Developing entrepreneurial skills through cultural activities

"Create for Region" Vision - The Latvian economy is based on people's ideas and their implementation - Latvian as an entrepreneur, the creator of high added value, but "Create for Region" as a tool for achieving this vision. Competition Pilot Project 2014-2016. The year was successful and recognized as one of the best business promotion projects in Europe, which points to the potential and value of this tool.

PURPOSE OF THE COMPETITION

To give an opportunity to prove themselves to talented and enterprising young people of Latvia, developing and implementing various business projects in the regions of Latvia. In a competition for youth teams by November 2018, realizing business ideas should create the greatest possible economic value by creating new jobs by attracting investment, while promoting economic and social development in these regions.

PLACE AND TIME OF THE COMPETITION

The whole territory of Latvia, except for the republican cities and Lielvarde. From April 2017 to November 2018, thus giving the teams the ability to fully develop and implement various projects and create added value for teams.

PARTICIPANTS OF THE COMPETITION

All young people in Latvia who have a business experience of no more than 6 months.

COMPETITION NEWS

- The competition differs from other business ideas competitions because its focus is on results rather than ideas. One of the main objectives of the competition is to identify those young people who, despite the difficulties, knowledge and resource gaps, and limited funding, are capable of taking risks, responsibility and delivering results.
The competition can effectively involve different parties and their resources. The competition uses the motivation of young people and universities to prove themselves and directs this energy, gazuŗt, knowledge, ideas and honors to help develop the regions of Latvia. The competition supports not only business projects but also teams that want to help local businesses.

BENEFITS FOR PARTICIPANTS

Benefits for young people. The competition is unique in that participation in it does not require any investment, but only benefits. The teams gain publicity opportunities, better conditions for cooperation with local authorities, additional trust and reputation in the eyes of potential investors and partners, and additional funding that allows you to achieve the main benefit of implementing your business idea.

Benefits for the counties. The competition enables the counties to attract new ideas and energy for their development, helping young people implement business projects in their territory and creating economic benefits for the regions. Participation in the competition also allows the county to position itself publicly, as a place where young people are expected and supported in their pursuit of their intentions.

Benefits to higher education institutions. Higher education institutions are a great opportunity to show the public how well they can prepare young people for real life and how useful the knowledge and skills they acquire when studying.

RECENT RECOGNITION FOR COMPETITION

“We have established the region” has received the European Commission’s recognition as the best project for promoting entrepreneurship in Latvia and has been recognized as one of the best in such projects at European level in 2016.

Support young entrepreneurs in the cultural and creative sectors

The Creative Industries Division is responsible for creative industries in the Ministry of Culture, which helps to implement and initiates different interdisciplinary projects. Young people, as the main target audience in projects like DEMOLA and in the creative partnership programme or RaPaPro.

The Creative Partnership Programme (RaPaPro) is the programme initiated in 2014 and funded by the Ministry of Culture for the establishment of new partnerships in professional cultural educational institutions (art, design, music and dance secondary schools), involving in the cooperation teachers, students, representatives of local governments, businessmen, social groups and other representatives of the local community.

A creative partnership manifests in interdisciplinary activities, where all the cooperation partners are equal: equally contribute and equally receive from participation, from contribution and from the use of the final result.

5 RaPaPro projects were implemented in 2016: the Riga Choreography School in the project “Neighbour Amity” (Kaimiņu būšana) in cooperation with children from orphans houses “Vita” and “Ziemeļi” created a joint multimedia performance for patients of the Children’s Clinical University Hospital to enjoy; the National School of Arts in the project “At the LastMoment” (Pēdējā brīdī) certifies that merger of two schools is not a threat for pupils and teachers of schools and you get more than you lose from a merger; the Rēzekne Art and Design School in the project “From Letter to Sound” (No burta līdz skaņai) studied the public service environment in Rezekne and offer solutions for environmental improvements, the Alfrēds Kalniņš Čēsis Music School in the project “Sound Plein Air” (Skaņas plenērs parkā) created a short film about the Čēsis Castle Park; PIKC “Rīga Design and Art School” in the project “FROM – TO” (NO – LĪDZ) promoted understanding of involved pupils and cooperation partners about design as a
multifaceted process, forming contemporary souvenirs for the Latvian centennial anniversary.

New skills and knowledge obtained as a result of RaPa Pro projects, made a contribution to the resolution of social matters, promoted culture-based creativity transfer to other industries and otherwise.

PUPIL RESEARCHER TOWNSMAN (SKOLNIEKS PĒTNIEKS PILSĒTNIEKS) [SPP] is an idea of free thinking education previously unknown to Latvia, which was started in 2009 to embed children and school youths knowledge on the art of creating built environment. To promote understanding of future adults - its users, consumers and legislators - about architecture and urban environment. The most extensive result of the SPP project is a course of non-formal education [1]. Teachers, parents, businessmen and administrators of changes in build-up environment are also taught in a responsible way. The SPP project is implemented by the Association of Young Architects, which is ‘the youngest structural unit of the Association of Latvian Architects, the only professional organisation in the country. It was established in spring 2009.

ACTIVITY OF SPP:

- training methodology for different target audiences;
- various rearing activities;
- cooperation with binding organisations;
- link to the Latvian Education System;
- international experience plus alternative pedagogics;
- training and visual aids;
- souvenirs of built environment;
- child award “Zirnis” for the annual best work in Latvian architecture.

DEMOLA Network is successfully operating in 18 places across the world, including in Tampere, Helsinki, Vilnius, Budapest, Oulu, East Sweden, Slovenia, Latvia, Basque Country, Guadalajara, Canary Islands, Southern Denmark, Namibia, Cape Town, Campus Iberus, Stavanger, Northern Sweden and Côte d’Azur. The future prospects are talks with other countries. In 2014, the IT cluster as a partner of the Baltic Sea Region StarDust project, by overtaking DEMOLA Network experiences, trained employees on the creation of the platform and preparation of the training programme, and undertakes the leading initiative to introduce the DEMOLA Network experience in Latvia, promoting interdisciplinary training of students and occurrence of new, innovative products and services in all industries. On 31 December 2014, the DEMOLA LATVIA platform was successfully created and by autumn 2016 DEMOLA LATVIJA spent 5 seasons solving tasks, problem matters, offered by 30 companies, state governance institutions and organisations. Overall, 159 students participated in training stages and a broader student audience participated in related events, exceeding more than 2000 participants in total.

Demola Latvia facilitates co-creation projects between university students and companies, either locally or internationally, with the aim to find innovative solutions to the needs of companies, institutions and organizations that are seeking for the spark of creativity, design thinking and new products.

Demola Latvia was launched in 2014 by Latvian IT Cluster with the support of Ministry of Economics and Investment and Development Agency of Latvia. Until December 2015 Demola Latvia was financially supported through the Motivation program of the ERDF implemented by the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia. In autumn 2016, Riga Technical University and University of Latvia took over operation of Demola in Latvia. LIAA will further support Demola operation via Motivation program.

Multidisciplinary Demola student teams during 4 months (two seasons per year – Spring and Fall) work on real-life cases together with partner companies. For instance, teams (formed of students from different fields, faculties and universities) create and refine business concepts, develop new products, or build demos and prototypes. Demola ensures that the process is formatted and facilitated; work is systematic and runs on schedule and yields meaningful result. The partner company can purchase or
license the team’s creations, so it is a possibility for students to earn money, too. Students own the IPR for results of each project. Partners may also want to continue the project for further development.

Benefits for partners:

Possibility to relatively simply and without financial risk obtain new, creative solutions as a fresh perspective on the edge of your challenges which are developed by students under the guidance of professionals;

Get to know and hire or offer traineeships to young talented people;

Possibility to position yourselves as open, innovation-oriented and student friendly employers.

Possibility to implement and develop project ideas further after the end of DEMOLA season by continuing cooperation with the best students and teaching staff and utilizing research facilities of universities.

Benefits for students:

Unique experience of new product, service and process creation in a multidisciplinary team;

New skills (creative thinking and design process, presentation skills, team work and others) and your talent discovery;

Practical experience working on a real-life challenge provided by partner organization and getting useful insight into the specific field of the project;

Business contacts and remarkable CV record;

Option to commercialize the idea and get rewarded by project partner if the case solution is of a good quality;

Making new friends, meeting new people and getting strong connections for future;

Valuable life experience, personal growth and first step to start your own company.