Agora Talks
Specs and Techs for creating an Agora Talk

The aim of an **Agora Talk** is to engage and challenge your audience to think about your topic or ideas on philosophy, education and/ culture, maybe encouraging them to explore this in more depth for themselves.

Designing, creating, memorising and delivering an **Agora Talk** is very different from simply delivering a lecture, seminar or making a speech to an expert audience at a conference. Since you will be engaging with a general audience, it requires a conversational tone and more creativity and discipline to engage your audience, without of course speaking down or patronising them.

A **PESA Agora Talk** is maximum of 15 minutes long.

If you wish to create a longer video, it needs to be broken into shorter parts or sections – preferably 10-15 minutes long, with each part numbered with a sub-title.

Please liaise with us about your topic.

Our first example is actually a TEDx Ruakura talk, The Evolution of Truth by Michael Peters on the PESA Agora YouTube Channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WDFwSrzvFa8

They did not allow any visuals and his was the only talk that was not memorized with the organisers deciding a 'fireside chat' approach would work well for this topic – it's a style some of you might like to do that differentiates **Agora Talks** from TED talks.

While **Agora Talks** are not the same as TED talks, there is a lot of useful information online on how TED talks set out their requirements, so we recommend you check these out.

1. Create an **Outline** (a bit like an abstract - that will go with your video)
2. Create a **Script** for your talk – a clear structure
3. Create and prepare **slides**, **visuals**, an interesting **backdrop** and even **music** to enhance and emphasise your points.
4. **Rehearse** - do several video recordings so that you are finally happy that the end result, after editing is exactly as you want it to be, talking as you would speak, not as you write.

Some points from Ted Talks
- Encourage honest, contagious emotions – wonder, optimism, anger, surprise, etc.
- Be wary of overstatements, utopianism, fake emotion, fake self-deprecation, TED puns, and suspicious claims.
- Personal anecdotes are like garnishes. Just the right amount can make a delicious meal, but too much of the wrong kind can destroy a meal. (https://www.ted.com/participate/organize-a-local-tedx-event/tedx-organizer-guide/speakers-program/prepare-your-speaker/outline-script)

Agora Talk Content
All **Agora Talks** will be checked and approved by the PESA Agora team before they can be uploaded onto our PESA Agora website.

We need to ensure that there are no breaches of various sorts, including copyright and defamation. Please obtain written permissions and check with us beforehand if you are using 3rd party or copyrighted materials.

Just as TED Talks require, so do we…:
No bad science:
- TED and TEDx showcase and explain genuine advances in science backed by research.
- Speakers should be transparent about any factual claims, the scientific evidence for them, and peer-reviewed expert data and theory.
- The consequences of pseudoscience can be especially severe, and speakers should not misuse scientific language to make unsubstantiated claims.
- Make clear what is opinion and argument

Talks are thoughtful, not divisive:
- No inflammatory political or religious agenda, nor polarizing "us vs them" language.
- We seek to build consensus and provide outside-the-box thinking, not to revisit familiar, unresolvable disputes on these topics. (see: https://www.ted.com/participate/organize-a-local-tedx-event/before-you-start/tedx-rules#h2--talk-content)

Slides – are not required, but if you wish to use slides, please use them sparingly and keep it simple, following these points:

TED talk points out: *A single, strong, graphic image or succinct line of text will tell your speaker's story better than a crowded collage of pictures or long paragraph. Remember, people need to process everything a speaker is saying while simultaneously absorbing the slides.*
- Make sure the slides are image rich, and easy to understand.
- Only use high-resolution pictures and graphics.
- Keep graphs visually clear, even if the content is complex.

When it comes to **text and content**, ask:
- **Do the slides have a lot of text?** Text-heavy slides distract the listener from the heart of the message.
- **Do the slides have too much information?** No slide should support more than one point. It's better to show several slides – each with one idea, image or data point, rather than one complex one.
- Maximum of six lines of text per slide. (Most of the time, just one or two lines will do!)
- **Text** - Use a common **sans serif font** (e.g. Helvetica, Verdana, Calibri, Arial) NOT a **serif font** (like Times).
- **Is each slide necessary?** Too many slides can be distracting. Make sure every slide has a purpose – if not, delete them.
- Since images represent what you're saying, there is no need to verbally describe them.
- Avoid 'headline and bullet points' slides - they are tiring to read.
- To help the audience remember a person, place or thing you mention, use images or photos.

- You must own the rights to all images used on your slides & acknowledge source of image if under a Creative Commons license, citing the source at the bottom of the slide.

(https://www.ted.com/participate/organize-a-local-tedx-event/tedx-organizer-guide/speakers-program/prepare-your-speaker/create-prepare-slides)

Some other useful links available online:
Illustrated Guide
https://storage.ted.com/tedx/manuals/IllustratedTEDxSpeakerGuide.pdf

Speaker Guide
https://storage.ted.com/tedx/manuals/tedxspeakerguide.pdf

Presentation skills: - there are many available online, here are just a few. Such useful skills will help academics and others in relating to an audience, be it a class or conference.
https://www.ted.com/playlists/574/how_to_make_a_great_presentation
https://www.ted.com/talks/chris_anderson_ted_s_secret_to_great_public_speaking?language=en
https://cgiinteractive.com/blog/ted-talks-to-watch
https://www.skillsyouneed.com/rhubarb/presentation-skills-ted-talks.html

Tech details -- What can I use to produce a high quality Agora Talk?
You can record your **Agora Talk** video in a lab, on a sound stage, with a digital video camera, on your computer or with a smartphone or iPad - search online for tips on how to do this (see some links below).
Nowadays smartphones have very good cameras that can take a 4K movie which is 4xFullHD.
An inexpensive **tripod** (like Joby Griptight Gorilla pod and a bluetooth remote accessory) is helpful for holding a smartphone steady.
While some older computer webcams are not very good quality for professional looking videos and may need you to use an external webcam, newer webcams are ok and actually quite good quality.

Regardless, our focus is on the **quality of the video**, with the most important part being the **resolution**.
We will accept 720p [HD] video quality, but would prefer 1080p [FullHD] for even better quality.

Here are a few links:
 https://www.pocket-lint.com/phones/news/131351-10-tips-for-recording-better-video-with-your-smartphone
https://www.imore.com/how-to-record-video-iphone-ipad
https://www.shoutmeloud.com/iphone-camera-video-shooting-tips-techniques.html

Edit your Agora Talk video
Check out your computer or smartphone editing suite – these are free. There are also many links and YouTube videos giving advice on how to do this e.g.
https://www.tomsguide.com/us/pictures-story/511-best-video-editing-apps.html

https://insights.samsung.com/2019/12/17/how-to-edit-video-smarter-on-your-smartphone/
https://blog.hotmart.com/en/video-recording-apps/
https://www.creativebloq.com/features/6-great-video-editing-apps-for-mobile
https://www.oberlo.com/blog/best-free-video-editing-software

Tech specs:
Your **Agora Talk file size** needs to be in **mp4 format, with maximum file that** enables us to upload your **15 minute talk**
We can be a bit flexible with file size.
While 720p should not be a problem to hit under 256MB per 15 minutes,
some FullHD videos might go over this.
Depending on the device you are using (and the encryption the device is using and how much movement there is in the video) file size may vary.

Here is a reference chart taken from sample videos found on Youtube/internet

Resolution	Bitrate	1 minute	Recording Duration per GB
4K (UHD)	20 Mbps	84MB	12 minutes
1080p (FHD)	5 Mbps	20MB	50 minutes
720p (HD)	1 Mbps	5MB	3.5 hours
480p (SD)	500 Kbps	2MB	8 Hours

These calculations come from how YouTube processes their videos and in our case we would get:
- 300MB for 1080p
- 75MB fro 720p

For any questions please ask us at: admin@pesaagora.com

Uploading:
Please send your **Agora Talk** to: admin@pesaagora.com
We look forward to your **Agora Talk** video & we will do the rest.