How to use your smartphone for outreach

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# How to use your smartphone for outreach

Let's start with **why**

- **Present research results** to a wider audience.
- Improve **general interest** in particle physics.
- Reach potential **new colleagues** who are interested in pursuing a career in particle physics.
- Present a human side to science and how science is done.
- Lobby **Governments** to support scientific endeavours.
- Gain valuable communication skills.
- Because it's **fun and rewarding**.
- A reminder that our research is cool!

Image: CERN
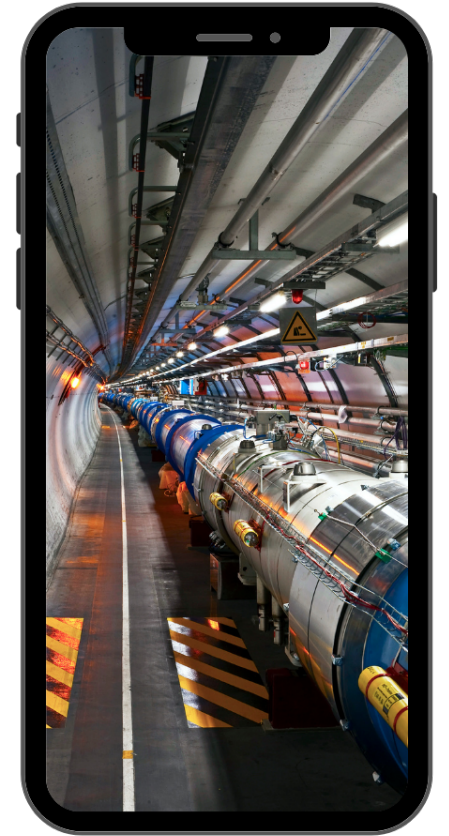
The best equipment is whatever you have on you.

- Many people now carry smartphones with them all the time.
- They usually have great cameras and recording capabilities.

Note: I've focused on visual content here, but you can also use your phone for audio based outreach, such as discussions on Clubhouse and on Twitter (Spaces).

Why use photos and videos in the first place?

- Can help a post on social media to **stand out from the crowd** if there is an image or video, compared to text only.
  - **Increased engagement** has been shown for posts on twitter with images.
- Can provide **additional aesthetic or information** to compliment what is in the text.
- But a poor or confusing image or video **could distract** from the content being shared.
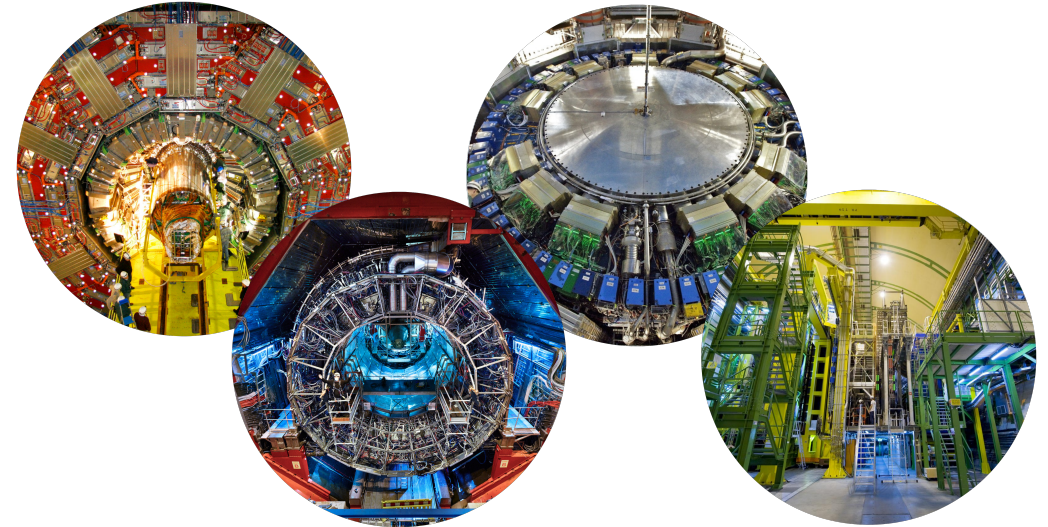
More and more people are consuming content on mobile devices and therefore the way that photos and videos are framed need to match how people will watch it.

Videos are often filmed in **portrait mode**, as this is how people will view them on their phones (it is surprisingly difficult to get people to turn their phone around for short videos. They may do it for something longer).

Photos should be 1x1 or now also sometimes portrait mode to fill the space of the screen available.

Think about how your audience will view your content and match that style

Li, Y. and Xie, Y. (2020) 'Is a Picture Worth a Thousand Words? An Empirical Study of Image Content and Social Media Engagement', *Journal of Marketing Research*, 57(1), pp. 1–19. doi: 10.1177/0022243719881113.

Why this (quick) tutorial from me?

Have been working in outreach for over a decade now!
My speciality is social media and content creation.

- Was social media manager for ATLAS for 5 years.
  - (There is a dedicated talk on ATLAS communications from Katarina Anthony on Friday to hear more on this topic.)
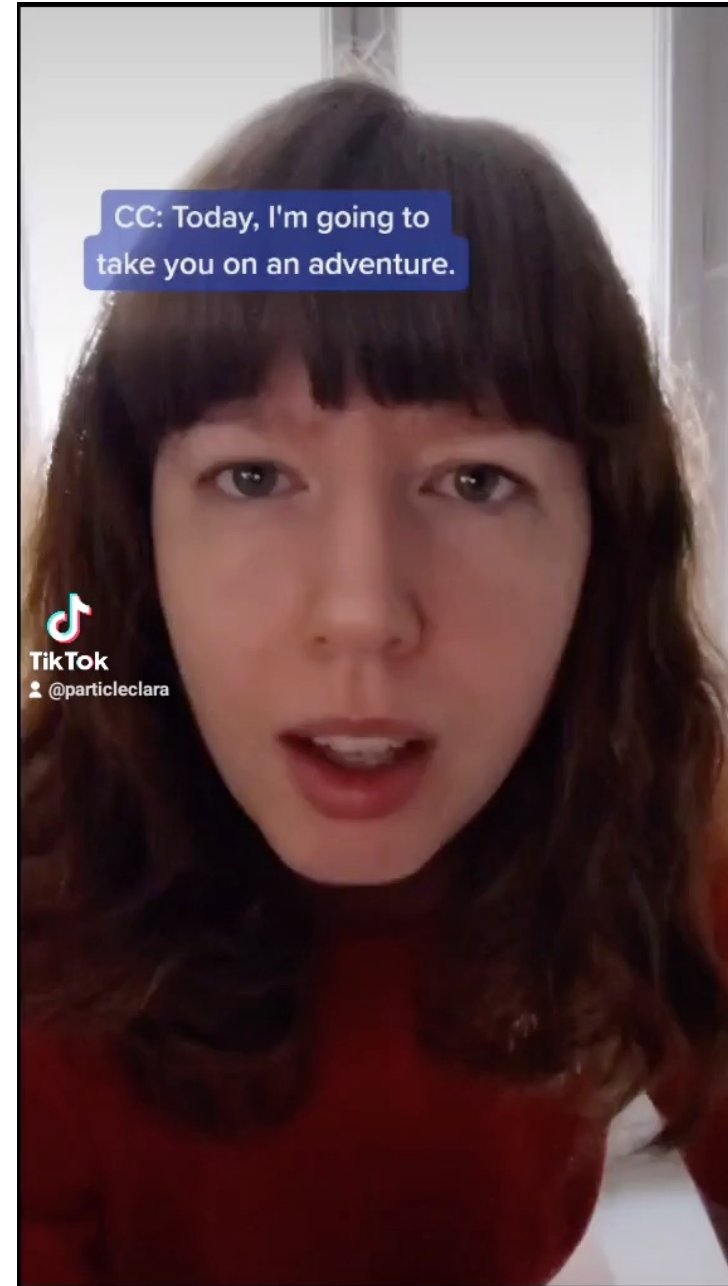- Was the first scientist / communicator from CERN to make dedicated science videos on TikTok.

The advice here is biased by what I use and like. It's a good starting point, but I always recommend to try new things out and see if you like them.

* Not an extensive CV

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OK, here's an example:

https://www.tiktok.com/@particleclara/video/6922959130617466118

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It can be as simple as taking your phone out and taking the photo or video!

But if you want to get a little fancier, then you're going to want to download additional apps to help you to edit your content.
This can all be done directly on your phone!

All social media apps have some built-in editing:
- Best I've found are: Instagram and TikTok.

Recommended apps I use (not sponsored :D):
- **Capcut**: video editing. Can film in my phone's original camera app and then drop the best takes in here.
- **OtterAI**: creates a transcript of my audio which I then edit for accuracy.
- **Canva**: create diagrams and images to explain a concept.
- **Lightroom**: If I want more control to edit my photos.

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An example structure for a 30-60 second video

A hook: Get your audience's attention within 3 seconds

⬇

The content of the video: pick up to 3 things you want your audience to learn or remember. Too much information and they will be overwhelmed.

⬇

The round up: summarise what they've learned and consider a call to action.

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Where to upload it?

You can keep your images for use later in presentations or longer articles, but you can also upload it directly online (please see my note of caution in the next slide).

Many social media platforms are chasing the short video form, as it is very popular right now:
- TikTok
- Instagram Reels and Stories
- YouTube Shorts

You can also stream live events, such as tours, and share behind the scenes directly with followers with your phone! (also see Francesca Mazzotta's talk next for more info on live events.)

Chetna Krishna @CERN

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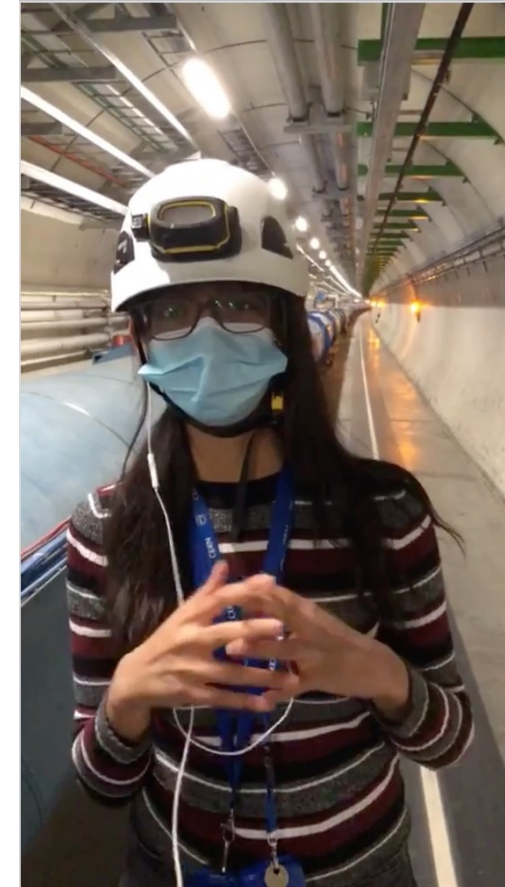
A word of caution

Please **follow the guidelines** of your collaboration, lab, institute… regarding photography and filming rules.
- If in doubt, check with the relevant outreach or communication team.

Please wear appropriate safety equipment in all footage.

Accessibility is important

Since we want to share our work with as many people as possible, this also means **making sure that it is accessible to as many people as possible**.

For visual content, this means:

- **adding alt-text**
  - a description of the image in words.
- **captioning videos**
  - A transcript of the spoken audio as text overlayed on the video.
  - A description of the music used can also add layers to the context of the video.
  - Primarily for people who are deaf and hard of hearing, but can also benefit people not fluent in the language the video is recorded in.
  - Additionally, many people watch videos when they cannot turn the sound on.

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Evaluation

It's important to evalute the content you're putting out to see **if it's having the impact** that you want it to have.

Some platforms also **tell you about your audience**.
- Compare results against the information for the platform as a whole. For example, TikTok generally has a youger userbase than Twitter, and Instagram has a higher percentage of women users than YouTube.

This can vary depending on your own goals, but often we **look at engagement** to see if people are looking at your content and liking or commenting.
- Are the comments positive or negative?
  - Negative comments aren't always bad per se. They can be an oportunity to learn and improve.
    - Though, I wouldn't recommend feeding the trolls, so it's also up to you to decide how much you want to interact with people leaving unconstructive negative comments…
- It's useful to look at the analytics from the social media platform and keep track to see how your content performs over time.

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The Challenge

Create a video on the topic of your choice
(it can be anything!)

- Think of the three main points you want your audience to learn / remember.
- Catch them in the first 3 seconds!
- Keep it < 60 seconds long.
- Film in portrait.
- Have fun with it!

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Bonus!

You don't need a lot of fancy equiment to make good content.

But here are a few things that can make things a little easier for you:

- **A ring light**
  - Evenly distributes soft light over the presenter.
- **A microphone**
  - Sound quality is very important. You should also test this before recording something that is time-critical.
- **A tripod**
  - Keeping your phone steady.

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Thank you for listening and please tag me in your creations!!

@claranellist: Twitter, Instagram and YouTube
@particleclara: TikTok