
- **Size and Scale**: Consider the size of your poster and design accordingly. Larger posters may require different layout considerations than smaller flyers.
- **Alignment**: Align text and images consistently to create a clean and professional look.
- **Consistency**: Maintain a consistent color scheme and font style to ensure a cohesive design that aligns with your campaign's branding.

SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS

Designing for Different Platforms:

- **Platform Specifications**: Each social media platform has different size and format requirements. Make sure to create graphics that fit the specifications for platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.
- **Engagement**: Use eye-catching visuals and concise text to capture attention quickly. Social media users scroll rapidly, so your graphics need to stand out immediately.

Ensuring Visibility and Engagement:

- **Contrast**: Use high contrast between text and background to ensure readability, especially on mobile devices.
- **Animation and Video**: Consider incorporating animated graphics or short videos to increase engagement and shareability.
- **Hashtags and Tags**: Use relevant hashtags and tag influential users or organizations to increase the reach of your posts.
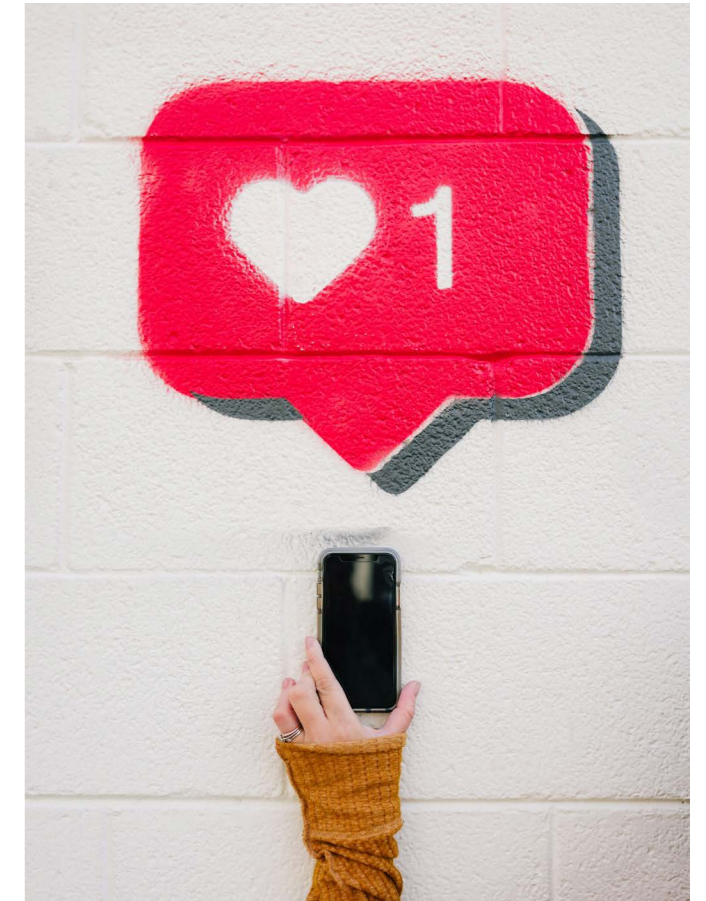
1.4 CASE STUDIES

OCCUPY WALLSTREET

Occupy Wall Street (OWS) was a significant social movement that began in September 2011 in New York City's financial district. It sought to address economic inequality, corporate influence in politics, and social justice issues. The movement quickly gained international attention and sparked similar protests worldwide. A critical aspect of OWS's impact was its use of compelling design to communicate its message, mobilize supporters, and sustain the movement.

- **Simplicity and Clarity**: Effective design doesn't have to be complex. Simple, clear visuals can powerfully convey a message.
- **Consistency**: Maintaining a consistent visual identity across all materials helps build recognition and trust.
- **Adaptability**: Designs that can be easily adapted for different formats and platforms ensure maximum reach and impact.
- **Engagement**: Interactive and accessible designs encourage participation and support, crucial for sustaining a movement.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

In the realm of activism, having the right tools and resources can significantly enhance your ability to create compelling visuals and effectively communicate your message to a broader audience. Activism often involves rallying people around a cause, and powerful visuals can be instrumental in capturing attention and conveying your message succinctly and impactfully. This chapter highlights four essential tools that can aid activists in their design efforts, ensuring their campaigns are both visually appealing and effectively communicated. These tools include:

1 **Canva**: A versatile design platform that offers a wide array of templates and customization options, making it accessible even for those with limited design experience.
2. **ChatGPT**: An advanced language model that can assist in generating engaging content, brainstorming ideas, and refining messages to ensure clarity and impact.
3. **Unsplash/Pexels**: Two platforms that provide a vast collection of high-quality, royalty-free images that can be used to enhance the visual appeal of your materials without worrying about copyright issues.
4. **Google Fonts**: A resource that offers a diverse selection of free fonts, allowing you to choose typography that aligns with the tone and style of your campaign.

By leveraging these tools, activists can create more professional, polished, and persuasive visual content that resonates with their target audience and amplifies their cause.
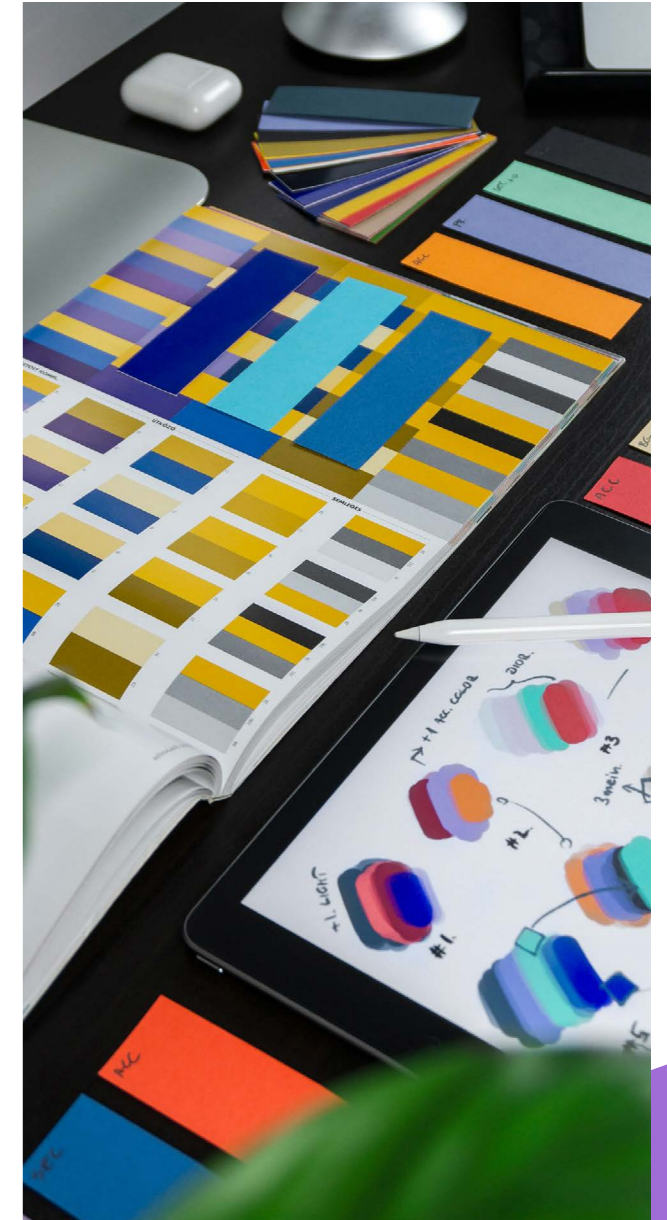
CANVA

Overview:

Canva is a highly user-friendly and accessible graphic design platform that empowers users, regardless of their design experience, to create stunning and professional-quality visuals with ease. It offers an extensive range of templates and design elements, including fonts, images, and icons that can be customized to fit any specific campaign's needs. Whether you are working on social media posts, marketing materials, presentations, or any other type of visual content, Canva provides the tools and flexibility to bring your creative ideas to life seamlessly.
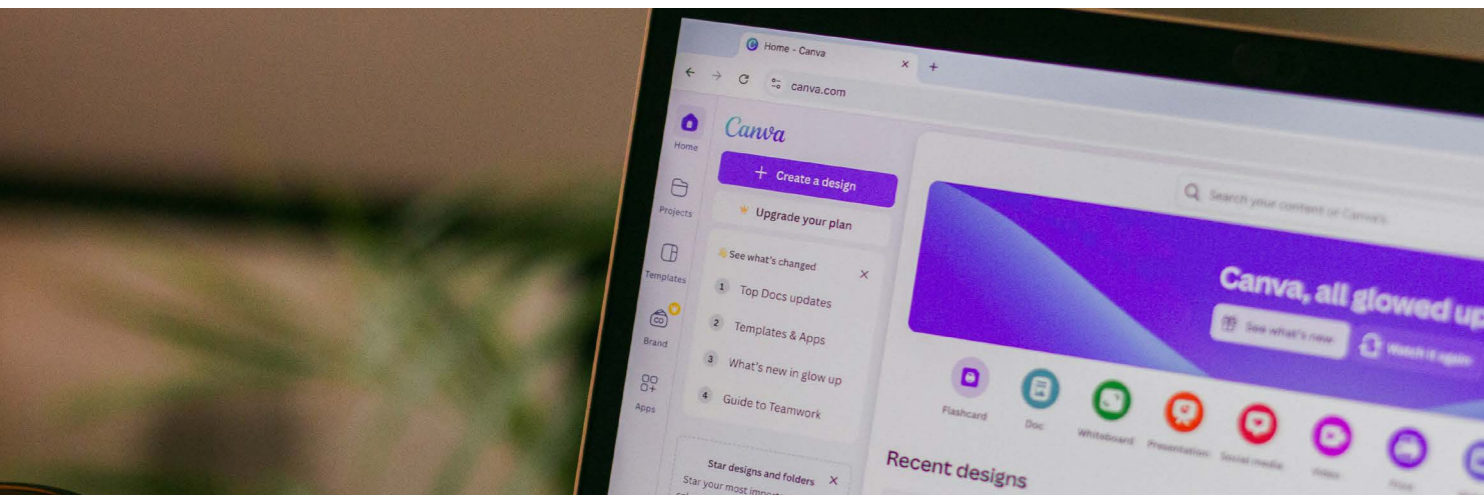
Features:

- **Templates**: Canva provides a vast library of templates for posters, social media graphics, flyers, and more. These templates are a great starting point for those who may not have advanced design skills.
- **Drag-and-Drop Interface**: The intuitive drag-and-drop interface makes it easy to add and arrange elements in your design. You can upload your own images or use Canva's extensive library of photos, icons, and illustrations.
- **Collaboration**: Canva allows multiple users to collaborate on a single project, making it ideal for activist groups working together on a campaign.
- **Export Options**: Designs can be exported in various formats, including PNG, JPEG, and PDF, ensuring compatibility with different platforms and printing requirements.

CHATGPT

Overview:

ChatGPT is an AI-powered text generation tool developed by OpenAI, designed to assist users in a variety of ways. It can help in generating high-quality content for various purposes, whether you're writing articles, creating social media posts, or drafting emails. Additionally, it is valuable for brainstorming ideas, offering a wide range of suggestions that can inspire and enhance your creative process. Furthermore, ChatGPT provides innovative and creative solutions for your activist campaigns, helping you to craft compelling messages, mobilize support, and effectively communicate your cause to a broader audience.

Features:

- **Content creations**: ChatGPT can help write engaging content for posters, flyers, social media posts, and websites. It can generate slogans, headlines, and detailed descriptions based on your inputs.
- **Brainstorming**: Use ChatGPT to brainstorm new ideas for campaigns, events, and messaging strategies. It can provide a fresh perspective and spark creativity.
- **Editing and refining**: The tool can also assist in editing and refining your written content, ensuring it is clear, concise, and impactful.

> **Usage tips:**
> • Utilize the ready-made templates and customize them with your campaign's colors, fonts, and images to maintain consistency in your visual identity.
> • Explore Canva's tutorials and design school for tips and inspiration to improve your design skills.
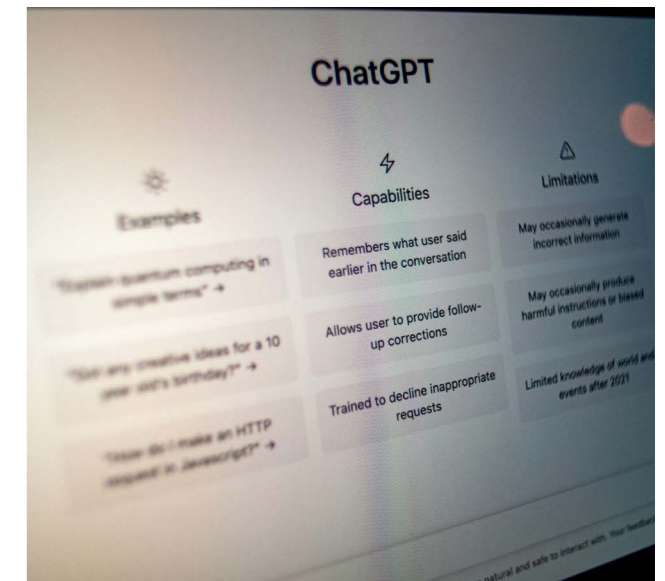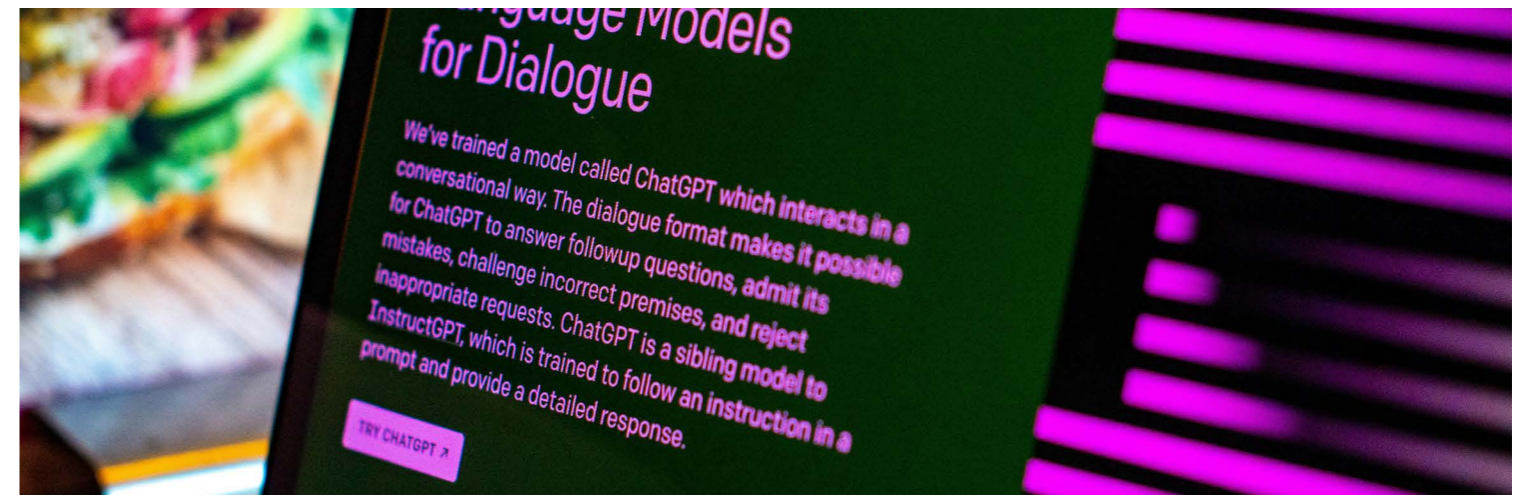
> **Usage tips:**
> • Provide clear and specific prompts to get the most relevant responses from ChatGPT.
> • Use the tool for initial drafts and ideas, and then refine the content to match your campaign's tone and style.

UNSPLASH/PEXELS

Overview:

Unsplash and Pexels are renowned online platforms that provide an extensive and diverse collection of high-quality, royalty-free images. These resources are incredibly valuable for activists, designers, and content creators who require visually striking photos to enhance their designs and presentations. By offering a wide array of images across various categories and themes, these platforms help users find exactly what they need to convey their messages effectively. Additionally, the ease of access and the ability to use these images without worrying about copyright issues make Unsplash and Pexels indispensable tools in the creative community.

Features:

- **High-quality images**: Both platforms provide access to thousands of professional-grade images that can be used for free, even for commercial purposes.
- **Search Functionality**: Easily search for images using keywords related to your campaign. Filters can help narrow down results to find the perfect image.
- **Collections and Curations**: Explore curated collections that group images by theme or style, offering inspiration and easy access to related visuals.

GOOGLE FONTS

Overview:

Google Fonts is a library of free, open-source fonts that can be used for both web and print projects. It offers a wide range of typefaces suitable for various design needs.

Features:

- **Variety**: With hundreds of font families available, you can find fonts that match the tone and style of your campaign.
- **Customization**: Google Fonts allows you to preview and customize fonts, adjusting weight, style, and size to fit your design.
- **Easy integration**: Fonts can be easily integrated into websites using the provided CSS links or downloaded for use in design software.

Usage tips:
- Always check the image license on Unsplash or Pexels to ensure it meets your usage requirements.
- Use high-resolution images to maintain quality, especially for printed materials.

Usage tips:
- Choose fonts that enhance readability and align with your campaign's branding. For example, use bold, sans-serif fonts for headlines and clean, serif fonts for body text.
- Combine two or three different fonts to create a visually appealing hierarchy without overwhelm-
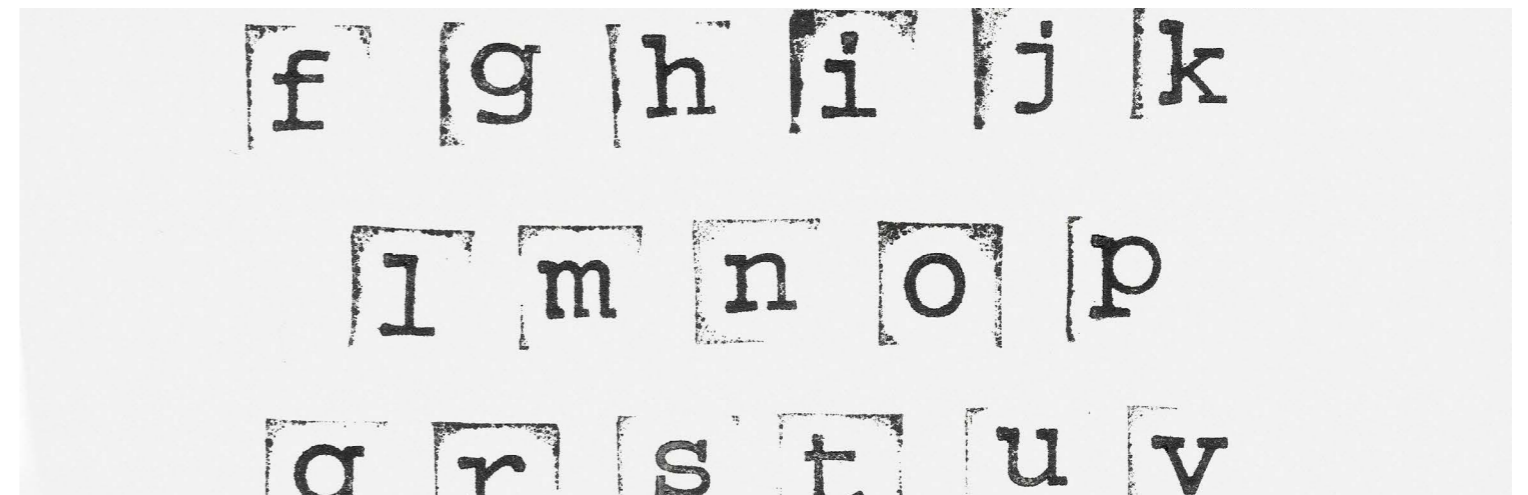
CHAPTER 2

ART-TIVISM
AS A TOOL

Valerio Gatto Bonanni

This chapter offers a comprehensive overview of artivism and guerrilla communication as strategic tools for activist campaigns. It outlines their foundational principles, contextual relevance, and key techniques, providing practitioners with accessible methods to engage public space, challenge dominant narratives, and creatively amplify their causes.

2.INTRODUCTION

To challenge dominant narratives and amplify activist causes, it's crucial to explore creative and disruptive communication strategies.

Artivism and guerrilla communication combine artistic expression with activist intent to engage audiences, reclaim public space, and expose social and environmental injustices. These approaches disrupt the cultural status quo, generate visibility, and invite public reflection through symbolic and unconventional actions. With limited resources but strong visual impact, they offer accessible tools for mobilizing communities and strengthening campaigns. Understanding these methods empowers activists to influence discourse and drive change in bold, engaging ways.

2.1 ARTIVISM AND GUERRILLA COMMUNICATION

Artivism and guerrilla communication invite activists to reclaim public space, question cultural norms, and spark collective awareness through symbolic and creative actions that disrupt the status quo and open new spaces for dialogue and change.

This module introduces the practices of artivism and guerrilla communication, forms of creative communication used within activist contexts. These practices are situated at the intersection of art and activism and emerged between the 1980s and 1990s as tools for social, cultural, and political action.

Artivism—a portmanteau of art and activism—refers to expressive modes in which artistic languages are employed in support of social causes. Guerrilla communication consists of non-conventional communication strategies aimed at challenging dominant narratives through symbolic and performative interventions.

The main objectives of these practices include:
- promoting social and cultural change;
- challenging power structures and dominant values;
- strengthening activist campaigns through high-impact symbolic techniques;
- making complex issues more accessible and engaging for a wider public.

The use of the term "guerrilla" does not imply violence but refers to a way of operating with limited resources, in small groups, and through lateral, creative actions rather than direct confrontation with authorities or institutions. These actions often take place within the time and space created by others, with the goal of generating symbolic disruption and producing an effect of estrangement.

Guerrilla communication can be described as a semiotic conflict, aimed at the transformation of linguistic and cultural signs. In this context, the notion of cultural grammar is central: it refers to the system of codes, conventions, and rituals that regulate everyday behaviour and social interaction. Artivist interventions seek to temporarily suspend these rules, creating disruptions in the perception of shared reality.

Such practices are mainly deployed in public space, understood as a performative arena charged with symbolic meaning and open to reinterpretation. Urban locations (squares, streets, bus stops, public offices)

can all be reimagined and repurposed as spaces for communication and symbolic struggle.

In this context, the use of irony, humour, and artistic eccentricity functions as a strategic tool. These elements make it possible to capture attention, generate surprise, and stimulate critical reflection. Artistic elements often introduce a discontinuity comparable to the "knight's move" in chess: a lateral, unpredictable, and potentially disruptive action.

Guerrilla communication operates as a temporary suspension of social conventions, generating moments of rupture, questioning, and redefinition. These moments introduce confusion, stimulate inquiry, unveil hidden systems of oppression, and convey the political or social messages of the initiating group.

Another relevant aspect is the relationship with rules and norms. Social rules are often perceived as fixed and immutable. However, through symbolic and repeated action, they can be challenged and transformed.

It is also crucial to consider the timing of an action. The "right time" may refer to:
- the broader cultural climate;
- the news cycle and current events;
- a strategic use of attention, akin to a magician's misdirection.

Common tools include shared symbolic objects (or fetish objects) used during protests or collective actions to create a visual identity and sense of unity, as well as external symbols (such as corporate logos), which may be altered to reveal hidden meanings or build new narratives.

Actions may raise ethical questions regarding the consent of bystanders or individuals unintentionally involved. There is no universal answer, and each situation requires strategic and ethical assessment.

Finally, it is important to emphasise the need for medium- to long-term organisation, with actions that are interconnected and consistent, and for careful preparation, including site analysis, contextual observation, and attention to the naming and titling of actions, crucial elements of any communication strategy.

SUFFRAGETTE MEETING, LONDON   22-4

THE VOTE THIS SESSION

2.2 METHODOLOGIES

By exploring a diverse set of low-cost, high-impact techniques, activists can design and implement unconventional actions that strengthen their campaigns, mobilize communities, and build visibility around urgent social and environmental issues.
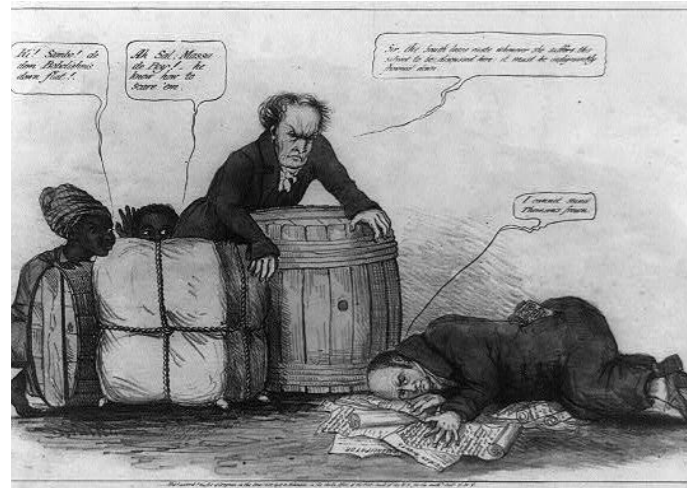
Guerrilla communication techniques encompass a wide range of actions that can be adapted to context, objectives, and available resources. The following is an overview of the most commonly used forms.

1. CREATIVE PROTEST
This technique involves subverting institutional public events through non-confrontational methods. One example is an action during a Confindustria assembly in which activists, scattered among the audience, stood up one at a time to pose critical questions to ministers and officials, disrupting the event without direct confrontation.

2. SYMBOLIC DISRUPTION
Examples include the throwing of confetti at Mario Draghi during a press conference, accompanied by leafleting, or the classic gesture of a cream pie in the face of a public figure—an act of symbolic humiliation aimed at undermining their authority and attracting media attention.

3. COLLECTIVE NAME
The adoption of a shared identity by multiple activists, signalling horizontality and unity. Well-known examples include Subcomandante Marcos or Super Barrio, symbolic figures representing broader movements, made recognisable through visual elements such as masks or costumes.

4. SUBVERTISING
A technique that reinterprets advertising by modifying content or visuals to subvert its original message. The UK-based collective Brandalism has carried out numerous such interventions and produced tutorials on how to legally replace advertising posters in urban infrastructure.

5. INSTITUTIONAL FAKES
The creation of fake organisations or campaigns, usually for the purpose of exposing hidden mechanisms. An example is a fictitious fossil-fuel bank created by a Belgian NGO, which openly declared its polluting activities and generated media scandal before being revealed as a hoax.

6. INVISIBLE THEATRE
Derived from the Theatre of the Oppressed, this technique stages realistic situations in public settings without revealing their performative nature. During Italy's 2016 referendum on offshore drilling, activists made public phone calls to imaginary deaf grandmothers, delivering political messages through spontaneous-seeming interactions.

7. ALTERNATIVE DEMONSTRATIONS
Public marches or parades that reinterpret the traditional demonstration format. One notable example is a robot march in Geneva, organised during a referendum on universal basic income, with the slogan: "We robots want basic income for humans so they can work less."

8. PUBLIC SPACE INTERVENTIONS
The creative use of urban elements to convey messages. Statues, rivers, bus stops, or other urban infrastructures may be temporarily altered or recontextualised for example, dyeing a river with non-toxic substances to draw attention to environmental issues.

9. OCCUPATIONS
These can be symbolic or long-term. Examples include a brief party inside a bank to protest corruption, long-term occupations of abandoned buildings, or performative acts such as mock séances in public offices to demand institutional dialogue.

10. URBAN WRITING (STRETTATA)
The use of visual messages beyond walls—on sidewalks, poles, and unconventional surfaces. When applied creatively, this technique becomes a powerful visual communication tool.

11. PUBLIC PERFORMANCES
Actions incorporating theatrical and communicative elements. In one example, activists staged a scene featuring a fire-breathing oil tycoon opposed by environmentalist "waves" in a central square. The performance was followed by a press conference and distribution of materials.

12. HUMOROUS AND PLAYFUL ACTIONS
These include pranks, costumes, candid camera-style interventions, and staged absurdity. Humour can be used to engage public attention while conveying serious and well-grounded messages, often with strong potential for dissemination via social media.

13. VIDEO MAPPING
A technically complex method involving the projection of images or text onto buildings. This technique allows for high-impact visual interventions without physical damage, serving as a form of luminous denunciation.

ADVOCACY AND LOBBY

Salvatore Barbera

This chapter provides general guidelines for activists interested in applying effective advocacy and lobby methodologies to their campaigns, empowering them to strategically influence stakeholders, build persuasive narratives, and drive meaningful social and policy change.

3.INTRODUCTION

To effectively drive change and overcome the climate crisis, it's crucial to master advocacy and lobbying methodologies.

Advocacy and lobbying are essential tools in climate activism. They shape how messages reach policymakers and the public, ensuring campaigns are compelling and impactful. Through strategic narratives, clear roadmaps, and visual tools like Power Maps, activists can identify influential stakeholders, articulate persuasive stories, and mobilize support. These methodologies serve as the strategic backbone of movements, translating complex issues into clear objectives and actionable steps. Whether engaging directly with decision-makers or influencing public opinion, mastering advocacy and lobbying significantly enhances the effectiveness and reach of climate campaigns, making them indispensable for today's activists.

3.1 ADVOCACY AND LOBBY

Successful advocacy and lobbying campaigns rely on clear methodologies and practical strategies. Here, we explore three powerful approaches to design and implement impactful campaigns.

Terminological differences

The terms advocacy and lobbying are often used interchangeably, but they refer to distinct practices within the broader field of influencing public policy. Advocacy involves actions carried out by individuals, groups, or organizations to promote a cause, raise public awareness, or influence institutions on issues of collective interest. It is typically associated with civil society actors such as non-profit organizations, grassroots movements, or citizen networks. Advocacy activities include public campaigns, mobilizations, research dissemination, policy recommendations, and meetings with public officials, all aimed at building consensus and driving social or cultural change.

Lobbying, on the other hand, is a more structured and technical practice focused on directly influencing political and legislative decisions. It is commonly performed by actors representing economic or institutional interests, such as corporations, trade associations, or consultancy firms. Lobbying involves continuous engagement with policymakers, drafting legislative proposals, regulatory analysis, and often strategic efforts to secure specific advantages. Unlike advocacy, which often operates in open public spaces and is less formally regulated, lobbying is subject to legal frameworks in many countries to ensure transparency and accountability. Nevertheless, lobbying is sometimes viewed negatively due to its association with private interests and opaque decision-making processes.

Brief history
The historical roots of both advocacy and lobbying lie in the evolution of democratic participation and the struggle to influence political power structures. Though they have taken on modern forms, their origins can be traced back to a few critical historical moments that

laid the foundations for organized civil influence and institutional persuasion.

One of the earliest and most significant precedents for advocacy can be found in the abolitionist movements of the 18th and 19th centuries, particularly in Britain and the United States. These movements marked a turning point in the use of organized campaigns, public petitions, and moral persuasion to shape public opinion and pressure governments to change unjust laws, especially those related to slavery. The British abolition of the slave trade in 1807 and later of slavery itself in 1833, achieved through widespread mobilization, pamphleteering, and appeals to conscience, can be considered among the earliest and most impactful advocacy efforts. These movements demonstrated the power of civil society in shaping political agendas and paved the way for later rights-based advocacy.

The term lobbying, on the other hand, is said to have originated in 19th-century United States, particularly associated with the lobby of the Willard Hotel in Washington, D.C., where advocates would wait to speak with members of Congress. However, the practice of lobby-

ing — as strategic influence on decision-makers — predates this naming. A crucial moment in its institutionalization was the development of professional lobbying in the early 20th century, during the progressive era, when economic interests began employing specialists to influence legislation, particularly around labor laws, monopolies, and trade regulations. The rise of industrial capitalism necessitated more formalized communication between private interests and public officials, leading to the recognition of lobbying as a distinct, and eventually regulated, political activity.

A third turning point, which affected both advocacy and lobbying, was the institutionalization of civil society participation in global governance, particularly after World War II. The creation of the United Nations in 1945 and the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 provided a framework within which advocacy could be exercised on an international scale. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) gained consultative status and began to systematically engage in policy dialogues, representing marginalized voices at forums previously limited to states. This period marked the formal recognition of advocacy as an essential component of international public life, distinct from lobbying but often overlapping in method. The historical trajectories of advocacy and lobbying reveal two parallel yet interrelated paths through which individu-

als and organizations have sought to influence power. While advocacy emerged from collective struggles for justice and inclusion, often driven by moral imperatives and social mobilization, lobbying developed as a strategic tool to defend specific interests within formal political arenas. Today, both practices coexist and interact, shaping the democratic process from different angles. Understanding their distinct origins and evolutions allows us to better interpret their roles in contemporary society, where the ability to influence decisions—whether through civic engagement or institutional dialogue—remains a fundamental expression of democratic vitality.

3.2 METHODOLOGIES

To build lasting change and face the climate crisis, it's essential to understand how to design campaigns that engage decision-makers, mobilize communities, and influence systems effectively.

The CoIMPACT project, funded by the European Union, empowers young people in environmental organizations across Europe by equipping them with strategic tools, methods, and knowledge to take action where it matters most.

Creating a campaign means designing a deliberate, strategic effort to influence change—whether in public opinion, institutional behaviour, or policy decisions. A campaign is not simply a collection of actions or messages; it is a structured journey that connects a specific problem to a broader vision of transformation. Especially in the field of environmental and climate justice, where challenges are systemic and often urgent, knowing how to build a campaign means being able to act with clarity, purpose, and direction.

This is where methodologies become essential. They offer frameworks to understand complex contexts, identify leverage points, and structure a plan that can lead to real impact. Without methodology, even the

most passionate activism risks becoming reactive or fragmented. With it, activists can think critically, align their actions with strategic goals, and adapt their work as circumstances evolve.

In this section, we explore three core methodologies used in advocacy and lobbying—Theory of Change, Power Mapping, and Story Arc. Each provides a unique lens to analyse, plan, and communicate campaigns. Together, they help activists move from intent to action, and from vision to victory.

Theory of Change

The Theory of Change is a strategic framework that allows activists to map the path from a specific problem to a broader and lasting transformation. Unlike linear planning models that start from the present and look ahead, this method works in reverse. It begins with the long-term vision of change and retraces the necessary steps back to the root of the issue. This backward logic makes it possible to build a campaign that is coherent, focused, and aligned at every level.

Every effective campaign begins with a clear vision of the long-term change it seeks to achieve. This final goal (be it a policy reform, institutional accountability, or a shift in public behaviour) defines the direction of all strategic efforts. From this vision, we can reflect on the wider benefits the campaign might generate: broader social or cultural impacts such as increased awareness, community empowerment, or long-term shifts in public discourse. To assess progress, it's essential to identify the measurable effects of the campaign. These may include legislative proposals, media coverage, mobilisation data, or visible shifts in attitudes. Measurable indicators help validate the campaign's effectiveness. Achieving these results requires concrete steps. These might involve advocacy, mobilisation, communications, or alliances, and should be realistic and aligned with the overall strategy.

Understanding how to begin is equally important. This involves identifying the entry point: the first opportunity to connect with the audience, whether through a political event, media moment, or social trend.

Central to all of this is knowing who the key audience is. These are the actors who have the power to unlock change. Targeting them precisely makes the campaign more effective. Finally, the process is anchored in a clear definition of the problem. This is the root issue that justifies the campaign. Recognising it ensures all efforts remain relevant and purposeful. A concrete example of this approach can be found in the LIS Campaign promoted by Change.org in 2015. The campaign, aimed at gaining official recognition of Italian Sign Language, followed a structure that mirrored the Theory of Change: from the vision of recognition, back through the identification of institutional targets, clear steps of mobilisation, entry points through public discourse, and the underlying problem of linguistic discrimination.

Power Map

The Power Map is a strategic tool used in advocacy and lobbying to identify and visually represent the people, institutions, or organizations that hold influence over a specific issue. It allows campaigners to understand where power lies, how it is distributed, and how different actors relate to one another within a political or social system. By mapping out these dynamics, activists can design smarter, more targeted strategies to shift positions, build alliances, and apply pressure where it matters most.

The version included in this toolkit follows a classic quadrant structure, divided along two axes: one representing the level of power an actor holds (from low to high), and the other representing their position toward the change. Each stakeholder is placed accordingly within one of four main zones: those with high power who support the change, those with high power who oppose it, those with little power who support, and those with little power who resist or are indifferent. This visualisation helps clarify who your allies are, who you need to persuade, and who might block progress.

Using the Power Map begins with identifying all relevant actors in the ecosystem: politicians, institutions, companies, NGOs, media outlets, or public figures. This requires both research and critical reflection (sometimes informed by direct experience, insider knowledge, or consultations with partners).

Once mapped, the stakeholders can be prioritised based on the strategy. You might focus on consolidating support among high-power allies, shifting the stance of powerful opponents, or mobilising the base to increase the visibility of lower-power supporters. The map is not static: it evolves as the context changes and as your campaign progresses. Returning to it periodically can help track movement and reassess your approach.

An example of this method in practice is Greenpeace's "Green My Apple" campaign. Activists identified key players in the tech and environmental sectors, assessed their levels of influence and alignment, and developed precise interventions based on this understanding. The Power Map made it possible to apply pressure effectively (directing action toward influential figures inside Apple and building support among tech users and environmental advocates).

Story Arc
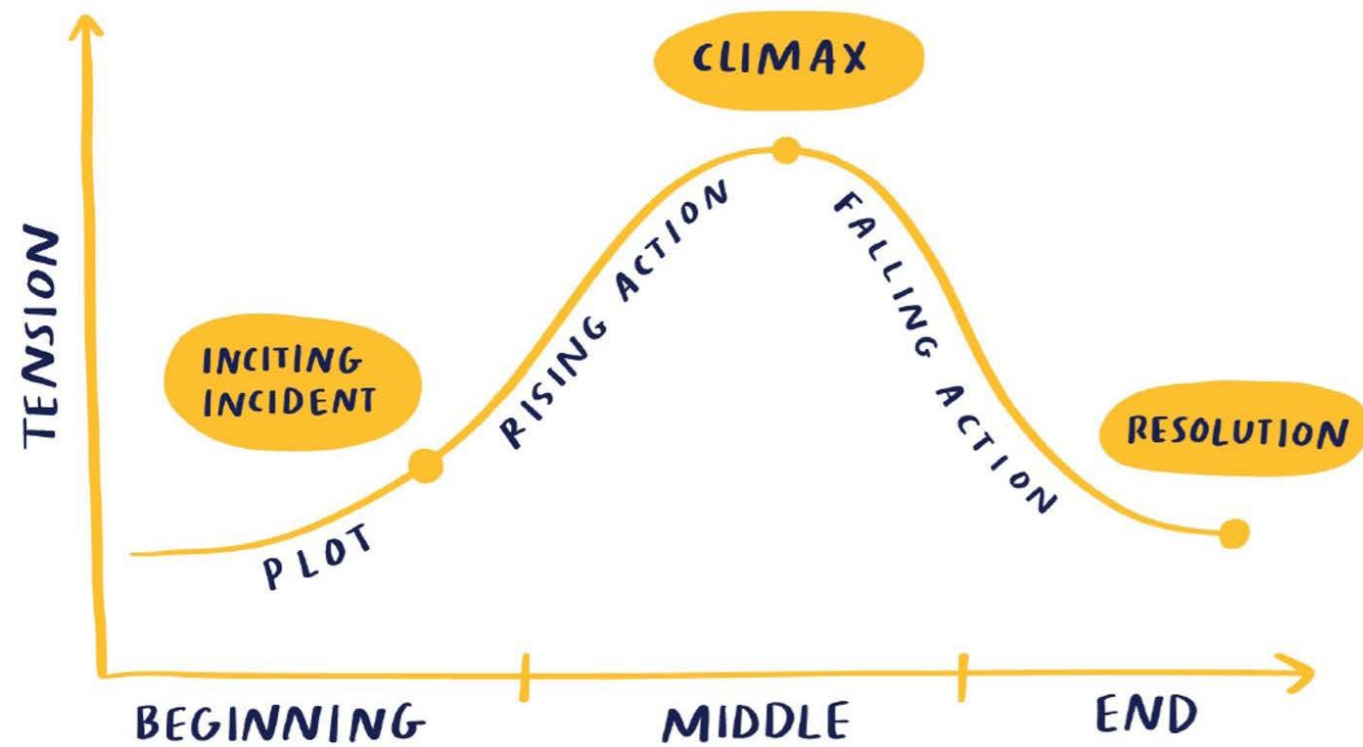
The Story Arc is a strategic narrative methodology that enables activists to craft compelling and emotionally resonant campaigns. It helps structure a campaign's story into a clear sequence of phases—beginning with the identification of a critical issue, followed by challenges, actions, and ultimately, a moment of transformation or victory. This approach is essential in advocacy and lobbying, as it turns abstract or complex topics into relatable and memorable narratives. The Story Arc engages audiences not only intellectually but emotionally, guiding them step-by-step through the logic and urgency of the campaign's goals.

The template used in this toolkit has been provided by Dancing Fox, a creative agency known for empowering movements through storytelling. It offers a practical structure that activists can follow to design the emotional and narrative flow of their campaigns. Starting from the present situation, the template prompts users to define protagonists, map out rising tensions, identify turning points, and conclude with the desired change. By laying out the story in this way, campaigners can visualize the emotional trajectory and plan communication tools that align with each phase of the arc.

Whether used for videos, social media posts, live actions, or lobbying events, the Story Arc ensures coherence and depth across all touchpoints of the campaign. It supports the strategic alignment between messaging and advocacy goals, making stories not only more powerful, but more actionable. A strong example of this method in practice is Greenpeace Italy's 2011 campaign "I Pazzi Siete Voi", which built its success on a clear narrative arc that framed the dangers of nuclear energy in a way that resonated deeply with the public and policymakers alike. Through structure, emotion, and clarity, the Story Arc becomes a transformative tool in the activist's toolkit.