



Customized Training



Mentorship

EMPOWERING LOCAL VOICES THROUGH GLOBAL EXPERTISE

In Person, Online, & Hybrid Training Solutions for UN Organizations, NGOs, & International Agencies

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INTRODUCTION

Helping organizations communicate persuasively to improve the lives of people globally...

In a world where the authenticity of local stories and voices holds paramount importance, the ability to effectively communicate and represent an organization, culture, and community becomes crucial. I, Kristen Palana, offer my support in this arena, not merely as an international educator but as a facilitator and champion of local narratives and educational empowerment.



With extensive experience teaching art, design, communication, and multimedia across four continents, including my tenure as an Associate Professor of Digital Media at The American University of Rome, I have dedicated my career to nurturing creativity and technical skills. My journey from Rome to the vibrant communities of Myanmar and Malawi has underscored a pressing need for locally relevant education in communications, design, and multimedia—a need I have eagerly met by collaborating with design firms, UN organizations, international agencies, schools, and NGOs.

My distinctive approach lies in introducing tools and techniques that empower learners to forge their own paths. Guiding them in the art of learning, I enable them to tackle challenges proactively. By nurturing skills that have both local resonance and global relevance, I help cultivate internal capacities, paving the way for sustainable development and compelling storytelling.

ORGANIZATIONS I'VE TAUGHT FOR INCLUDE:



SERVICES OFFERED



IN-PERSON TRAINING PROGRAMS

Customized workshops that provide hands-on experience in communication, design, multimedia, and more, tailored to enhance your team's capabilities in a collaborative and immersive environment.

SELF-PACED VIDEO COURSES:

From foundational design principles to advanced digital media techniques, these comprehensive courses offer flexibility and depth, catering to diverse learning styles and needs.



LIVE WEBINARS:

Engage with the latest trends and skills in digital media through interactive sessions that encourage participation, questions, and real-time feedback.

ONE-ON-ONE COACHING:

Personalized mentorship that addresses specific goals, challenges, and projects, offering tailored guidance and insights.



HYBRID OPTIONS:

A blend of self-paced, live, and in-person training methods designed to provide comprehensive learning experiences that meet your organization's unique requirements.

CASE STUDIES

Digital Media Accelerator -for UNFPA Malawi:



During the height of the pandemic, I created and implemented the only multimedia UNFPA pilot program of its kind in Lilongwe that equipped young Malawians with digital storytelling tools. This initiative filled an educational gap, offering vital skills in communications and design, and empowering participants to confidently craft and share their own narratives.

Ethical Media & Best Practices -For MYPOL, GIZ Myanmar:

In Myanmar I led specialized training for police officers, focusing on the ethical management of police websites and social media, as well as the creation of digital content. This initiative aimed to foster positive collaboration between the police force and the media, enhancing transparency and community trust through responsible communication practices.



Nthambi Series & UN Design Projects - UNFPA Malawi



Together with my colleagues at UNFPA, I created 'Nthambi,' an animation series featuring local characters, who also appeared on various UNFPA promo materials. The aim was to educate youth on reproductive health and gender-based violence. My *Digital Media Accelerator* students also collaborated with me on design projects, extending their learning experience into real-world applications for UNFPA, WHO, UNDP, and others.

Leadership Training -For Australia Awards Alumni:

I led training for the Australian High Commission, centered on personal branding and strategic online communication. Participants gained essential skills to cultivate their digital presence and effectively communicate their advocacy efforts. This initiative aimed to amplify the voices of the Malawian alumni, leading to more robust leadership roles and a greater impact on gender-focused initiatives.



HOW IT WORKS



ENGAGE AND DISCOVER:

Our journey together begins with an in-depth conversation to understand your organization's unique context, challenges, and ambitions. This crucial first step ensures we align our goals and set a solid foundation for impactful training.

DESIGN AND TAILOR:

Leveraging insights from our initial discussions, I craft a customized training solution designed to meet your specific objectives. This personalized approach guarantees that our program not only addresses your immediate needs but also supports your long-term goals.

IMPLEMENT AND SUPPORT:

With a bespoke plan in place, we roll out the training, engaging participants with dynamic and interactive methods. Throughout this phase, I offer continuous support and adapt the program as necessary to maximize participant engagement and learning outcomes.

REFLECT AND GROW:

Post-training, we evaluate effectiveness and identify lessons for future strategies. While our formal collaboration concludes, my commitment to growth persists, offering support and guidance for advanced training to ensure lasting impact.



ABOUT

My goal is to empower ordinary people to do extraordinary things.

I'm an American/Portuguese multidisciplinary artist, international educator, and consultant based in Malawi.

I've taught at universities on four continents. I co-founded the Film and Digital Media BFA at The American University of Rome, where I was tenured and led the Film and Digital Media Program between 2013-2016.



From 2016 to 2019, I expanded my teaching to academic institutions and NGOs in Myanmar, including at the groundbreaking American University of Myanmar.

When not making fine art, I work as a designer and educator for United Nations agencies and international bodies, including the World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), The British High Commission, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), World Food Programme (WFP), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), The Public Relations Society of Malawi, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and The Australian High Commission.

I craft training programs catering to diverse audiences, and since 2014, I have also reached over 100,000 online students from 191 countries. My learners range from refugees and diplomats to individuals without formal education living on less than \$2 USD a day, reflecting my commitment to inclusivity and empowerment.

What can I help you with today?

K Palana



Testimonials



“Kristen has been so instrumental in advancing UNFPA's innovation, digitization, strategic communication, and realizing more meaningful youth engagement/empowerment.

She was such a unique asset that nobody else could offer for the country office in Malawi with her outstanding technical skills in digital arts, good understanding of social media content development, truly empowering coaching skills, plus her passion, initiatives, commitment and perseverance to get things done!”



-Masaki Watabe
UNFPA Deputy Representative, Bangladesh

“Kristen is a truly innovative and creative artist. She’s contributed to UNFPA communication specially with youth by developing an iconic animation series that has been attracting so many young followers. Digital media training developed by her produced many young media art experts who will lead social media campaigns on SRH&R. I am so impressed at her expertise.”



-Young Hong
UNFPA Representative, Nepal

“Kristen is responsive and connects easily with students. An online format presents unique challenges, but Kristen has shown that she dominates the online space, offering engaging webinars and thoughtful forum posts. We appreciate all that Kristen has contributed to the UPEACE Centre and look forward to continued work with her in the future!”



-Julia Delafield
Director, UPEACE Centre for Executive Education

“We have been incredibly lucky to have Kristen shape our Digital Design program. In the process she has not only instilled an enduring love for the field in her students, she also guided them to positively challenge themselves and become self-disciplined creative risk takers. This is in part due to her extensive experience and knowledge in the field, on which she has a lot to share, but also because her clear passion for what she does shines through.”



-James Joubert
Director, Thalun International School

“Kristen Palana is, without reservation, one of the finest examples of an art professor and artist that it has been my pleasure to encounter. Her boundless energy, determination, creativity and expertise in her field made her one of the most effective and respected members of the faculty, as well as one of the most beloved of our students.”



-Steve Rittler
Professor of Animation
William Paterson University



MISSION

I'm Kristen, an interdisciplinary artist and international educator who seeks to empower organizations and individuals to be seen and heard, communicate effectively, and have a stronger impact online and offline.

Ready to transform your team's digital media skills and storytelling capabilities? Let's connect and explore how we can work together to achieve your goals.

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Kristen Palana

Together, we can unlock the potential of your local staff and communities, enabling them to thrive in a global digital landscape.