Kaunas –
European Capital
of Culture 2022

YOUTH
programme
methodology

This book is worth having at hand for everyone who cares about empowering the youth to realise their dreams, make influence on their environment, feel an integral part of the society, and take responsibility for what is happening around them.

Based on the example of the youth programme "Kaunas Challenge" created by "Kaunas – European Capital of Culture 2022", this book serves as a methodology which turns the youngsters' need of self-realisation into a brainstorm of ideas for the city, into a space for discussing, dreaming, and acting without constraints, into a platform of project development, and into numerous implemented projects. The book presents and offers a methodology for working with the youth, as well as formats and specific advice on group facilitation, activity structure, and communication. Everything described has already been tested in practice during the 6 years of existence of the still active "Kaunas Challenge" programme.

The inspiring experience of "Kaunas Challenge" and the detailed structure of the programme has formed the content of this book that makes this publication no less impactful than the "Kaunas Challenge" programme. Now, all you need to do is roll up your sleeves, and the youngsters of your city, town, neighbourhood, or community will start building their future themselves.

Jurga Knyvienė
Chief Manager, Kaunas City Chamber Theatre
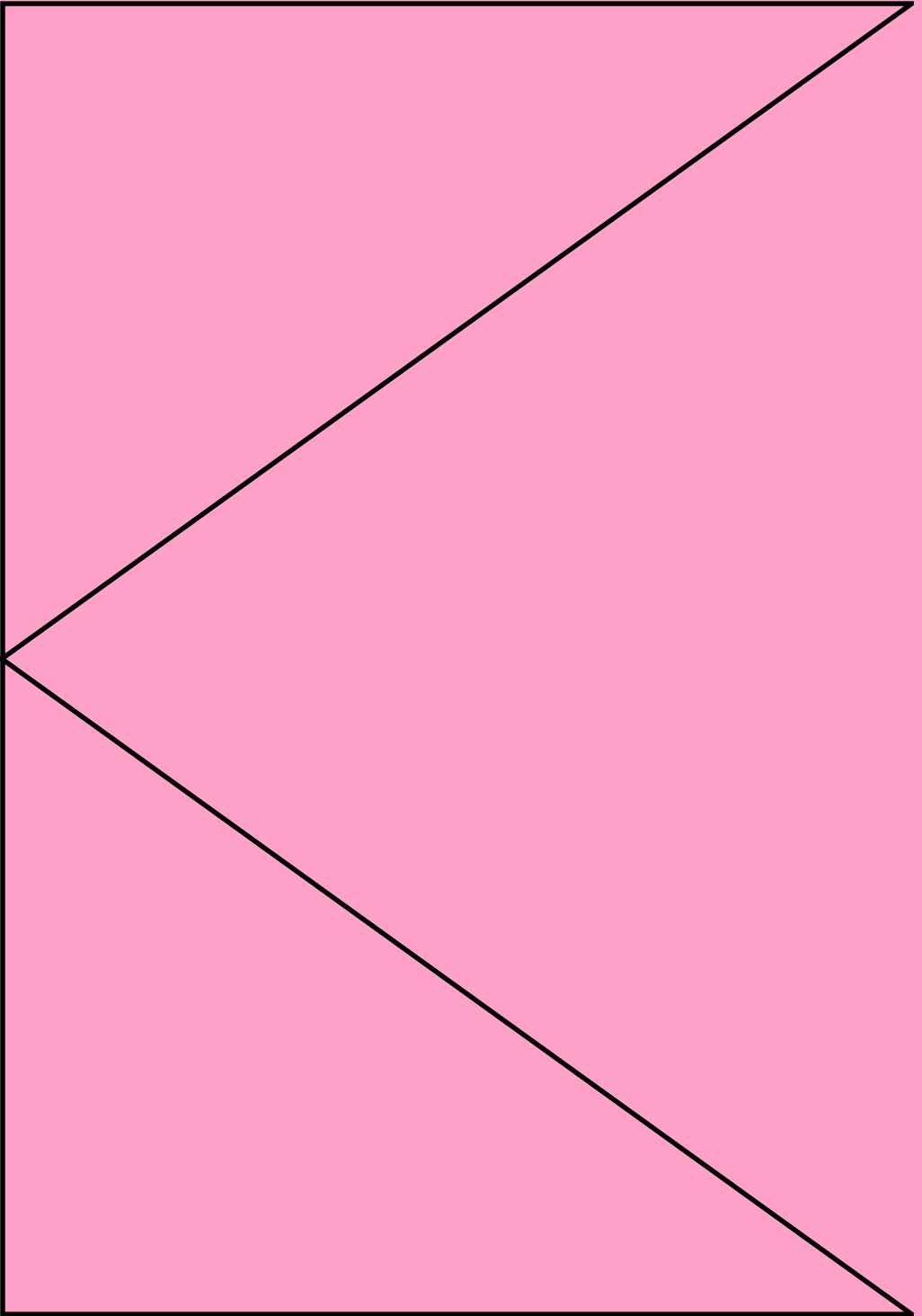
Growing the heads where Kaunas grows

CONTENT

Introduction / *letter*

Youth Program of
"Kaunas –
European Capital of
Culture 2022"

From the very beginning of the project, putting together an extensive Capital of Culture program, the team has unanimously agreed that Kaunas has to offer quality content and opportunities for young people to be part of the program. The team wants to work with young people consistently and to ensure continuity, to provide an opportunity to develop their personal skills, to become part of the cultural field and thereby to make them love their city even more, and to feel an integral part of the identity of the city.

This is how the program "Kaunas Challenge", and the Alumni Club, which ensures its continuity, and which is intended for everyone who wants to create for their city, were born. Together with competent mentors, cultural partners, and the entire team of "Kaunas 2022", we have managed to achieve in a few years that young people have truly realized what it means to create and implement cultural projects in their city. This program has offered something for all young people – regardless of their social status, hobbies, or personal competences. We, as curators of the program, and the young people who co-create with us, have made mistakes and learnt from them. The process has raised professionals who are able to work with an audience of pupils and a strong generation of young urban culture lovers.

We want to share this knowledge and encourage other cities to take up the challenge to create together with young people.

This publication is intended for mentors, teachers, youth workers, and young organizations seeking to develop such a youth program in their city or independent teams looking for ways to create value-added projects.

This methodological publication is compiled according to the chronological sequence of program development. Turning page after page allows you to create a youth program step by step. The publication is concluded with the most important tools, fun games, and relevant "what if" questions.

Enjoy the journey!

The authors

Programme team /
experiences

Team
experiences

The team of "Kaunas - European Capital of Culture 2022" initiated this program and continues working with young people that have gone through it.

We introduce the developers of this unique program:

"For me, "Kaunas Challenge" is, first of all, a community that brings together people who want to create changes."

"For me, "Kaunas Challenge" is, first of all, a community that brings together people who want to create changes, where mutual trust and crossing of boundaries together are very important. From this, FRIENDSHIP is born, which creates safe conditions for growth. In practice, it works as a program created for youth and by youth for their experiments and co-working. The program can is considered to be successful if each of its participants – a pupil, an alumnus, a mentor, a program coordinator or a partner – have become more courageous to dream and make decisions that are significant both for their professional life and for creating a change in the environment. I think this is a lifelong experience for those who have become active members in the youth platform. "Kaunas Challenge" plays the role of a catalyst, it depends on each individual experience on how much and what we have taken from the program. For me, the greatest legacy of this program is the opportunity to call a large part of the participants not only acquaintances, but also reliable and professional colleagues or successful entrepreneurs, with whom we are implementing and, I believe, will implement joint cultural projects. Present, like the future, is in the hands of these enthusiastic and creative people. They are and will be the creators of change, capable of bringing innovations into the local, national, and global cultural field. I believe that "Kaunas Challenge" for the participants of the program is the moment of breakthrough, after which we will observe their works and results for many more years after 2022."

VAIDA
VENCKUTĖ-NAGĖ

Founder of the program.

**ŠARŪNAS
DIGNAITIS**

Co-founder of the program,
mentor.

*"Kaunas Challenge" is a safe
space to make mistakes, create,
learn and, of course, discover
yourself in a circle of new friends."*

"Youth program has become not only useful for a young person to learn how to develop and implement artistic projects, but even vital for the city itself - to become a city young people want to live in."

"It is hard to believe how since 2016, when Vaida and I met to talk about the measures that motivate young people and empower them to create, we found ourselves in the title year, when we already have to write our final idea about the program in its methodology. In so many years, we can only rejoice at how many creative youngsters have grown, created Kaunas and fell in love with it. Youth program has become not only useful for a young person to learn how to develop and implement artistic projects, but even vital for the city itself – to become a city young people want to live in."

DOMINYKA GINELEVIČIŪTĖ

Facilitator, coordinator of the youth program, organizer of the festival "Storm" ("Audra"). The first young expert and a co-creator of the program.

AURELIJA PRAŠMUNTAITĖ

Mentor, facilitator, and activity manager. After joining the program in 2018, she has been conducting classes and implementing group projects from the development of an idea to its implementation. She helped to establish the Alumni Club and maintain its structure. Her key competences: youth work, development and administration of the project idea, project coordination.

"I would never have thought that trusting [the youth] and allowing [them] to act with minimal adult mentorship could bring such exciting and meaningful changes to the cultural field, create such benefits for the city. I particularly admire the enthusiasm and determination of young people."

"This program has become part of my identity, vitamins of emotional and professional growth."

"At 17, I registered here not knowing what it was. Now I know – it's a safe space for everyone who wants to build friendships, the city, have adventures, create initiatives, and most importantly, create themselves. This program has become part of my identity, vitamins of emotional and professional growth. I am honoured to create the program in which I myself grew up, so I use the superpowers acquired here for mentoring curious, active, creative young people. I believe that you too, by believing in this program, will create the best memories for young people in your city."

SANDRA KARNILAVIČIŪTĖ

Program developer, mentor, alumna. Participated in the first version of the program in 2017, and once Kaunas became the European Capital of Culture, she continued to work in the team of „Kaunas 2022" and create "Kaunas Challenge". In 2021, together with other alumni, she founded the youth cultural organization "Emerging Kaunas".

"Kaunas Challenge" will help you try yourself and expand your horizons in every way."

VAIVA MARIJA BRUŽAITĖ

Program developer, mentor, alumna. After completing the program in 2019, together with Sandra, she became a mentor of "Kaunas Challenge" and a part "Kaunas 2022" team. She is also one of the founders of the youth cultural organization "Emerging Kaunas".

About
"Kaunas Challenge"

Kaunas *Challenge*

is an opportunity for young people to implement their ideas for the city and its people. Young people participating in the program can continue their activities in the Alumni Club, where conditions are created for the youth to learn from experience and experiment in implementing their cultural ideas.

Program content. During the meetings of "Kaunas Challenge," participants analyze and creatively solve the challenges of Kaunas city and district, develop their own projects, and apply the acquired theoretical knowledge in practice. The meetings are theoretical: for discussing, introducing certain techniques ("Business Model Canvas", "Urban Survey", etc.), lecturing on public speaking, personal efficiency, budgeting; and practical: based on the principle of "hands-on learning," where participants can experiment, develop their creativity and problem-solving skills, and practice working in a team.

This is a safe medium for trying, growing the city, the team, and oneself. The program plan is supplemented by informal activities that help the participants connect, individual mentoring sessions for setting personal goals, and visits to cultural organizations for improving the inclusion of young people in their activities. There are also events or workshops in which not only the participants of the program can participate. This is an opportunity for young people together with the team of Kaunas 2022 to implement their ideas for the city and its people.

End of the program. Out of the 5 best projects, one wins a prize of 2022 euros for its implementation + the help of Kaunas 2022 mentors. Other teams can also implement their projects in the Alumni Club. All young people that have participated in the "Kaunas Challenge" can continue their activities and projects in the Alumni Club, where conditions are created for young people to learn from experience and experiment in implementing their ideas. The long-term vision of the Alumni Club is to engage young people to create and implement one of the big events of 2022.

Goals

Goals

Space

To offer a space where young people can interact, learn and create. This program creates a safe space not only to learn but also to err.

In communication with other program participants and mentors of the program, the aim of the pupils is to create projects with added value for the city.

The Community

The aim of the program coordinators is to develop students' soft competences and to guide or support the development of their projects by adding more value. It is through these projects that young people will be able to develop their competences in practice and consolidate their learning experience in this program.

The results we expect at the end of the program are:

– Improved students' soft competences: students are bolder, able to think critically, are not afraid to make mistakes, have the basic skills of public speaking and teamwork, are able to take leadership and act under uncertain circumstances.

– The participants of the program, having become acquainted with the cultural sector, are actively involved in the cultural life of the city.

– Continuity of at least one project developed by pupils.

– In the alumni group, pupils that have completed this program gather and willingly spend their time together in informal settings or even develop new projects.

– The information about the program for young people spreads by word of mouth, with some potential participants wishing to join the program next year.

A year in the *program of "Kaunas Challenge"* in numbers

35

pupils

40+

training hours

at least

70

meetings

5

projects for the city

50

youth ideas

*A year in the
Alumni Club*
IN NUMBERS

3000+

visitors

5

*projects
curated by
youth*

10+

partners

30+ *members*

∞ *of time spent having fun*

20+ *events for the youth*

active participants 150

Resources
What you'll need?

What
you'll need?

Coordinators /mentors

An ambitious team of at least two persons who have basic facilitation skills, experience in working with young people, and an understanding of how to lead a group.

Invited guests

Professionals, inspiring individuals, lecturers, representatives of companies or projects whose presence can help deepen the following competences: leadership, emotional intelligence, entrepreneurship, time management.

Partner network

Cultural organizations / NGOs / public bodies designed to connect with young people, engage them in the network and help their projects find either spaces or professionals for implementing and acquiring experience.

Spaces

Meeting rooms that can also be used for formal training and informal meetings and individual team meetings. A permanent location helps to engage and create a safe zone for ideas and community growth.

Tools

Tools for writing, creation, games, and classes, such as: large sheets, sticky notes, "Dixit" playing cards, etc. These can also be virtual tools: "Canva", social networking groups, virtual meeting rooms.

Motivational techniques

Partners' prizes, hot drinks and snacks, café vouchers can be great means for rewarding and promoting participants.

Interested groups

Business / culture / city representatives whose purpose is to provide challenges and guidance for the implementation of the projects and to help to understand them better and provide feedback.

Program
timeline

± 3 months of preparation

1 mentoring session

1 mentoring session
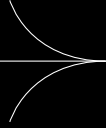
1 day
Kick off

± 1 month of active
team-building

± 5 guests and lectures on *Grow*

±1 month for *Challenge*

±3 months for Creating *Project*

1 mentoring session

Continuity. Alumni

The program *consists of*

To-Do
list

Creation of the program

Preparation for the mentors

Dissemination and communication

Search for the partners

Selection of participants

The beggining of the program

Hike

Learning period

Project presentations

End-of-program hike

On-boarding to Alumni Club

Before beggining
the program.

PREPARATION
OF THE PROGRAM

It may take longer if you are not familiar with the target audience or have no experience with youth programs. If you do have experience, it should not take you more than 3 months to prepare for the program, including communication with and selection of pupils. Certainly at this point we already have people in charge – a team of coordinators or mentors.

The focus in this stage is:

On the approval of the program coordinators	– At least 2 years of experience working with youth or developing educational programs. – Basic facilitation / moderation skills. – Mentoring experience.
For agreeing on the necessary resources (premises, necessary technical equipment, etc.)	– A space that can accommodate ± 35 people. – Tables / chairs and the possibility to move them by making space for movement. – Internet access and a computer. – A projector. – Other – as required.
Program Communication – Creating a Name and Communicating	– Social media channels focused on the target audience – pupils – Program visuals and a slogan (motivating and defining the key milestone)
Selection of pupils	– Visits to schools. – Program presentations at events. – Selection of participants, if the number of applicants is greater than the foreseen number of intake.*
A budget for lecturers, learning and motivational measures	
	* The key selection criterion is motivation. We do not select pupils based on their competences or learning outcomes – instead, we select them on the basis of how motivated they are to grow, learn, create projects with other pupils, and develop their own city.

Communication

*Get to know your participants!
Where do they usually go?
What grabs their attention?
What kind of invitations to the
training program would they
respond to?*

Communication with educational institutions

Network with as many educational institutions as possible. Schools and gymnasiums are the main space where the target audience of the program can be found. Informative posters on the notice board, posts on school community platforms, teachers' encouragement are great tools to keep the program visible. Some of our favorite activities are school visits. Presentations of the program in schools help to establish a live connection with potential participants. This way, they can get to know their future mentors, ask questions that come to their mind, and get a better understanding of the program, which is difficult to convey using static visuals in an advertisement or a poster. It is more beneficial when the participants present the program themselves. It shows their importance, responsibility and ensures interesting stories for young people!

Advertising in public spaces

It may seem that young people are always on their phone screens, but at the same time they are also the most active researchers of the city. Therefore, we offer to use the city's spaces for outdoor advertising: at stops near schools or on public transport screens to initiate engagement in places where the youth gather. It is important to talk about the program not only when inviting participants to register, but also in general – to show and remind them that such a program exists. Non-traditional ways of communicating about the program can be used – communication in a café popular with young people (on the tables), stands with bright visuals in large supermarkets, drawings of street art (in permitted places), etc. – these can become reminders and objects of attraction for potential participants.

Social networks

Reklama socialiniuose tinkluose – puiki mintis. Taip galima surasti norimą auditoriją pagal tam tikrus segmentus (amžių, lokaciją), kurių galbūt nepasiektumėte gyvai ar organiškai internete. Nepaisant įtraukių statinių ar dinaminių reklamos įrašų, skatinančių registruotis į programą ar sužinoti apie tai daugiau, svarbu turėti ir informatyvaus, patrauklaus turinio programos profilyje/sienoje. Programos turinys turi parodyti įvairias programos puses, ne tik mokymus. Dauguma mūsų dalyvių kaip vieną svarbiausių prioritetų programoje laiko naujų draugų suradimą ir gerą laiką – parodykime tai.

Youth – for young people

Advertising on social networks is a great idea. This way, you can find the audience you want based on certain segments (age, location) that you might not otherwise reach out live or organically online. Despite using engaging static or dynamic promotional posts encouraging to sign up for or learning more about the program, it is also important to have informative, engaging content on your program profile / wall. The content of the program must show various aspects of the program, not just the training. Most of our participants consider making new friends and having fun as some of the top priorities in the program – let's show this.

Contacting with partners, visiting guests

Partners can also help to disseminate information. Partners can mention their future involvement or appearance in the program. Perhaps you might collaborate with a theater that will allow your attendees to visit the premiere of a performance, and each month there will be an interesting personality visiting you? Let each person and organization involved in the program share their message about it.

Mentor
preparation

A mentor is an advisor in the process of growth of teams and ideas, a friend of program's participants who helps ensure their full participation.

The mentor should understand the stages of project development and have experience working with young people. During the program, this person is a meeting moderator, an inspirer, a teacher, and a friend.

It is important to have clearly scheduled meeting days and on the remaining days to schedule time when participants can contact you and communicate with you. It is important to set the boundaries in communicating live and remotely. You can get on well and communicate with the participants, but you should also build a healthy relationship and make sure you and others have free time.

It is important to prepare for meetings – be it a slide show or a creative workshop – it is very important to assess how long it can take and what the participants can get out of it. Each meeting should have a clear topic, purpose, attendants that can be introduced to new tools, methods, examples. At the same time, let's give more space to the participants – let them have a say, ask questions and, most importantly, act on their own. It is not a regular school, but a program that empowers young people, their creativity and innovative ideas. Therefore, provide them with the freedom to make mistakes and have a fun time.

The mentor is not obliged to make perfect teams of all the groups, but they should ensure that the participants create a safe space and help these teams at various stages of their work. The mentor navigates through the stages of team development and takes care of the work process but does not have to interfere with the participants' internal experiences. Mentors must monitor all work-related processes, and they have to be able to react – to resolve any issues or tensions during conversations with the team and potentially split participants into new teams if they see that the communication between young people is not smooth.

So,
for a mentor to get prepared, THEY NEED TO:

1. Know parts of the project, prepare the meeting content.

2. Get familiar with the tools.

3. Prepare for communicating with participants.

4. Feel a part of the team.

5. Connect with partners and always have ideas.

6. Conduct classes.

Selection of
participants

This programme is aimed at young people who want to acquire new skills and use them to create value-added projects, find like-minded people, and at the same time contribute to the improvement of their environment.

We do not select pupils based on their competences or learning outcomes – instead, we select them on the basis of how much they want to grow, learn, create projects along with other pupils, and grow their own city.

Registrations are evaluated by the mentors organizing the program, but the program's alumni or their colleagues can also join the evaluators of the registration questionnaires. You can decide how you will evaluate the applications, but we'd like to share with you how we do it.

The registration at the first stage is a virtual questionnaire, which includes questions ranging from the applicant's age and hobbies to the idea for their city and their expectations of the program.

The maximum score of each applicant is 5 points.

Motivation: (1 point)	– Why do you want to participate in this program? – What do you expect from the program / What would you like to learn?
The idea: (1 point)	– What idea / project would you like to create and implement here?
Search for a solution: (2 points)	– In your opinion, what cultural challenges does the city face? – If you had any superpower – what would you create / what would the best festival look like?
Perception of the program context: (1 point)	– Where did you learn about "Kaunas Challenge"? – Why do you want to participate in this program?

The participants' questionnaires are firstly evaluated by mentors, and then the average score is calculated. If >= 3 points are collected, participants are invited to a motivational interview; if less, participants are not invited to further stages.

Motivational interviews with applicants

We dedicate up to 12 minutes for motivational interviews. This meeting – live or online – is designed to meet a potential participant, find out their expectations, and ascertain their level of motivation. We do this by asking the following questions:

Which characteristics of yours or your skills would be useful for the work of the team?

How would you deal with a conflict or if you cannot find a way to successfully communicate with a team member?

What do you do after school?

Will you be able to attend meetings every other Saturday and will you be able to give extra time for the meetings of "Kaunas Challenge"?

What problem(s) do you see in the city or the district?

Do you have questions about the program?

Letters to the admitted and not admitted

Information on (non)admission must be sent to each applicant. We welcome those who have joined the program and introduce them to the tentative schedule, important dates and responsibilities. In the meantime, unsuccessful applicants receive a letter offering to join other initiatives offered by the city / partners; they are encouraged to follow the program and participate in the open events of the program and lectures, to register for open calls, and try to enter the program next year. A number of young people are not admitted to the programme not because their performance in the selection procedure was poor – the program has a fixed quota of participants; therefore, it is impossible to invite all the best candidates. If you have an opportunity to bring more participants together or to conduct more meetings – it would be great! Otherwise, we offer unsuccessful candidates to return back next year and directly take part in motivational interviews, without filling out the registration form again. In addition to this, it is also important to take age into account that some youngsters are competing for a place in the program during the first year they are eligible to take part in it, and for some it is the last chance to join it before leaving school.

To add. Participants whose participation in the program has been confirmed are invited to fill in a questionnaire about themselves, from which we can see the results of the communication campaign and get to know the participants faster and adjust the program accordingly. In the questionnaire, participants note what skills they would like to acquire and what activities they would like to engage in. These responses can help you create teams and individually invite participants to participate in other initiatives. Idea for cognition: Myers-Briggs personality types.

Kick *off*

This is the first meeting.

The aim is to make the first contact with the participants and to introduce the program to them.

Pupils need to get acquainted not only with the coordinators / mentors and vice versa, but also with each other. Of course, it is also very important to agree on common rules. After selecting motivated participants, it is advisable to start with the program at the beginning of October.

During the kick-off session, special attention is paid to explaining the program's guidelines, introducing the team, and getting acquainted between the participants.

Ice-Breakers. Team games and presentations headed by coordinators / mentors. (see "Games")

Agreement on common rules*. A task is facilitated by coordinators during which all participants share, individu-ally or in groups, their opinion on what the common rules and arrangements should for everybody to follow. The purpose of this agreement is to ensure that everybody follows the rules throughout the program.

Introduction with the progress of the program. Mentors present the program plan and how the program works so that the participants can get an impression of employment, importance, goals.

Participants can be right away split into teams. (see "Team Up!")

Let's not forget developing the program's attributes and "common traditions" – gifts from the program and the first informal meeting.

* The participants create the rules themselves. The rules to be created can be a task for discussion in groups or for sharing with everyone what needs to be written down in the list of rules. The key question in creating the rules is "How are we to be here?" Interestingly, there is a stereotype that teenagers want to break the rules. In this program they create the rules themselves, so this concept has more meaning and relevance to them, they feel more involved.

Individual
mentoring
SESSIONS

This is a 1-on-1 meeting between the mentor and the participant, during which the participants talk about their personal effectiveness, involvement in the program, and personal goals. During the first individual mentoring session (see "Individual mentoring"), the most important questions can be:

What do I want to learn during the program?
Which of my traits will help me or which traits am I to improve?
What do I expect from my peers?

Additional parts in the program

Follow-up –

a summary of the activities of each previous meeting. For some, the meeting plan and activity descriptions are a great reminder of what they have done in the team, and for those who did not attend the meeting, it is a wonderful opportunity to be informed of the related program content and to follow the tasks and important news.

Feedback –

program evaluation. After the first challenges (before the holidays) and at the end of the program, participants receive for filling out an anonymous questionnaire about the content of the meetings, the work of the team and the mentors. Sometimes certain things are not communicated, so filling out the questionnaire helps mentors / coordinators understand if the program is interesting, helpful, or whether it could be improved; whether all the participants feel safe and are satisfied or if someone needs extra attention. We like to call this program an organic one – although we do have a plan, we are always ready to improve it not at the end of the program, but to look for solutions during its course.

Team *up!*

This section focuses on mutual cognition.

The goal –

is to get to know the team members and feel part of the community. For "Kaunas Challenge," we chose a hike as one of the core team-building activities. We start with it at the beginning of the program (immediately after the kick-off) and at the end the program (after the project presentations). Of course, you can customize the process according to your own ways, but a hike is a really clever way to get participants to leave their comfort zones and to have a unique experience together.

At least a few consecutive meetings of participants are dedicated to team building. A team will show better results if everyone in it feels safe.

Captains

Each team should choose a team leader – the captain. It is a participant who is put in charge of following the deadlines of the team, maintaining a conducive atmosphere within the team, and is the contact person for mentors / coordinators. This not only helps to develop leadership qualities and to take responsibility for the team, but also facilitates communication – reaching several participants is more convenient than trying to reach all 30–40 participants at once.

Team Building

It is important to emphasize the part of teaming-up at the very beginning of the program, but teams will be built throughout the program. Coordinators / mentors need to be aware of team dynamics throughout the program and feel when intervention or simply reinforcement is needed.

Participants can be assigned to teams during the first three meetings: during the kick-off, the teaming-up stage, or as tasks are assigned. To ensure the best possible communication between the participants, we assign the participants to the teams at the end of the kick-off meeting, but this can also be done when everyone is getting their first challenges.

There are several ways of teaming up

Most often teams are made by the mentors / coordinators. Mentors should pay attention to the participants' applications and expectations: what are the participants' skills, what would they like to learn, whether the participant is inclined to be a leader or does not dare to communicate with new people. You can get to know the participants during the interviews, by observing the participants doing various tasks, or by looking at the results of tests on personality type and team roles. These results are not facts; it is recommended to look at them as guidance about participants.

Participants may be divided into teams so that:

- a team has as a diverse range of people as possible (representing different schools and ages);

- the team has people with diverse skills (artists and planners, thinkers and doers, leaders and observers);

- the team is oriented toward a common goal – perhaps part of the participants are ecology activists, and the other part want to take care of the city's art or create a youth space? Participants can be teamed-up according to their shared interests or, on the contrary, by allowing them to discover each other's diversity, which will help them create unique ideas.

This will ensure that a team has the widest possible range of skills and personalities.

It also helps to avoid a situation when the participants who are already familiar amongst each other close themselves off from new acquaintances.

There is not enough time to get to know all the participants; therefore, the dynamics of a particular teams do not always meet the expectations.

Participants may team-up by themselves. They are given complete freedom to choose their ways of gathering.

- It is easier for the participants to make friends in a team – there is no need to worry about "compatibility."

- More motivation to act and to share ideas more boldly.

- Participants having no acquaintances may be left without a team.

- Fun and friendly teams do not always ensure smooth and high-quality involvement in work tasks (fun > work).

Teams are divided according to ideas / tasks.

- In this way, the participants will already be familiar with the relevance of the topic and related problems.

- Mentors who have the same goal are brought together.

Participants will not necessarily get on well, even if they like the topic. Character games can occur within a team: competition or hierarchy, discrepancy of ideas, unwillingness to seek compromises.

Mentors must monitor all these processes, and they have to be able to react – resolving any issues or tensions during interviews with the team, agreeing with proposed teams or dividing participants into teams themselves if they see that the communication between young people is not smooth.

TEAM UP!

The
hike

The hike is the most awaited part of the program.

The objective is to get acquainted with the participants and the shared values of the program.

The hike has become the best way of teaming up, and for program participants it is a wonderful opportunity to experience a one-day camp while forgetting about the bustle of the city – an escape from the urban environment, tired legs, and the tastiest sandwiches. Meetings in informal settings help to start free conversations, discussions, and conceive the most astonishing ideas, and the obstacles that emerge on the hiking trail help improve the participants' responses to challenges and develop a sense of community. During the hike, participants can spend more time and give more attention to getting to know each other and developing self-awareness.

During the hike, one may encounter challenges wholly different to those in a class meeting: rain-soaked clothes, shoes rubbing against your heel, challenging forest tracks, counting steps to the next snack stop. What do the participants do in such situations – complain, take it as an adventure, help others, laugh, or worry?

To achieve the best possible effect, we ask the following questions during the hike:

– How is a team leader different from a leader?

– What is important when working in a team?

– How will we assess our progress if we succeed?

– How can we contribute to the growth of the city?

You may ask various questions, depending on the goal you want to achieve – to introduce the participants with each other or provide them things to consider on effective engagement.

For discussions, participants can be divided into groups of varied sizes, or divided into pairs and allowed to speak to each other for 20 minutes while walking. Every now and then, stop to discuss the groups' answers and share your thoughts. One of the best things associated with our hikes is walking in silence. During this task, all the participants walk, not talking and not asking questions. This is a challenge for the participants, who have already made friends here, and a wonderful opportunity for reflection and establishing a conscious presence in the here and now.

About the hiking trail. The optimal hiking trail is about 15 km. The route is more interesting if there are obstacles (a tree lying on the road, a section of mud or a stream on the trail), slopes, or various tracks. This way the route becomes a hike rather than a regular walk.

Growth

When groups become teams, the learning-growth part begins.

Objective: to gain more knowledge of one of the competences offered by the program during each meeting and develop skills in practice.

The competence of the invited guests and the coordinator is a very important element of the program. Participants will be guided by the principles of learning by doing, but the topics on methodology and general competence skills can help participants gain more knowledge and lay a foundation for their experiments in general.

Topics for half-day meetings include leadership, time management, emotional intelligence, stress management, public speaking, etc.

Training methods: lectures, games, creative workshops during which participants may discuss, complete related tasks or start preparing an idea for future projects.

The topics of the meetings
can also be dictated
BY THE PROJECT STAGES:

	Stage	Meeting subject / tools
1.	Subject, problem	Exploring the city, audience survey, problem-solving.
2.	Idea	Creativity, idea generation models.
3.	Form	Creative workshop, analysis of examples.
4.	Action plan	Business model canvas, time management.
5.	Service / product	Creative workshop, prototyping.
6.	Partner search, help	Visits and inquiries to organizations.
7.	Communication	Identity building, trying social networks.
8.	Self-assessment and improvement	Reflection according to the de Bono's thinking hats principle, team self-assessment, critical thinking.
9.	Presentation	Public speaking, pitching.
10.	Continuity	Plans, commitments, involvement in city activities.

Tasks –
challenges

The challenge is the core value of the program. In this context, these are the tasks to be addressed and performed by the participants. The program consists of two parts: the first part – challenge of testing, reflection, and improvement, and the second – project development, during which teams apply the acquired knowledge and better understand the specificity of project development and teamwork.

The goal is to try to work in a team and learn to fail (to make mistakes) and to solve tasks, challenges. The involvement of mentors is important here, as is the freedom to make mistakes and learn from them. This may also be fun time to team up.

Our experience shows that when they receive challenges, pupils need to be able to ask questions and get feedback from those that assign them tasks, i.e., partners, founders, mentors. In other words, the platform or organization offering a challenge must be actively involved in the process.

During the program, there are 2 challenges for teams. The first challenge may be a hypothetical situation for testing, and the second is the development of a real project initiated by the team.

The first challenge is a task assigned by the mentors for testing the team. Program partners can also form the task. It can be working with the existing cultural organizations that want to have young people as their audience. For example, a museum that needs help in updating or creating a new and interesting exhibit. It can also be a task set by an upcoming event – to produce a concept of the event or try out a new format. Alternatively, it could be a hypothetical challenge of urban renewal – what does the city need?

Each group is assigned a coordinator / mentor who helps participants understand the challenge, delve into it and suggest a solution. Depending on the task, these may include the contact persons that offer a challenge, who can be consulted. In this case, it is impor-

tant to define the number and duration of the consultations and the extent to which the external person will be able to contribute.

For example, an organization is facing a challenge in attracting young people to a theater. This challenge can be given for solving to a team of pupils. First of all, program participants are themselves the target audience. Secondly, they can more easily reach other, like less active pupils, whose views are crucial here.

The purpose of the first challenge is to solve a specific task given to a team. To solve it, and therefore to test the solution in practice (for example, when creating a plan to attract young people to the theatre, conduct a peer survey to see if the ways devised will be attractive; offer visual examples of communication — mock-ups of posters or slogans that would attract young people to the theatre or perhaps even organize a day's campaign — a performance next to a theatre). It is important that the team has time to produce several different solutions to the challenge, try more than one solution, and then present their insights during the presentation of the challenge (highlighting which elements were successful and which were not).

More *ideas*
FOR CHALLENGES:

To develop a prototype model of communication and cooperation between young people and the elderly
(the challenge "Memory Office" of "Kaunas – European Capital of Culture 2022").

To create a project concept that would suit a city festival in space X.

To create a model of operation for the Alumni Club of the program's participants.

To create an initiative that would encourage the city residents to pay attention to the architecture of modernism
(challenge of "Modernism for the Future" of "Kaunas – European Capital of Culture 2022").

To provide ideas on how Museum X could attract more youth.

Part of the challenge shall be given at least one month, during which participants shall meet at least several times in joint sessions, where the facilitator shall assist in facilitating their creative process.

Groups are also encouraged to communicate and meet informally to present the best solution to their challenge in a month.

The final part of the challenge is reflection.

Groups can present innovative ideas in the presence of representatives of organizations who evaluate and give feedback to participants on the proposed solution.

The groups present their ideas and discuss the results of the pilot actions within the program community (among participants and mentors). In a safe environment, all groups share what they have done and offer their advice.

The process is as follows:

the program coordinator moderates the event. Challenge founders (board members / leaders of organizations who assigned challenges) evaluate the projects. Evaluation criteria: feasibility, creativity, quality of presentation, etc.

Reflection on the first challenge is a very important part that will help in further project development by means of self-assessment and encouragement.

After the first challenge, it is a good time for conducting the second individual mentoring session. The purpose of this session is to discuss how the partici-

pant feels halfway through the program, what they have learned, and what they need to get the most out of the rest of the time. The following questions can be provided:

How did I manage working in a team?
What have I learned on problem-solving, etc.?
What I could have done in a different way?
How did I contribute to the work in the program?
What do I expect from the program later on?

Creation

When groups have tested their skills and roles in teams, it is time for a real project.

Let's start by developing a real project. Teams can choose to continue the project started in the challenge part or finally start developing a new idea of their own. As a result, groups may develop a different work pace during this section of the program.

It is also important not to forget to follow the group dynamics. It is possible that after the first challenge or project, there may already be disagreements — we need to identify them, discuss them, hear different opinions, find solutions and then move on.

The duration of the project development part is at least three full months, during which the team has access to a coordinator / mentor who can accompany and advise them during the project.

The end of the Create part, like the first challenge part, ends with the presentation of group projects, which are evaluated by the program coordinator and mentors and / or visiting guests.

Initially we have focused more on problem solving and team building, while now we are trying to develop creativity: to ask questions that would encourage us to choose not necessarily the first idea that strikes the mind, but to go deeper and look for more unique solutions.

Facilitation plays a very important role in this part. The coordinator must provide a form to help the groups continue and / or start new projects. It is especially challenging if the group does not even know what project it would like to develop. Then they need the assistance of the mentor, first of all, to help them by asking simple questions as to what challenges they see in their district / city and would they what to create which doesn't exist yet. Once they get on the right track, with the help of mentoring, the project may get rolling toward the first concrete steps. It is also possible to remind the teams of the ideas or suggestions shared by the participants during the selection process (if this was a question on the registration form), which were their motivation for joining the program.

Members of the groups are encouraged to meet more often than just during formal meetings. During the meetings, lectures can still take place, more theoretical knowledge can be gained, but part of the time still needs to be devoted to working in teams. You may plan the stages of the course of each meeting, when and what needs to be prepared: a clear idea, an action plan, identity creation and communication, real product / initiative development, testing, etc. Also, this is a wonderful opportunity to invite partners to help young people actively engage in the network, seek connections for their ideas, discover new experiences, and learn from examples.

In parallel: team building, growth of personal competences, team mentoring, fun time.

Questions to be asked
to help in the
CREATIVE STAGE:

1.   Does the idea solve any specific problem?

2.   Why does this problem exist?

3.   Does this seem interesting to the team offering the idea? Is it interesting not only to them?

4.   How specifically does their idea create change?

5.   What is needed to implement the idea?

6.   What are the steps of implementation of the idea?

7.   What would their idea look like if they didn't have the available resources?

8.   What would the idea look like after 5 years?

Finish

Presentations

The presentation of an idea is the most important part of the final stage. Teams must be able to not only develop a project, but also to introduce it, to present it to a new audience, or even to sell it. This is important if the possibility to get funding for the project depends on this, if this will help to find a needed partner / sponsor or make somebody want to join the project. Before making official presentations to a commission or audience, it is recommended to have tried to present for a smaller audience among teams.

It is important to substantiate the evaluation criteria during the presentations. But the team itself remains to be important: how the team grew, what challenges it faced, something interesting that happened. The presentation can be short and informative, but the soft and emotional side must also be touched, for example, during a discussion of the reflection.

There are many forms of presentations:

– A slide show.

– An application submitted.

– "Pitching".

– Artistic expression (e.g., a video, presentation with elements of acting).

– Any other agreed form.

The composition of the presentation can be as follows:

– The problem.

– Value / idea.

– Product.

– Financial need.

– Practical implementation.

– About the team (at the beginning or at the end).

What should be the duration of the presentations?

It is up to you. We usually give 12 min. for participants of the "Kaunas Challenge." Ten minutes' time is usually exceeded, and it is not always enough for in-depth discussions, while 15 minutes would already be too much. If it's not a slide show presentation, more or less minutes can be allowed. It is important to assess whether all the desired items can be presented within the given timeframe.

Project *evaluation*
CRITERIA

Relevance of the problem to be solved

The problem solved by the project and its relevance are evaluated. The validity of the choice of the project idea in solving a specific city or district problem is assessed. When presenting an idea, the team must assess how and why their proposal is appropriate to address the chosen problem – the project and its idea address a real, pressing problem.

The value created by the project for the residents of the city

The value created by the project and its idea for the residents is assessed. The choice of the target audience is assessed, and what is the expected impact on it. By presenting an idea, the team presents its target audience (the study conducted) in terms of demographic and geographical indicators, hobbies, leisure, etc. and identifies the value their idea creates for that audience. Ideally, we look for ideas that create high added value.

Project originality, innovation

The novelty, uniqueness, originality, and innovativeness of the project are evaluated. The submitted project must be unique and stand out from the existing events and activities. The description must reflect a substantiation for what makes it unique. The project is original, exceptional, innovative.

The need for funding for the idea

It is evaluated how optimal are the foreseen resources required for the implementation of the presented idea, the evaluation and justification of the required financial resources are assessed. It is assessed how the team managed to calculate the financial needs for the project. The description must specify how the budget will be allocated for the implementation of the idea. The resources required for the implementation of the project correspond to the cultural and / or social benefits it creates if they are realistically planned in time.

Practical implementation of the project (a pilot project)

The feasibility of project implementation is evaluated. The team presents the results from the pilot period during which they check (one or more) aspect of the feasibility for implementing the project (e.g., conduct a survey, make a presentation, find partners, etc.). The practical completeness of the project is assessed and whether it will be really possible to implement this project.

The presentation must justify how the project will be implemented, the planned implementation plan, the methods, stages, resources required, the team available and its motivation to implement the proposed idea. Points are given to the idea for the implementation of which a plan has been drafted, examples of activities started (surveys, testing, etc.), detailed and clear presentation of the idea. An implementation plan and examples have been prepared.

The quality of the presentation of the idea

The quality of the presentation will be assessed – team participation and distribution of work, delivery of the presentation (visualizations, etc.) and the quality of the presentation.

End of
the program

There are no winners or losers in this program – all participants develop their own initiated projects on the topics that are most relevant to them. However, to ensure continuity, a financial prize can be set up for the implementation of the project, for example: in the case of "Kaunas Challenge," we provide the winners with a 2022 euros prize. However, money is not the only prize given. Together, the team gets the necessary attention and time to improve and implement the idea in the city. The prize is awarded to the team with the highest scores, based on the evaluation criteria and team motivation. We must not forget the teams that were not awarded with a prize – these teams must be encouraged to continue with their projects, to look for partners, get funding. The only difference between the winning team and all other teams is that the prize is awarded to the team whose project is closest to being implemented. Meanwhile, other teams can set aside time for mentoring and consultations to improve their projects.

Here's an interesting fact:

during a year of the "Kaunas Challenge" experience, two teams that were not awarded a prize implemented their projects earlier and on a larger scale than the team that won the prize. This was due to the fact that the first two teams had bonded better, acquired more motivation, and put more effort, appearing at the modern city festival "Audra", which was organized by the youth of the organization at that time (see "Audra").

A hike for concluding the program

is a great alternative to reflection. Prepare your route, ask questions, bring the participants together and have an unforgettable experience the last time you come together in a cosy community. You can also invite the alumni to this hike, whom the participants can get to know and thereby be introduced to the Alumni Club.

Feedback

In addition to reflection, it is important to evaluate and program the lectures, mentor's work, etc. These can be views collected through interviews or by means of an online survey that will help improve the program plan and the work of mentors.

Documents giving more meaning to the completion of the program

Prepare diplomas proving participation in the program. Specify the number of hours and competences acquired — this could be a document proving the individual's skills, an entry in their CV for seeking employment, etc.

The third individual mentoring

It is an opportunity to review the participant's personal progress, to discuss the program, to encourage them join an Alumni Club, and enjoy the participant's growth in the program.

Potential questions to be asked:

How do I assess my growth?

How did I personally benefit from the program?

What did I understand?

What are my next steps?

The Alumni
Club

The Alumni Club

– provides room for continuity. We can tell from experience that it is important for young people that the educational program has continuity – the new competences gained, and acquaintances made must persist and have a platform for continuing successful cooperation. After starting the creativity engine, you need to maintain combustion!

Who can become a member of the Alumni Club?

Anyone who has completed the program of "Kaunas Challenge" and wants to remain an active participant.

What does an Alumni Club need?

Physical space for meetings is very important. The space should be as accessible as possible (in the second half of the day, after school / on weekends), cosy and modern, reflecting the needs of the young people gathering there. Such a space must also have a person in charge from the organization (usually an Alumni Club coordinator) to help young people create their own rules on using the premises and maintaining order. If possible, the space should have:

– Workstations (tables for work with teams / computers).

– Places for informal meetings (a lounge area).

– Coffee / tea available.

– Basic tools for activities (a printer, audio equipment, a projector, a flip chart, tools for crafts, etc.).

– Have your own minimum budget for running costs (acquisition of tools for youth ideas, quality press, paraphernalia or other petty expenditure).

The Alumni Club also needs a clear structure, goals (related to the organization's goals), constant support from the coordinator, communication with partner organizations, and a division of responsibilities – young people need to feel they are the hosts of the Alumni Club.

How is an Alumni Club formed?

At the end of the "Kaunas Challenge" program, we invited all the young people to set up an Alumni Club - they had to produce their own rules of operation, responsibilities and contribute to the activation of the Alumni Club. This is a very good way to develop a sense of responsibility in young people. By creating everything together, young people feel more responsible and involved.

A regular schedule of meetings with members is drafted (once or twice per month) – these meetings serve to strengthen the community as a place for new ideas, discussing projects being developed, fostering initiatives from the youth, and disseminating news from the organization that may be relevant to young people.

The main responsibilities of the Alumni Club are formed – the formal head of the club (the rotation of their "term" is decided together with the members), teams are built which continue their projects and present further plans and needs, and an alumni council is elected. In this regard it is possible to establish a varying degree of responsibility — to discuss with the young people how many and what positions they see are necessary for the functioning of such a club. It is very important for everyone to collectively understand the main task of such a club, which is the continuation cultural projects and promotion of joint cultural activities for young people in the city.

Main responsibilities:

– Alumni Club Leader (brings together the work team).

– Alumni Club Board.

– Alumni Club Communication Team.

– Alumni Club teams (developing specific projects).

– Alumni Club members (joining various projects, generating new ideas).

The Alumni Club becomes a platform for learning about active members and understanding their competences and areas of interest, which allows them to distribute the tasks and involve young people even more actively. It is very important for the coordinator to find the right balance between coordination and the freedom to act for the young people themselves – organically, the Alumni Club should become an organizational structure managed by the young people themselves.

The coordinator must:

– Get to know the members and their competences.

– Assist teams in planning activities.

– Support club activity (organize meetings, form tasks).

– Monitor indicators – implementation of plans and alumni involvement.

The coordinator works with the teams and individual young people to set goals and plan their activities expediently – it is important to give young people an opportunity to contribute to the organization of cultural activities (e.g., to make them responsible for taking care of a specific space at the event; to include in the festival program the proposals of the artists / performers for youth audiences). It is important to keep in mind the development of a sense of community: for this purpose, having individual conversations is worthwhile, as well as organizing activities for members of the Alumni Club only, like competence development activities, etc.

The coordinator must help:

– Discover the possibility of self-realization for every young person involved.

– Help teams to develop and realize their project ideas.

– Involve young people in the activities of the organization of larger extent (festivals, events, presentations, etc.).

– Continue to develop competences. Within three months, it is recommended to implement: at least 1 competence training course, 1 informal meeting, 1 visit to partners or participation in a cultural event.

The coordinator, together with the Alumni Club, must draw up an annual activity plan and set the indicators they want to achieve. For example:

Objectives of the annual plan:

– The Alumni Club develops at least 2 youth projects per year.

– The Alumni Club holds monthly member meetings.

– The Alumni Club provides training at least once in 3 months.

– The Alumni Club participates in the activities of at least 3 cultural organizations per year.

– Alumni Club members organize 5 open events for the youth of the city on topics relevant to them.

– Alumni Club members contribute to the organization of one major event (a festival of the organization and / or partners, a city celebration, a project).

To achieve these goals, monthly plans are discussed with club members, the steps to be implemented are planned, the schedule of training sessions, meetings and events is drafted, and the persons responsible for the implementation of these plans are appointed.

It is important to continue developing the community and fostering a positive atmosphere throughout the process – it is not all about projects, work, and responsibilities. Find the time to stay together, take care of the needs of young people, and try to create a space where they feel safe and not assessed – a relaxed atmosphere builds self-confidence, which gives birth to the best ideas and develops leadership.

Motivational support

It is important to emphasize that all activities at the Alumni Club are voluntary. The youth involved do not receive any pay, so their responsibilities need to be weighed and everyone needs to assess how much quality time they can devote to this activity. The activities must be motivating – alumni experiences must stimulate the growth of the young people's competences and open up opportunities for them to get involved in the city's cultural sector, participate in various initiatives and projects, and even find future employment in the cultural sector.

Here are some examples that might help keep your alumna motivated:

A clear goal

If the youth team sees that the project they are developing has a clear purpose and is valued in the organization and the society, it motivates them to work harder and improve their competences by creating.

A note

The coordinator should set up a system to observe and encourage certain individuals / teams. It is important to be able to enjoy the positive things – to vote on the most active members of the month, new ideas, etc.

(Self)-assessment

Taking a professional look at this period of non-formal education and providing a constructive assessment to have time to discuss overall achievements with the entire Alumni Club.

Events

It is recommended to have a joint activity once a season (summer / autumn / winter / spring) that would unite all members – an alumni camp. Changing the environment, inviting interesting and inspiring speakers, visiting places that are interesting for young people (national parks, exhibition spaces, youth festivals).

Paraphernalia

Together with the youth, create a visual identity (brand) and use it both to communicate about the Alumni Club.

The goal of a coordinator is to understand what motivates young people — for some it may be an opportunity to spend time with their peers, for others it may be an opportunity to participate in an international project and visit a foreign country. All members of the Alumni Club have different personalities, so the ways of motivation should be as responsive as possible to each active young person involved.

Challenges of the Alumni Club

There are many challenges in developing activities that are based on volunteering. To avoid at least some of the problems, the coordinator needs to stay in very close contact with the people with key responsibilities in the club and keep talking about the problems that the club is facing. Quite frequently the youth involved need to be reminded of the goals raised and motivated to pursue their implementation (with informal activities, additional attention, etc.). Talk to the youth involved so that you can understand what would motivate them to stay and continue with their activities.

Here are some examples of how challenges may be addressed:

Self-assessment on whether the projects under development are still relevant to the youth.

General meetings for moderating the conversation and talking openly about any issues that arise. Look for solutions together.

Understanding what hinders team dynamics – are these disagreements between people or differing visions?

Individual interviews will provide an opportunity to better understand personal needs and abilities, to assign tasks to a specific person that they specifically would be interested in.

Interesting, non-standard content and suggestions – try to involve the young people in as many different activities and projects as possible in order to broaden their horizons.

Ability to say goodbye – if toxic behavior is observed, be resolute and bid the member farewell. Constructive evaluation and feedback should help such a person grow in the future.

Young people are a major source of energy and new ideas, but at the same time, they are the ones that demand the most attention during a work process.

The achievements *of the Alumni* CLUB

of "Kaunas 2022", which reflect the growth of the club and the growing youth community, the visibility of the content they create and the added value for the city:

35

70

1

2

4

10

100

160

2017

2018

2019	2020	2021	
110	140	160	Alumni members
5	6	9	Alumni projects
15	20	51	Number of events
350	300	850	Young people involved (participants)

Alumni
Teams

During the entire program, young people at the Alumni Club developed their projects and ideas. Here we give a brief overview of them. These projects illustrate the diversity and creative potential of the "Kaunas 2022" Youth Platform.

Komoda
(Chest of drawers)

The goal of the project is to show Kaunas as a city of trendy people, to educate the residents of the city about the world of fashion and self-expression. During the project, photo sessions are organized in historical buildings interpreting interwar fashion, telling stories of outstanding residents of the city. Once a year, a fashion show is organized in an open space of the city, aimed at emerging young fashion makers.

More info:
IG: _komoda

Puota (Banquet)

The goal of the project is making peo-ple who create poetry get together and to promote their work in non-tradition-al forms. During the project, young people not only organized open events (poetry readings, poetry competitions, slam poetry events), but also provided a platform for many creators to pub-lish their work – they published poems collected through open competitions in public urban spaces (audio tracks in public transport, paintings in cafes), as well as published as many as two publi-cations in the zine format — collecting more than 200 pieces of poetry!

More info:
IG: puota2022

Randai (Scars)

A project that actualizes the expression of emotional trauma using culture and art as a means of therapy. The youth team organized several long-term projects with young people serving sentences in penitentiaries, collected anonymous stories about the emotional "scars" of young people, collaborated with artists to find the most interesting means of how stories could be presented to the public in different forms of art. During the project, photographs, art exhibitions, therapeutic art sessions, discussions were organized.

More info:
IG: _randai

Playing Kaunas

During a game development work-shop, in collaboration with young peo-ple and residents of the city, the project created a board game about Kaunas. During the project, various communi-ties meetings were organized, a board game was developed, and board game culture was promoted. Gaming eve-nings, game tournaments, game de-velopment workshops were held by diverse cultural organizations. The board game was released in the vol-ume of 100 pcs. and distributed to city libraries and young people.

More info:
IG: zaidziam.kauna

Lempa (Lamp)

The objective of the project is to promote the expression of Fluxus ideas and to organize unexpected happenings in the city. The youth that came together during the project implemented a number of the most unexpected ideas – a search for cultural treasures in the city, unexpected celebrations, concerts and exhibitions, night painting sessions. The whole idea of the project was to make room for the implementation of the strangest ideas and bring together the like-minded.

More info:
IG: _lempa

Metafora (Metaphor)

The goal of this project was the promotion of reading among young people. Literary meetings, interviews with writers, reading evenings, and other activities inviting book lovers to get together are the basis of the project idea. During the project, the team collaborated with city libraries, different book authors, and translators.

More info:
IG: metafora_2022

NFTon Kaunas

The idea of the project: to bring togeth-er professionals and creators of dif-ferent fields interested in NFT art and inform the public about this area being developed. During the project, the first NFT art hackathon was organized, dur-ing which professional mentors helped teams delve into the subtleties of cre-ating NFTs. During the hackathon, the teams created the first pieces of their NFTs, which were on display at the ex-hibition.

More info:
facebook.com/nfthon

PDF

– Half-Song Festival. The project objective is developing a platform for popularizing trap / rap music culture. During this project, competitions for young creators are organized, where beginners in the trap / rap music scene performed their songs on stage, with the audience provided the opportunity to decide which artist will perform their work to the end. Performers that are most popular with the audience have the opportunity to perform; teams make music videos during the project; interviews are conducted with the performers, which increase their popularity on social media. The musicians that performed during the project received greater audience support and more social media followers.

More info:
IG: pdf.fest

*Atsipindžiai
(Reflections)*

The aim of the project is to actual-
ize the issues of stereotyping people
and talk more to young people about
the negative effects that stereotypes
cause. By using artistic means during
the project, different stories of people
who faced stereotypes were present-
ed. In the course of the project, various
activities are organized – discussions,
quizzes, night-time conversations and
meetings, exhibitions.

More info:
IG: _atspindziai

Nefonas

A youth initiative intended for pro-
moting the culture of musical improv-
isation in the city and creating young
music bands. In the course of the pro-
ject, performances of these bands
were organized in different areas of
the city. Also, in cooperation with cul-
tural organizations, the culture of jam
sessions was promoted, positioning it
as communication through music im-
provisation.

More info:
IG: nefonas_

AUDRA
Modern
City
Festival

A modern city is not only beautiful streets or modern buildings. It is not glass or concrete. The city needs a stormy, bustling, and youthful culture. Sometimes delicate and sensitive, and sometimes elemental and noisy.

This modern city festival, which we organized in Kaunas from June 29 to July 3, 2022, was an outstanding example of a culture that unites the city. Five days of open and inclusive cultural activities intertwined with musical events, concerts and parties – it is this synergy of activities that accurately revealed the potential of youth of the city.

We were developing the concept of the festival with our partners, the music nightclub "Lizdas", who offered to take care of the musical part of the festival — the variety of performers and genres, and at the same time the concert during the festival impressed even the most demanding music lovers. We created the cultural (day programme) part of the festival together with young people, who were brought together into a team of 7 people called "young curators."

Firstly, the progress toward the conclusion of the youth program quite organically turned into the format of a festival. During the summer we wanted to offer youth audiences a wide range of activities and experiences, and to all those who sought to get to know the city – to present it as European, alive and full of youthful culture. The conceived idea was that such a festival should reflect major themes relevant to young people, involve as many different audiences and partners in the city as possible, offer a broad musical program, and explore undiscovered urban spaces. One of the goals was also the integration of Alumni Club projects into the festival program and the possibility to reach a wider audience.

Through an open call, we selected a youth team whose main competences needed for further work in organizing the festival were quite extensive – an interest in a specific area of art / culture, organizational experience of cultural activities, personal competences (organization, responsibility, creativity), and working in a team. Back in 2021, in the post-pandemic period, we tested the results of teamwork: a weekend-long festival "Per_kūnija," the main goal of which was to enable as many young creators as possible to be seen in the city. During the festival, we defined clear thematic lines that shaped the program.

The main
thematic lines of the
FESTIVAL CONCEPT:

Identity

Communication in non-verbal ways

Psychological well-being

Sustainability

These themes were revealed using different instruments, which all had the principle of co-creation in common. For us, in developing the program, it was very important to interact with the visitor, to engage people into a discussion, and to offer to build together. During the pilot festival, all the projects operating in the Alumni Club organized activities in line with thematic lines. For projects, it was a good incentive to create or develop the available content appropriate for the festival format, an open urban space, or a wider-than-usual audience. The pilot festival "Per_kūnija" drew attention and brought together over 50 different creators, included 5 Alumni Club projects, had impact on public areas of the city, and offered about 30 different activities during the festival weekend. Thematic lines made clear were preserved in our further work.

After the pilot festival, together with a team of young curators, we assessed the lessons learned and decided to continue with the work, significantly increasing the goals we wanted to achieve. We focused on the challenge of creating a five-day festival program, combining it with a musical part curated by partners, offering activities to a significantly larger audience, and involving more local and foreign creators.

Preparations for this larger festival began already in the autumn of the year 2021. We had a schedule of meetings and dedicated every other Thursday night to planning the festival. In particular, each curator developed the concept of their part of the program by resisting a specific thematic line and supplementing it with different, inclusive activities. Having thus put together all the proposals after many discussions, we had the "frame" of the program. We provided several essential elements to the curators as guidelines indicating joint targets on the scale of the festival:

– Thematic lines – part of the program must reflect one of the 5 thematic lines.

– Co-creation or participation element – a part of the program must be inclusive, offer the visitors to actively engage in the festival.

– Audience engagement – activities must be accessible to large numbers of people (50–100 participants) or be repetitive (attendance possibility).

– Young creators: to include at least 5 young creators.

– Local partners or spaces. This program part must involve a local partner or activate a non-traditional space.

– Foreign developers. This part of the program introduces young foreign developers.

– Lingering products – cultural products created during the festival.

Each young curator focused on 5–7 activities that formed their curated part of the program. People working on their curated parts took full care of their implementation, communication with creators / collectives, searching for premises, program content communication, etc. Each young curator also had additional general responsibilities, which included the common issues in organizing a festival:

- Program update and monitoring.
- Collection of information for communication.
- Labelling and visual identity.
- Balancing of the budget and calculation of costs.
- Quantitative indicators and a contact base.
- Foreign guests, coordination of delegations.
- Catering, accommodation needs.
- Volunteer coordination.
- Internal communication.
- Items and equipment logistics.

The distribution of these works, with each young curator having a clear curated part, the structure of the festival program and the specific areas of responsibility activities were highlighted. Further work on the program included technical preparation, updates on and coordination of locations and times, integration of partner proposals into the program, and overall synergy with the musical part. Alumni Club projects were also included in the program, with the task of becoming more open to a wider audience – on its scale, the festival of 2022 was supposed to attract larger masses than the pilot event. This incentive also strongly motivated young people to work and prepare for the program of a city-wide festival, to expand its content, to involve new young people and creators, and to discover new partnerships to reinforce their activities.

As the festival approached, when the program was already approved (about 3 months before the start of the activities), we devoted most of the time together with the young curators to administrative works by organizing contracts with artists and creators, meeting minor needs, receiving and coordinating foreign delegations and creators. We paid particular attention to technical implementation – complex logistics, technical equipment distribution between activities and various locations was a major challenge. Another important aspect is also the fulfilment of the festival's visual identity and integrity. Visual identity and recognizability are important factors in order to give the visitor the feeling that the activities taking place throughout the city are connected into a single festival.

By combining all elements, having prepared well the administrative and technical parts, the final stage was devoted to communication about planned activities. Numerous articles and mentions in the press, different invitations to audiences in video and audio format, and the dissemination of messages in partner channels, social media, official media sources or on outdoor displays; the remaining time before the festival was used to raise awareness.

During the festival itself, the team strictly allocated the days and locations for which it was responsible – each activity had its own supervisor and an assistant (just in case something happens, the co-coordinator could take over the coordination).

So, the five-day festival started on Wednesday with the opening installation, presentations and routes that operated throughout the festival. Thursday was devoted to workshops and virtual activities, music for guests from abroad. Friday, one of the main days of the festival, offered activities in open urban spaces, visits to locations that were never previously opened, and a huge electronic music party lasting until the morning hours. During the day on Saturday, activities moved to the city park, inviting the participants to socialize and share — active sports activities, live concerts, sustainability workshops, and a second night with a party until the morning, was like a test for all savvy festival goers. On Sunday, all the townspeople once again were invited to visit the open exhibitions and installations, discover a space for relaxation, and stay with the community in the city park during the day, while in the evening participants were all invited to a live closing concert with the biggest musical stars. The closing of the festival, even though it was thunderous, offered a very calm end for the five-day festival of culture and music that had turned the city into a large playground of youthful culture.

After the festival, after resting, together with the young curators and partners who implemented the musical part, we had a self-assessment session, during which we were not only delighted with the achievements, but also named the lessons learned. Some of these include a lack of human resources in the implementation of the program, lack of internal communication when delegating tasks, last-minute changes from the suppliers of equipment, etc., which cultivated our ability to manage unforeseen situations.

Achievements
of the
"Audra"
FESTIVAL

50
Activities and events

And here are the achievements that we are delighted to have implemented: the Grand Event of the Youth Season of "Kaunas European Capital of Culture 2022", the modern city festival "Audra":

49
Local partners

60 000
Visitors

35

*International
partners*

262

*Young
professional
creators*

28

*Various
locations*

1 489 183

*The number of people reached
by means of communication*

11

Sponsors

How
to

Informal
activities

Promising ideas, creative solutions, smooth work, and motivated teams are hardly possible if participants attend meetings as lessons and there is no room for fun. Informal activities are a key ingredient for our unique initiatives and functioning community of the "Kaunas Challenge." As you can see, we include hikes, visits, and interactive assignments in the program. We believe that serious and high-quality projects must be a fun process. Informal activities include Christmas parties, visits to cultural organizations, hikes, board games nights, camps, or simply after-school team meetings. Well-built teams tend to continue their projects after the program ends, generate ingenious ideas, and inspire others. Informal meetings help to create a bond that may not otherwise be made during the meetings if only serious project matters are discussed. Informal activities inspire and often start an avalanche of unexpected ideas that becomes very useful for the part of project development.

The participants can organize informal activities themselves — they know best what they want to do and what is fun. Yet do not forget the aspect of adding value when planning fun activities, for the planning of which the following questions will help you:

–   What will the participants take out of the meeting? Will they memorize each other's names, or create a vision for a new project?

–   What is the responsibility of the mentor? The mentor does not have to combine all the groups into perfect teams.

Sometimes in fact not all participants get on well or are interesting to each other. The mentor must make sure that participants can create a safe space and help the teams at the various stages of their work. By the way, some team members may become good friends, but be absolutely unable to work together. The rule here is that we are friends, but at this table we are colleagues. Thus, the mentor navigates through the stages of team development, takes care of the work process, but does not have to interfere with the participants' internal experiences.

How to
facilitate
GROUPS

Practical advice for coordinators on delivering lectures:

How should we start each session?

Recommended structure of lectures.

Communication and creating a bond with pupils.

How to teach?
A learning cycle by David Kolb.

Starting each session

Each lecture has to start from understanding what we have come here for. ABCD1 is one of the methodologies that may help in each lecture:

A – Attention

Before starting the activity, make sure that the pupils' attention is already focused on you as a teacher.
For example: if the session takes place remotely, ask if the participants can hear and see you well. Once most participants reply "yes," you can start the lecture.

B – Benefits

During each session, tell the audience how they will benefit from the lecture.

For example: "In this session, we will learn how to manage our time and set achievable goals." In this case, this information will make your participants interested and will make them get involved in the activity once they perceive why it is important.

C – Credibility

Tell them why it is specifically you who is lecturing on this particular topic. Introduce yourself as an expert on this topic – it will increase your credibility and encourage the participants to get more involved in the lecture.

For example: "Today we will be talking about team building, and I have been lecturing on this topic for five years now. This is a topic that I got interested in and that made me get involved in the training sector. I highly recommend a magazine / webcast / article cycle which you may follow to get access to the latest information on the subject."

D – Direction

Structure the activity well. If you tell at the beginning of the session what / how the students will study today, they will be able to focus and prepare for this properly.

For example: "Today we will have a lecture for one hour after which we will work in groups. Then there will be a break, followed by a quick test to check what you have learned during the lecture. Finally, after the test, we will have a half-hour QA session."

Recommended
structure
OF LECTURES

It is recommended to have lectures for not longer than 3.5 hours; we recommend the following arrangement of lecture time:

20 min introduction (ABCD) / discussion / overview of the previous lecture;

1 hour of theory;

40 min of practical work in groups / individual task + discussion;

20 min break;

30 min of practical work in groups / individual task + discussion;

20 min of QA session mentoring, homework assignment;

20 min for quiz on the today.

Structure of
MEETINGS

*Task allocation
meeting:*

11:00–11:10 Discussion on the plans of the day and the task;

11:10–12:00 Platform presentation;

12:00–12:30 Groups distribute the tasks, short brainstorming session, time for questions;

12:30–13:00 Coffee, conversations about the task with the curator;

13:00–13:30 TEAMWORK Questions, preparation of the first plan;

13:30–14:00 The teams present the direction chosen.

How to
operate
REMOTELY?

The structure of the meetings is similar, but we propose to fit the content in a shorter time. Of course, if it is a theoretical lecture or a seminar, it can take more time, but 2–3 hours at the computer screen can be tedious, and at the same time it can be boring and discourage participants from attending these meetings. Ideas for remote meetings:

–   Turn the cameras on (provided that the participants feel comfortable, as this should be a safe medium) to see the participants' reactions and stay in touch.

–   Don't forget to play.

–   Provide information interactively so that participants are not just listeners but are really involved. Engage them by asking questions, asking for examples or comments, assigning individual or group tasks (for remote programs, see online).

–   The information has to be attractive. Proper illustrations, slides, or video inserts can help capture everyone's attention.

–   Assign responsibilities to participants. Have participants prepare one of the fragments of the training topic and conduct a part of the meeting themselves. Asking them to search for information will let them learn more and feel useful, and other participants will be more engaged listening to the learning content. Participants can also present their group or creative tasks and homework – this way they will all feel the need to be on the same page and will be able to support each other by observing the progress.

–   Invite guests. For remote lectures, guests do not have to come to your city, so use the opportunity to invite any person or celebrity no matter where they are. Sometimes it is also a great financial solution.

Communication
with
PUPILS

Creating a bond with participants

Program coordinators not only facilitate the sessions, but also communicate informally with the participants: FB groups, live, informal meetings.

How to maintain a separation between a "coordinator" in the classroom and a "friend" outside of it?

Connecting with participants is also a matter of the coordinator's personal style. Some want to stay neutral, others want to communicate, even meet after lectures. With that in mind, we have general observations about networking and what we expect from the program coordinator.

The coordinator has to connect with the participant as an adult with an adult. How should this be done? During the lecture you can ask questions "And what do you think / what would you do?" Instead of explaining what the best solution is, you can always ask participants for their personal views. In this way (by asking) you will not only start a dialogue, but also establish a relationship of trust.

The coordinator must draw boundaries. In the context of the program, partici-pants have a very clear time when and to what extent they can communicate with the coordinator. If a participant crosses the line and wants to address the coordinator during the coordinator's free time, the coordinator must clearly communicate when and on what issues they can be contacted. Of course, time after work is already the responsibility of the coordinator.

What should I know about learning? The learning cycle

The principles of learning are perfectly reflected in the circle of the learning cycle by David Kolb. There are four main stages in this learning cycle: concrete experience, reflective observation, active experimentation, and abstract conceptualization.

Concrete experience: what has happened?

For example: I have read a book, attended a seminar.

Reflective observation: how do I see the experience acquired?

For example: how does the content I have heard / seen / read relate to my current experience? How does this enrich my current knowledge, is it contradictory to what I know?

Abstract conceptualization: what conclusions can I draw?

For example: I reflect on a new experience and draw the first conclusions. The information I hear can negate my previous knowledge, so I will follow the updated one.

Active experimentation: what do I do with this experience?

For example: I am trying a new code I have learned; I am applying a new method I have read about.

So that the participants are not only taught, but can also learn, we have to go through a full training / learning cycle. It is also important to assess how many and what tasks / teaching methods we assign to students and how we help them to go through the learning cycle.

Applying David Kolb's
learning cycle methodology
IN CONDUCTING SESSIONS

Practical tasks = new experiences

Create as many opportunities for new experiences as possible in your sessions. This can be done by giving as many practical tasks as possible.

Discussions

Involve participants in discussions. When discussing, give them time to consider their tasks completed and how this fits in with their experience.

Conclusions

Encourage participants to draw conclusions based on their experience. Help them understand how their findings can be applied to new practices.

Many ways of learning

Encourage participants to work in groups (discussing), individually (reflecting, doing practical homework), in a group (sharing ideas). The more options provided and the more exciting the learning process is, the more engaging and ensuring better learning it becomes.

How to *fail?*

The model of this program is based on learning from each other, on learning by doing. It can be stated that it is learning from mistakes. The program consists of two parts: the first challenge for testing, reflection and improvement, and the second part – project development, during which teams apply the acquired knowledge and better understand the specificity of project development and teamwork.

It is important to emphasize that it is important to fail, to err. In times when things are changing fast (fashion, technology, topics), young people may come to sessions with the misconception that everything is quick and easy to implement. During the program, participants face challenges: (non)involvement of the audience, obstacles during the event, (non)engagement of the team, (non)execution of the plan, (over)looking of details, etc. The purpose of the mentor in this part is not to destroy – not to kill – the idea and to help navigate in the process of finding solutions to problems. This learning process is like practicing for real and bigger projects. Only that participants do not learn from textbooks, but from their own experiences in organizing each initiative. Starting from the concept of the idea to implementation and finally – reflection of the process.

Idea – testing – evaluation. You create an idea, try it – whether it works or not, then you evaluate the pros and cons, and refine the idea – then try it, then... etc.

At the same time, the first attempts that failed, like inconveniences during the hike or a failed presentation, help to build stronger teams, develop critical thinking, and creativity that will be useful not only during the program, but also in solving everyday challenges.

The most important thing is to always find time to stop and to allow time for analysis: what has failed, what can be done with it, and what will be next step of the team.

Therefore, we like to use the following methods when developing any project:

The SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, threats, opportunities) method, which encourages critical and objective evaluation of anything – a project, teamwork, or even yourself.

The de Bono hat method, which helps to see our idea from different perspectives; we usually give hats to all participants to put them on and allow the participants to share their useful insights from outside their teams.

The user's journey – before events we encourage to go through the whole course of the event or initiative by walking in the potential user's shoes: what does it feel like, what does the participant see, how engaged they are, what helps, etc. This helps to create a clear experience and find complementary elements to the idea.

What should
a mentor do
TO PREPARE?

Know parts of the project, prepare the meeting content.

Get familiar with the tools.

Prepare for communicating with participants.

Feel as part of the team.

Connect with partners and always have ideas.

Conduct classes.

What if?

The Group is not bonding?

This is often a result of differences in personalities, clash of views, and sometimes simply because the participants do not know each other well enough. You can't know everything that happens in the group, what each member's relationship is, etc. Therefore, you cannot be responsible for the motivation of each participant or even an intra-group conflict. However:

– It is very important to stay calm and address a direct question to the group, for example: "I see the group is not discussing the current issue, what do you think should be discussed to help the whole group get involved?"

– Remember to manage discussions. Your goal is to move on, do not stop at one group, if one issue is not resolved, you can move on by telling that group that they will have to catch up (you have more than one group of participants to work with).

– If the group is still very passive, you can take a break for an informal discussion of the reasons for not engaging with the group. As a result, you can offer the group to take part in joint informal activities, which always make them feel closer to each other and help them get to know each other better, and consequently relax and not be afraid of deeper discussions.

What if someone is not fitting in?

First of all, the participant's motivation is their responsibility in cases where the participant fails to get involved due to a lack of motivation. It is not your goal to motivate individual participants. If the pupil is still shy, this might be useful:

– A lighter format of discussion tasks that is not an open but a more structured discussion. E.g.: "You have 10 minutes for the discussion, after that I want everyone in the group to write three answers, and then add up the repetitive ones."

– You can also distribute the responsibilities so that the person who is less keen to get involved gets more responsibilities, e.g., to present groups' work, etc.

– Frequent rotation of groups can also help to solve this issue, for example: during each session, at least at the beginning of the program, it is very important for everyone to have as many different contacts as possible, so that everyone knows all the members of the group at least a little bit; this will help them feel safer and get more involved in the discussions.

What if someone is being too much?

Some participants may have sharp discussions and be overly active in the group. The reasons for this are usually the wish to show off, demonstrate one's wit, a lack of understanding within the group, and the desire to lead. In this case, it is important to:

- Agree on how much time each participant can talk when facilitating tasks / discussions.

- If a participant's presence has become too strong, you can simply ignore their ideas, e.g.: "Thank you, Jonas, we know you have an opinion, but I want to ask others. What do others think about ...?"

- If the participant expands considerably when speaking, don't be afraid to stop them by asking them to specify the idea, for example: "What was the main idea you wanted to express?"

- If the participant is extremely difficult and cannot be controlled, you can ask the entire group for ways to manage this, for example: "Is everyone interested in this discussion / question, or can we move on?"

- This is important: you are the one who is responsible for the learning process, so you must supervise and moderate discussions to get as many people involved as possible. That is, you have to suppress the excessive activity of some and encourage others.

What if the participants fail maintain their attention / are bored during the lectures?

The coordinator will face a situation where there are very big contrasts between students – having a fair amount of knowledge vs. "not having had to deal with the area being taught at all,"

being more involved and less so. How does the coordinator ensure quality service and make all participants satisfied? Some recommendations:

- The teaching pace: average: do not focus on the slowest or fastest student. Look for ways that are acceptable to the vast majority.

- Tasks. We recommend giving various levels of assignments to keep students of various levels of preparation / technical preparation busy and improving.

- Poor student involvement, reluctance to engage in a dialogue with the coordinator or lecturer (especially when the question needs to be asked while listening to other students).

Recommended solutions:

Pay more attention to teamwork. The team will naturally require everyone to get involved, and the participant will have to give up and start working.

Paying individual attention – intervention. If you see that a participant is bored in more than one lecture, you might just tell that you feel they are not getting involved and ask whether there's a specific reason for that.

Do nothing. Sometimes students that look passive are indeed listening.

Mentoring

Mentoring

Mentoring is the relationship between a mentor and program participants, which helps participants grow individually, develop as a team and develop quality projects. The mentoring of "Kaunas Challenge" includes:

– Individual sessions by the mentor to the pupil, the purpose of which is set by the pupil himself: it can be personal efficiency, a conversation about challenges, questions about the program, potential, emotional state.

– Team-based mentoring sessions — the purpose of these sessions is to help the team communicate and become a team with a common goal, learn to work together, and help develop ideas.

In this program, we learn in a variety of ways: we use peer-to-peer learning, learning in teams, and individual learning. The situation is similar with mentoring – mentoring should be done both individually (if there is a need) and in teams (this is necessary at least at the beginning, even if the team does not state they need it).

Individual mentoring:

Based on questions, listening, rather than advice (unless the group needs specific knowledge / contacts, etc.).

Mentoring sessions can last about 30–60 minutes; they might be discontinued if there is nothing to discuss, and it is not worth making participants talk if they do not want to open up. It is very important not to have preconceptions about what mentoring should be like. Sometimes it is a conversation about a planned project, sometimes it is about releasing stress or a talking about challenges.

Recommended questions for the first mentoring session:

What do you want to talk about today?

What result do you expect from our 30–60 min conversation?

What do you personally want and can do to achieve your goal?

How much does it depend on you and how much on external factors?

How can mentors help you in the context of this program?

What steps do you plan to take before our next interview?

It is recommended to use a variety of coaching techniques during the interviews, if the mentor is experienced; otherwise, open-ended / closed-ended questions, depending on the path you have chosen with the pupil for this mentoring session.

It is recommended to have ± 3 individual sessions during the program:

– It is very likely that not everyone will need these sessions, not everyone will want them.

– It is also likely that the person will only come to one session to see how it goes and will not need to continue.

Group mentoring:

These sessions are different; their purpose is to help groups get started and to eventually achieve their goals, while the role of the mentor can vary, e.g.,

– To check the dynamics of the group – whether everyone hears each other, if everyone is involved, if everyone is moving in the same direction;

– To help with the set goals and expected project results, for example: to help the participants of the project set realistic, achievable goals and to help align them so that the project is not only feasible, but also reflects the values of the program, i.e., to create projects with added value.

Good questions for a group mentoring session:

Do you all feel involved?

Is this idea, this project interesting for everyone, and do you believe in it?

How do you split the responsibilities?

How much time do you spend on informal meetings? Is everyone involved?

Do you have deadlines?

Tools,
that
HELP

to conduct meetings, plan activities, and self-evaluate the ideas of youth projects.

Sli.do
– designed to make sessions interactive and to quickly collect (non)anonymous opinions on the issues raised.

Business model canvas
– for putting ideas on a sheet.

SWOT analysis
– an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities designed to assess yourself, teamwork, or an idea. Helps to visualize and find solutions when something is not working.

Canva
– a convenient platform for creating attractive slide show presentations or any other visual products, like posters or publications.

Stephen Covey's
– work prioritization matrix.

List of
photograph

The five years of co-working in the international project "Kaunas – European Capital of Culture 2022" brought unique experiences of continuous teaching and learning. For competence development, the "Tempo Academy of Culture" programme was established in the framework of the project and was aimed at both specialised training and practical workshops covering such topics as creative freedom, active community, open cultural networking, and sustainable solutions for the city. The tools mastered by the local residents enabled them to fulfil their dreams and create that type of Kaunas and Kaunas district that hundreds of people were dreaming about, bringing the feeling of pride about their local place. We have in mind different communities, active youth, seniors, representatives of cultural institutions and various nations, professionals and enthusiasts of architecture, design, heritage. The lessons learned – both personal and collective – reflect the values that we feel obliged to share with the others: our personal values and the ones shared by the entire Europe. The trilogy of our methodological publications reflects the experiences and achievements gained during the years of our activity. The three publications are dedicated to everyone seeking positive change and caring about their city, their community, and their neighbour.

Other Series Publications:

Community Programme Methodology,
ed. Greta Klimavičiūtė - Minkštimienė,
Aistė Ptašinskaitė - Paukštė, Milda Rutkauskaitė,
Kaunas, 2023, p. 254.

Volunteering Programme Methodology,
ed. Marija Pulokaitė, Kaunas, 2023, p. 164.