



The Preparation of Students of the State Conservatory of Uzbekistan for Independent Work in Business and Art

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v10i1.4433>

Abstract

Since 2020, the State Conservatory of Uzbekistan has been implementing a new program of art entrepreneurship within the framework of the European project MUSAE. This article provides an overview of some of the activities undertaken at the State Conservatory of Uzbekistan in order to develop and implement this program.

Keywords: *Multidisciplinary Skills; Free Market; Self-Employment; Creativity; Visual Arts; Musical Groups*

Introduction

In recent years, Uzbekistan has experienced unprecedented growth in all areas of the art industry. Young people have been the driving force behind this development, which has been supported by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev's program on the practical implementation of "five initiatives", which include comprehensive measures aimed at creating additional conditions for upbringing and development [1]. In recent years, Uzbekistan has experienced unprecedented growth in all aspects of the art industry. Young people have been the driving force behind this development, which has been supported by Uzbekistan's president, Shavkat Mirziyoyev's program on the practical implementation of "five initiatives", which included comprehensive measures aimed at creating additional conditions for upbringing and development. All of this economic restructuring had a significant impact on certain industries. A growing number of today's art institute graduates will be forced to work as independent designers, retailers, performers, and promoters. They most likely do not fit into the outdated statistical employment categories. As a result of a lack of sufficient funds to operate the business, they will be forced to form informal communities in which they will be expected to organize their work, frequently hiring friends or classmates. They will have almost no tangible assets, with the exception of a couple of computers and their musical instruments. To survive and break into the market in this competitive world, they will require nothing more than creative energy and professional expertise.

The Main Part

Therefore, the MUSAE (“Multidisciplinary Skills for Artists’ Entrepreneurship”) program has evolved into a platform for assisting and training specialists for technological projects in a new economic reality. To begin with, it would necessitate business transformation through collaboration between science, education, and business. The emphasis on profit through artistic ideas and creativity is the most important factor. Graduates of art institutes can work in any format of organizing and running a creative business, such as a music studio, online media, video production, a film festival, an advertising agency, or a TV channel. Entrepreneurship in the arts is a subset of human activity that arose from the confluence of two spheres: culture and business [2, 3].

This type of activity is typical of the period of market relations formation, development, and transformation that has developed and is being implemented within the context of societal growth. Some of the main strengths and weaknesses that students would address are supporting the local market, outreach and creativity, new ideas, maintaining Uzbekistan musical art, supporting heritage, finding solutions for those with disabilities, attracting people to art, and using local resources. However, some weaknesses have been identified, such as pricing, personal experience, a lack of materials and tools, financial and operational knowledge, a lack of interest in such initiatives, the Uzbek economy, marketing skills, and competing with global products. The state conservatory of Uzbekistan aims to provide qualified labor forces capable of bringing about positive change and meeting the needs and requirements of the community in artistic, scientific, technological, and research fields.

The MUSAE project was designed to train young professionals in the field of artistic entrepreneurship. The goal of this project is to train and develop entrepreneurship skills for future artists and musicians in order to increase self-employment opportunities and access to the creative economy [4]. Graduates of Uzbekistan’s State Conservatory are typically fully immersed in their field, whether performing arts or musical theoretical sciences. Former students face increased competition once they enter the professional world due to the limited employment opportunities in the arts. Musicians all over the world face financial difficulties at some point in their careers. The pandemic era exemplified the challenges that concert musicians faced. It takes years of dedication and a lot of help to create art. Unless something changes, much of the field of musical art will no longer be stable.

The State Conservatory of Uzbekistan is collaborating on the MUSAE project with the K. Bekhzod National Institute of Arts and Design, Turin Polytechnic University, and the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The program has been specifically designed to assist representatives of creative professions in the arts in acquiring the necessary set of skills to become recognized artistic leaders. Within the framework of this program, it is planned to introduce a special course in which students will be offered to familiarize themselves with the meaning and outcomes of managing enterprises related to the visual arts, musical groups, art galleries, theaters, studios, and record labels, as well as publishing companies. Students will be able to learn how to freely use creative ideas and translate them into unique pieces or marketing platforms for businesses because of this program. Students will be able to acquire skills in mastering competencies, recognizing and utilizing opportunities in their area of expertise—the sphere of art by means of studying the world experience in this area.

During the first year (2020 year) of the program, the State Conservatory of Uzbekistan delivered the dissemination project and conducted several surveys among teachers, students, and stakeholders to understand the situation in the field of musical art from various perspectives.

In February 2021, the participants in this project met to discuss the current state of affairs, summarize the results of the previous year, and outline plans for the coming year. The questions mainly concerned the purchase of equipment and the upcoming introduction of a new subject into the institutes’

curricula – “entrepreneurship and art”. This was followed by a stakeholder survey and analysis, as well as final observations that collected and synthesized all survey data by March 2021 [5].

During the spring months of 2021, the teaching staff of the Conservatorio Di Musica “Alfredo Casella”, Artesis Plantijn Hogeschool Antwerpen, and Jyvaskylan Ammattikorkeakoulu institutes delivered a series of teacher training courses via ZOOM platform. Colleagues from Birzeit University, Palestine Polytechnic University, Dar al–Kalima University College of Art and Culture (Palestine), University of Sfax, Université de Tunis (Tunis) participated in the workshops along with Uzbekistan’s partners. During these workshops, participants discussed a variety of issues that were important to them. Representatives from all universities were given the opportunity to present their projects and presentations, as well as ask questions directly to any of the participants. These workshops demonstrated how much everyone had in common while also allowing participants to share the peculiarities that come with living in different countries.

During this training, teachers learned about projects prepared by students and teachers from European institutions, and participants shared their experiences with promoting the MUSAE project in their respective countries [6].

On 29 March 2022, the representatives from the partner country, from the Centre for Global Education Services at JAMK (Jyvaskylan Ammattikorkeakoulu) the University of Finland, and professors and lecturers from JAMK University visited the National Institute of Fine Art and Design, State Conservatory of Uzbekistan, and Tashkent Turin Polytechnic Institute, as part of the MUSAE project’s field trip.

On the margins of this field visit, the guests were introduced to the teaching process at the above–mentioned institutions and the work of the project as well as signed Memorandums of Understanding. Meetings with students – the prospective participants of the future project of the three institutes were organized. This meeting provided an opportunity for all attendees to get to know one another and discuss the issues and challenges they face [7].

In June 2022, the participants from all the partner countries gathered for the annual meeting in L’Aquila, Italy. It was the first live meeting of all the participants, after 2 years of living with quarantine restrictions. At this meeting, participants from the State conservatoire of Uzbekistan had the opportunity to raise pressing issues regarding the introduction of the new course. The fact is that during the survey, the students did not express any interest in the new course being introduced. Conservatory students are concerned with the creative process more than with market promotion. Therefore, the experiences and concerns of students from Tunisian and Palestinian institutions were very useful.

During this meeting, workshops and training were held, the results of the work done were discussed and plans for the future implementation of the project were outlined.

The next stage of the project is the final phase. In this phase, students from eight partner countries will join the project activities in order to jointly implement the final performance. Until the final performance, which is due to take place in Italy in July 2022, students will take part in online workshops to develop the project together. All students are scheduled to meet in Belgium in February 2022.

Conclusion

Thus, the outcomes of the two–year Erasmus + “MUSAE” project at Uzbekistan’s State Conservatory demonstrated the interest of all parties, including students and teachers, as well as the institute’s management and stakeholders [8]. The pandemic impacted the project’s progress; many

activities were moved to an online format, affecting quality. However, it's safe to say that everything planned for the first two stages was completed successfully. It is also expected that the project results and best national practices will be widely disseminated in order to ensure the sustainability, exploitation, and utilization of the MUSAE project outcomes, as well as to increase the project's visibility among the main target groups and key stakeholders.

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