

LET'S GO intergenerational!

A COLLECTION OF CASE STUDIES OF INTERGENERATIONAL PRACTICE FROM GERMANY, UK AND POLAND

TERMS OF USING: LICENSING

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This publication was developed within the frame of the two year strategical partnership „Archipelago of Generations” and was funded by the Key Action 2 of the EU-program Erasmus +.

Berlin, Warsaw, Belfast, 2017

INTERGENERATIONAL MENTORING NETWORK

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University of Strathclyde
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LOCATION

Mentoring takes place in 6 secondary schools and two primary schools in Glasgow. A new project is also beginning in Fife.

WHEN DID IT HAPPEN?

The Intergenerational Mentoring Network began in 2010 with 12 volunteer mentors in Springburn Academy, Glasgow to support pupils who were considering going to university. The project now supports around 100 mentoring relationships. In expanding our scope, we have developed a primary school based project again drawing on inter-generational mentoring. 'Help a Child Learn to Read' has been successfully piloted and is currently being developed in primary schools.

WHY DID YOU START THIS PROJECT?

In 2006, our research team based at the School of Education, University of Strathclyde began collaborating with Springburn Academy in Glasgow. The aim of this work was to try and establish interventions that would support young people from the school entering higher education and getting into some of the most competitive professions such as medicine and law.

Some further research with a group of 28 of the highest achieving pupils at the school, aged 15-16 years old, indicated that these young people had narrow social networks in terms of access to others with experience of higher education, the professions or highly skilled employment.

A key dimension of the project has been to draw on the experience and knowledge of older adults and particularly retirees who form the majority of our mentors. In matching young people with a mentor it was anticipated that:

- Young people would benefit from access to people who could expand and strengthen their social networks, and to enhance their personal, social and educational growth.
- That there would be an increase in the overall number of young people from participating schools in disadvantaged areas of Glasgow that progress into higher education and particularly those highly competitive degree courses that lead into the professions.

- That the project would provide opportunities for older adults to engage with young people and contribute to the overall project development.

PARTICIPANTS

IMN currently supports 70 mentors delivering mentoring support to around 100 young people. With the project now in its 7th year, some mentors and students/ graduates are also still in touch and meeting regularly.

Young people are identified by school staff and are given the opportunity to meet with a mentor.

Mentors have been recruited through a variety of streams including the Centre for Lifelong learning at the University of Strathclyde, the university alumni and local press.

ACTIVITIES

Young people (aged 15-16 years old) are offered the opportunity to engage in weekly one-to-one mentoring by receiving academic, social and personal support from a volunteer mentor as they prepare for their Higher examinations and plan their future careers.

Through an examination of the mentoring process, we ask mentors to feedback on weekly meetings. The project has developed iteratively, with learning and overall project design responding to the needs of participants. We have developed a website which contains case studies and resources which support mentors.

The website has also been designed as a recruitment tool.

REFLECTIONS

At the beginning of the project we knew that young people needed very practical support in terms of their academic work and the process of applying to university. As the project has progressed, we have come to understand the value of a more mentoring based relationship offering not just support in these practical areas but, more importantly, very personal encouragement and emotional support at what can be a stressful and confusing time for young people as they plan their futures.

- Intergenerational mentoring provides a supportive relationship in which the young people gain knowledge, understanding and confidence.
- In parallel we have discovered the fulfilment that our volunteers experience in their role as mentor. Many have told us how rewarding and exciting they have found the project and how they have enjoyed the opportunity to get to know and support a young person.
- The intergenerational mentoring programme enables young people to meet and get to know older people from outside their local communities that they would otherwise not have the opportunity to meet and get to know. As the project is now growing we are keen to look at ways to encourage a more community based dimension to the project enabling young people and mentors to meet and engage with each other within their own school and between schools creating wider networks of support.
- Intergenerational mentoring offers a very promising way to support young people across different communities. Equally it offers older adults a mechanism for engaging with young people outside of their own community and networks.

FUNDING

Initial start-up funding came from the Centre for Lifelong Learning at the University of Strathclyde and Glasgow City Council. This was followed by a substantive 3 year project funded by the Big Lottery.

OUTPUTS

We have a project website, four academic research publications and we also have a film about the mentoring project. (See <http://www.intergenerationalmentoring.com/>)

WHAT ABOUT NOW?

The project is currently being established as a social enterprise which can attract funding to sustain this work. As well as supporting mentors in our existing projects, we are currently supporting the development of new projects.



INTERGENERATIONAL ENCOUNTERS

Organisation: Generation Bridge Germany
("Generationsbrücke Deutschland")
Rollefstr.4
D-52078 Aachen

Website: www.generationsbruecke-deutschland.de
Contact person: Holger Schmidtke
schmidtke@generationsbruecke-deutschland.de

LOCATION

Aachen-Brandt Marienheim
Berlin: John-F.-Kennedy School (JFKS)

WHEN DID IT HAPPEN?

2009 was the year of foundation in Aachen.
2012 was the project start at JFKS together with the retirement home "Arche" in Zehlendorf.

WHY DID YOU START THIS PROJECT?

We are moved by the idea of bringing children and adults together in retirement homes. The aim is to bring generations closer together which do not encounter each other anymore in our society. This is our answer to the demographic change in our society.

PARTICIPANTS

At JFKS all students of the 4th grade visit a retirement home in their proximity once a month and engage in an active encounter with the seniors. At the beginning of the school year the students get prepared for the encounter. At the end of the school year we conduct a farewell activity which includes a thank you gesture from both sides and a handover of certificates.

ACTIVITIES

The meetings have a set time and activity frame. This includes songs, a physical activity and an activity for the respective pairs (student and senior). A handbook with diverse methods is available for the employees.

REFLECTIONS

We have been conducting the encounters between the 4th-graders and the residents of the senior homes for 5 years. Approximately 600 students were able to make such an experience within that time.

The employees, nurturers and educators learnt about our concept and how to introduce it into their daily work routine in advanced trainings.

FUNDING

At the beginning of the project we needed to raise the money for the advanced trainings. During the encounters we needed some additional funds for consumables (pens, glue, paper, etc.). The retirement homes made money available for such purposes. Additionally, we asked for donations from parents and relatives who wanted to support our work.

OUTPUTS

You can find movies on youtube when you enter "Generationsbrücke Deutschland".

Furthermore, there is a book by Rocco Thiede:

„Die Generationsbrücke, Wie das miteinander von Alt und Jung gelingt“ herder, 2016
("How the togetherness of old and young will be a success")

Additionally, there are articles in newspapers. You can find them on our website.

WHAT ABOUT NOW?

In 2016, the Protestant- Lutheran community in Wroclaw became our cooperation partner. Since then, 6 additional partners have joined who now practice the generation bridges in their homes.

Several times a year, we offer advanced trainings in Berlin and in other places in Germany. Once a year the practitioners meet each other in a symposium to further educate themselves and to exchange experiences and knowledge with each other.



AN AGE-FRIENDLY SCHOOL PROJECT

Organisation: Linking Generations Northern Ireland
(Beth Johnson Foundation)

43-45 Frances Street
Newtownards
County Down
BT23 7DX

Website: www.linkinggenerationsni.com
Contact person: Lynn Johnston lynn.johnston@bjf.org.uk

LOCATION

Belfast, Northern Ireland

WHEN DID IT HAPPEN?

This project ran from April 2014 to January 2015.
The school involved has continued to engage with local older people's groups.

WHY DID YOU START THIS PROJECT?

We were engaged with the Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership in Belfast and they had funding to promote Age-friendly activity in the city. As intergenerational practitioners, we wanted to make the point that in order to have an age-friendly community, we need to build more positive relationships between generations. We wanted to work with a youth-focussed group and we met with the Acting Principal of Cregagh Primary School (age 4 to 11yrs) who expressed an interest in building the project with his pupils.

The objectives were to:

- Work with local services to identify and support older people at risk of social isolation through a partnership with Cregagh Primary School and Cregagh Community Association
- Raise awareness and build capacity about social isolation, older people and the age-friendly movement through discussions between generations
- Engage and support older and younger people to become more connected

PARTICIPANTS

We worked with 29 children who were P5 (aged 8 or 9) at the start of the project and were P6 (aged 9 or 10) at the end. We engaged 35 older people from Cregagh Community Association. We recruited participants by asking for volunteers who wanted to get involved and hosting a workshop to build age awareness and talk about our work.

ACTIVITIES

We had an initial meeting with everyone together to help to build a programme of activities, so that everyone had an input and the project was led by participants. The group decided to meet each month and took part in the following activities: planning day, physical activity, lunch and bingo, creative IT sessions, 3 x drama/performance sessions, Christmas party, final celebration event.

We used existing resources from other community services available locally and paid some specialist facilitators when necessary but we were able to use the skills of school staff and community members at very low or no cost to the project.

REFLECTIONS

The outcomes were:

- Increased societal engagement between older and younger people
- Older participants reported increased feelings of community and social inclusion
- Older and younger people reported more positive perceptions/attitudes towards other age groups
- Creation of a good practice example in building age-friendly environments

FUNDING

The project received just under £8000 sterling from the Belfast Health Development Unit via the Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership under their Age-friendly: Reducing Social Isolation grant scheme in 2014.

OUTPUTS

We produced a report about the project which we have used to promote our ideas about engaging young people in Age-friendly activities. It is called 'An Age-friendly School Project Report Cregagh Community' and can be found on our website.

WHAT ABOUT NOW?

Cregagh Community Association and Cregagh Primary School continue to have links and local older people are welcomed in to the school during the year.

Following on from this project, Cregagh Community Association got some funding from Belfast City Council to create a project where local older people joined up with the youth club (ages between 10 and 17) to build more positive relationships.



RADIO TO IPAD

Organisation: The Józefa Bergelówna
Municipal Public Library
ul. Szkolna 43
32-410, Dobczyce, Poland

Website: <http://www.biblioteka.dobczyce.pl/>

Contact person: Paweł Piwowarczyk
Tel / Fax: 0048 12 271 10 74, pawelpiwowarczyk@tlen.pl

LOCATION

Dobczyce is a town in the Lesser Poland Voivodeship in Poland. It has approx. 6500 inhabitants.

WHEN DID IT HAPPEN?

The classes were organised over a period of 10 months – September 2014 – June 2015. These were our first intergenerational workshops at the library. New intergenerational activities supported by the Library grew from this project.

WHY DID YOU START THIS PROJECT?

Ryszard Dulski is passionate about technology. When he retired he moved from Kraków to Dobczyce. He wanted to remain active. He approached the local library with an idea to organise an exhibition of his extensive collection of old radio receivers. He also wanted to share his knowledge. – When I retired I settled in Dobczyce and I wanted to offer “something” to the place that became my home. The young generation was particularly important to me – says Mr. Dulski. And so, together with Paweł Piwowarski, the director of the Library, they came up with intergenerational radio-making workshops.

It was important for Mr. Piwowarski to make the library premises a meeting place for the townspeople, so that they could use the space and equipment, develop their passions and engage others into action. Mr. Dulski’s idea was a perfect fit with the goals of the Library.

PARTICIPANTS

The project was popular. We had 28 applicants aged from 5 to 75. The organisers thought that only boys would be interested. It turned out that girls, too, are keen on handiwork. Parents and grandparents wanted to participate, as well. The call for applications was open during the radio exhibition and lectures by Mr. Dulski. It was also announced on the local media.

ACTIVITIES

The activities were initiated with an exhibition of radios from Mr. Dulski’s collection and his lecture. The exhibition was so popular, that it was extended from 1 month to 2 months and the number of lectures grew to around a dozen. Participants met during weekly

workshops, once a week, on Saturday. Young people built their own radios with the support of a group of elderly men and parents. The intergenerational group soldered, worked with condensers and resistors. The moment of constructing casing for each radio was important. There were as many ideas as participants – from an old clock to a vintage casket, a remote-controlled car, a music box and even a painting.

During the meetings older gentlemen shared their experiences and memories related to the use of radio receivers. They motivated to work, helped in overcoming difficulties and made sure everyone used all machines in a safe way.

There was a number of issues – Mr. Dulski says – once a 12-year-old boy started to cry. I approached him. We left the room and started talking. It turned out he didn't know how to do something. I told him that on such occasions he can let me know and we will do these things together. And so we did. His radio was very neat and inventive. In his life he will meet many difficulties. But from now on he won't break down when he faces them.

Soon the situation was turned around and young people became experts. They shared their knowledge about the latest communication devices – cell phones, tablets and iPads.

The project was concluded with an exhibition of radio receivers built by our participants. The exhibition took place at the local library, but also at the regional library in Krakow. A special publication was created, where each participant describes his or her idea and feelings related to the project. There are many photos in this album.

REFLECTIONS:

Attracting elderly men to the Library was our success in this project. Before the project they rarely participated in our events. The project led to the creation of an informal group of technology lovers and it encouraged more intergenerational undertakings.

Children had contact with physics and technology in an out-of-school environment. Building a radio receiver from scratch gave them the feeling of ability and convinced them that technology is not that complicated. Experimenting is a good idea. Maybe some of the young people will be encouraged to develop their engineering skills.

Working together, drilling etc. let kids and parents look at one another from a new point of view. They could be close in action, in problem solving and in celebrating success.

Young people now don't know that every device available in stores can be made on our own – Mr. Dulski stresses. They don't get the opportunity to uncover their possibilities and creativity in the realm of technology, as they have no contact with communities that could inspire them in that direction. School doesn't do it. They only see ready mades. So we have this dream-slogan around here: "polytechnicisation at the library".

If someone wants to learn about technology, you cannot use jargon with them, but approachable, even witty language instead. Otherwise we build a chasm. Nobody wants to listen and participants resign.

Setting a clear goal is also crucial for workshops that last many weeks: a goal of making something concrete as a result of all this DIY. And that this "something" will play. Then the group strives for the final result. A friendly atmosphere and sharing ideas is also

important. Now when our older participants meet school age participants at the library, they always have a chat. A bond has developed between our participants.

FUNDING

The project received financial support of the Association of Creative Initiatives “e” and the Polish-American Freedom Foundation within the framework “Seniors in Action”.

OUTPUTS

A publication summarizing the workshop and a film prepared by participants.

WHAT ABOUT NOW?

A group of elderly technology lovers was established. They meet and initiate new activities. One of them was to renovate an old railway model donated by one of the seniors. Schoolchildren and adults participated in this project. Another undertaking was a series of intergenerational workshops and film shows.



SONGS OF GENERATIONS

Organisation: Kreisau-Initiative e.V.
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LOCATION

Kreisau / Krzyżowa (Poland)

WHEN DID IT HAPPEN?

Since 2009 Kreisau-Initiative has conducted this project as an international encounter of people of all ages. The project took place once a year until 2016.

WHY DID YOU START THIS PROJECT?

By opening up our international encounters and welcoming people of all ages, we would like to contribute to a fair and balanced dialogue of generations in Europe. We think this is necessary due to current challenges, which came about with the demographic development in aging Europe. Only when people of all ages act together they will be able to create a good future for everyone. Using the unique learning opportunity of an international short-term project, we foster intergenerational dialogue in Poland and Germany.

PARTICIPANTS

Every project consists of about 24 participants of all ages coming from Germany and Poland. They were recruited by an open call, representing various milieus in both countries.

ACTIVITIES

Participants meet once for five intense days in the international youth meeting centre in Kreisau / Krzyżowa (Poland).

During the workshop participants are invited to discuss the meaning of music in their personal lives and to share memories of different melodies, which are connected to their own biography. They also deal with the role of music as a medium of social protest, change and opposition against totalitarian regimes. The programme contains many different workshops and methods, e.g. "Musical Life Line", a workshop on Adultism and Ageism, or interactive discussions of the terms "generations" and "intergenerational dialogue". Everyone has the chance to engage fully in the workshops as the selected methods of non-formal education heavily rely on active participation. This enables authentic international and intergenerational dialogue.

REFLECTIONS

Music is a perfect medium for an intense intergenerational dialogue as it is fun, connects people and enables us to communicate without words. Everybody has his/her favourite song, regardless of age.

Music is also quite suitable to discuss social issues, as tunes very often represent the time in which they have been written. Some of them are strongly connected to political movements (for example).

International short-term projects offer a perfect space to practice intergenerational dialogue, reflect age-based stereotypes (Adulthood, Ageism) and discuss the role of "age" in German and Polish societies.

Recruitment of participants was much easier in the older age groups. There should be a differentiated search for participants using different languages. The setting is multi-layered and quite complex, as besides the category of "age", the categories "nation" and "gender" came into play, as well. All aspects should be treated as interlinked, therefore, well-trained facilitators are needed.

FUNDING

Even though funding was a difficult issue (because of the project's combined intergenerational and international nature), ultimately, we were able to generate different funds for the project. These were:

- Freya von Moltke Foundation for the New Kreisau (<http://www.fvms.de/en/welcome.html>)
- Citizenship-Programme of the European Commission (http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/europe-for-citizens_en)
- German-Polish Youth Office (<http://www.dpjw.de>)

OUTPUTS

In 2009 we produced a publication to disseminate the project idea. Please contact Kreisau-Initiative e.V. for an online-version.

WHAT ABOUT NOW?

In 2013, we combined the fields "Education for Sustainable Development" and "Dialogue of Generations", as the question of sustainability of a society necessarily entails the question of intergenerational justice, as well. Therefore, we continue to offer regular international projects for people of all ages which are conducted in Kreisau / Krzyżowa.



INTERGENERATIONAL DANCING

Organisation: Intergenerational Dancing
<https://www.facebook.com/dancingmiedzypokoleniowy/>
<https://www.instagram.com/dancingmiedzypokoleniowy/>

Contact person: Paulina Braun
paulinabraun@gmail.com, tel. +48 507291154

LOCATION

Warsaw and other Polish towns: Sopot, Gdańsk, Wrocław, Katowice, Opole

WHEN DID IT HAPPEN?

The first Intergenerational Dancing took place in Warsaw in 2011 at Rozdroże Square. The UFO landed by the fountain located there (Unexpected Fountain Occupation) – a dozen international artists, architects and designers took control of the fountain (out of service at that time) and built an artistic installation – a mixture of a club, hostel and relaxation space. Paulina Braun is a cultural animator. She was invited to animate this space and to draw local people to the UFO. Youngsters and seniors dancing together was one of her suggestions and it turned out very successful. Intergenerational Dancing parties are still organised in Warsaw and in other towns.

WHY DID YOU START THIS PROJECT?

The Intergenerational Dancing is aimed at breaking stereotypes related to our perception of old age, at fighting social exclusion of the elderly, at bringing generations together. It teaches tolerance and courage. It inspires people to develop their passions regardless of age. One of the project's important goals is also creating jobs for the elderly which leads to improving the quality of their lives.

PARTICIPANTS

Seniors, including those lonely and living alone, who are looking for social space where they can spend time with their peers and with young people; young people who spend free time in music clubs and are open to conversations with seniors.

The seed community of Intergenerational Dancing was that of seniors attending DJ Wika's dancing events as well as Paulina's personal relations with seniors. With time, as the group started to attend trendy youth music clubs, a trend emerged among young people and seniors alike, to have intergenerational fun. New participants learned about the events from the media and through the grapevine.

ACTIVITIES

Intergenerational Dancing parties are organised in popular clubs. Seniors and young people spend time together – usually it's from 100 to 250 people. Our oldest participants were over 90. We also encourage home parties, low-key dancing parties in the homes of our seniors.

Our events create space for collaboration between younger and older DJs. DJ Wika, a senior who only used to play at dancing events for seniors, became part of the project at the very beginning. This collaboration is crucial. Wika became the face of the project, and a resident of Intergenerational Dancing. Paulina Braun also initiated another project, the Senior DJs Academy, where Paulina and young DJs conduct workshops for senior DJs, who then take part in the dancing parties. Seniors bought laptops, installed music mixing software and try their hand at DJing. They play popular Polish songs from the time of their youth but they also search and experiment.

There is also the Senior Casting Agency operating based on the Intergenerational Dancing community. Film producers are encouraged to engage seniors as extras and actors, as well as to rent their apartments for film locations. Invitations to other towns soon followed – Paulina and senior DJs were invited to organise Intergenerational Dancing parties there and to show how to organise such events. Paulina Braun wants to develop into the stage of granting licenses to organisations and institutions from other cities so that they can organise Intergenerational Dancing parties. She plans on spreading her activities outside Poland as well.

REFLECTIONS

Young people say that thanks to the project they could meet many seniors who don't just talk about medicines and illnesses, but who lead normal lives. Young people stopped being afraid of old age – says Paulina Braun.

“Seniors have more courage in entering the world of the young. And vice versa. The fashion for intergenerational events grows from the debris of stereotypes” WPROST weekly magazine.

The parties motivate seniors to be active. They often have cancer, diabetes, have undergone coronary bypass surgeries or suffer from 5 problems at the same time, but they always try to get to the party, go to the radio interview or attend a meeting in order to plan another event. A community of regular participants has emerged – they support one another in trouble, in sickness and in a poor state of being.

In Poland seniors enjoy little space for an interesting life, there are few role models – and yet there is so much more to life than just taking care of grandchildren and sipping tea at the senior club. Intergenerational Dancing parties inspire and show that they can keep learning and growing. The project could not have succeeded without the engagement and visibility of seniors. Promoting senior celebrities is crucial. The project has a VIP group – they are the forerunners of the lifestyle of a cool, trendy and courageous senior.

The use of social media is very important, just as encouraging seniors to using new technologies. Thanks to the internet, social networking sites, and smartphones, seniors get to know new people, find new hobbies and workshops. That broadens the influence of the project and helps us reach young people effectively.

FUNDING

Currently Intergenerational Dancing parties don't receive any funding. The project develops its business relations. In 2014 Paulina Braun received the scholarship of the Ministry of Culture to develop InterGenerational Dancing.

OUTPUTS

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFAPAqoWYsvE77jyLvGaGaQ>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rg4oXwkqmdw>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ACiBGCoX5CY>
<http://swiatsiekreci.vod.tvp.pl/23747388/dancing-miedzypokoleniowy>

WHAT ABOUT NOW?

Paulina, the founder of the project, would love it to operate as a social enterprise, to create jobs and acquire funds for its activities. She is currently developing this idea at the Academic Business Incubator.



CELEBRATING AGE

Organisation: Linking Generations Northern Ireland
(Beth Johnson Foundation)
43-45 Frances Street, Newtownards BT23 7DX

Website: www.linkinggenerationsni.com

Contact person: Lynn Johnston
lynn.johnston@bjf.org.uk 02891813022

LOCATION

Across Northern Ireland

WHEN DID IT HAPPEN?

Each year in April since 2014. In 2014, 2015 and 2016, we were celebrating EU day of Solidarity between Generations (29th April). In 2017, given the forthcoming Brexit, we rebranded the project as #allagesapril

WHY DID YOU START THIS PROJECT?

We wanted to celebrate 29th April, EU day of Solidarity between Generations, encourage generations to come together and promote our work across NI

PARTICIPANTS

In 2014, we had 29 projects and approx. 600 participants. In 2015 we had 38 projects with 1573 participants. In 2016 we had 34 projects and 1199 participants and this year (2017) we had 49 projects which engaged 3050 participants.

We used our contact list and social media and community connections to promote the project. We asked people to join us to celebrate age in April by organising an event or activity in their community/workplace/school which brings generations together for fun.

ACTIVITIES

We offered grants of up to £150 per group so that they could do so. Groups had to apply for the grant using a simple form and then we communicated with each group thereafter to monitor their activity and provide as much support as we could.

Over the 4 years, there have been 150 separate events/activities organised by groups and organisations all across Northern Ireland. These groups spoke to their participants and decided what activity to plan. As a result, the events included lots of arts based activity such as dancing, drama, singing and crafts. Lots of people hosted parties and grandparent days in schools and sporting activity was also popular. The grant required the intergenerational engagement to be just one event. We were delighted that many groups choose to organise more than one session.

REFLECTIONS

In the past 3 years, we gathered information from almost 1500 participants. On average, over 90% of them stated that taking part made them feel better connected to their neighbours and more included in their community. Over 90% also stated they thought it was important that people of all ages have opportunities to come together.

Each year we have delivered this project, we have learned how to do it more effectively. We started giving out bigger sums of money but discovered the smaller amount encouraged those groups who do not usually apply for funding, to do so.

We streamlined the application process and created better systems of communication and monitoring through our experience of delivery.

We are happy to put trust in the skills of others to deliver projects. Each year we are inspired at the creativity and enthusiasm of the volunteers who organise and deliver the activities which bring generations together to celebrate age.

FUNDING

In 2014 we used funding that we had through a core funder of our work, The Atlantic Philanthropies. In 2015 we secured funding from the Public Health Agency in Northern Ireland, on the basis that this project would help to alleviate loneliness and social isolation amongst older people. The project cost approx. £15,000 in 2015 and 2016 and then we expanded it in 2017 and secured approx. £20,000 from the same source.

OUTPUTS

There are annual reports and evaluations for each year since 2015 and videos to show what people did on our website.

WHAT ABOUT NOW?

On average, 95% of the project leaders stated that they used their experiences to inform other work they do and over 98% stated they had developed a lasting relationship with participants.

Every group which applied for a small grant to celebrate age was added to our contact list, meaning that our reach across Northern Ireland grows, enabling us to communicate our vision of a 'Northern Ireland where generations are respected, understood, connected and engaged together in their communities'.



COCKTAILS IN CARE HOMES

Organisation: Magic Me
18 Victoria Park Square,
London, E2 9PF

Website: <https://cocktails.magicme.co.uk/>
<https://magicme.co.uk/>

Contact person: Phoebe Grudzinskas,
Cocktails in Care Homes Project Manager
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LOCATION

In care homes and extra care schemes in six London Boroughs – Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Southwark, Islington, Westminster and Camden.

WHEN DID IT HAPPEN?

Began in 2010 and is an ongoing project.

WHY DID YOU START THIS PROJECT?

Evenings are the loneliest part of the day, care home residents told us, as there are very few visitors or activities. In 2010, we piloted CiCH in three homes in Tower Hamlets that Magic Me were already working with and now we are in 10 homes across five London boroughs.

The aim of the project is to combat social isolation of older people, boosting their self-confidence and activity levels. We want to connect care homes with the wider community. We engage and train young adult volunteers with the aim of building their understanding and awareness of the needs of people with dementia.

PARTICIPANTS

Participants are residents of the care homes and extra care schemes.

Volunteers come to us via our website, we also have partnerships with various corporates, such as, EY, Clifford Chance, Bank of England and Schroders. Each volunteer has to do an induction where we introduce the project and give basic training in communication and dementia.

In 2016/17 we delivered 98 cocktail parties, with 332 residents and 281 volunteers attending.

ACTIVITIES

We run Cocktails parties every month in each care home, excluding the month of August. Each party has two Volunteer Party Managers who host and support the volunteers and residents.

The parties run on a Wednesday or Thursday evening from 6 – 7.30 pm.

We decorate the room the party is in to transform the space and put music on. We supply drinks and snacks and the Volunteer Party Managers serve the residents and volunteers. Sometimes we have games, such as, jenga or dominoes. In the past few months, we have had a volunteer theme each party using donations from visual merchandisers and high street shops – British Sea Side, Summer Fun Fair and Spring Tea Party.

REFLECTIONS

Our resident participants enjoy new faces and change in the homes or schemes, they look forward to the parties and family members join in the parties too. One family member said “It’s like going to the pub with my dad again.” One resident said, “I have not worn lipstick in 7 years and I now I have a reason to.” Another resident said, “Fantastic experience, made you realise there was still a world out there.”

For our volunteers there is an increased understanding of ageing, dementia, care homes and extra care schemes. Volunteers also feel more connected to their community, whether it’s the wider volunteer network or the residents in the homes and schemes.

One regular volunteer said, “I feel involved with my community in a much wider sense, and connected to the other volunteers that care about tackling social isolation and caring for older members of our community.”

With Cocktails, I feel we are constantly learning lessons. Each care home and extra care scheme is very different. Each one needs a different approach in how to work with them. Patience is the key.

With the project itself, we are working on volunteer retention, hoping to streamline our sign up and keep volunteers coming back. We are doing this by giving more details about the homes on the sign up page and in the inductions. We ask for feedback from our volunteers a lot to make their volunteer experience better.

Theming the parties has been a great success over the past few months. Having different props and decorations are great tools for communication. For example, at the British Seaside parties we had postcards which facilitated many conversations about holidays and different countries.

FUNDING

Yes, we have. We are funded by grants, trusts, foundations and individual donors – People’s Postcode Lottery, The Headley Trust, The Henry Smith Charity and The ExPat Foundation.

OUTPUTS

We have our website which is cocktails.magicme.co.uk where you will find our video.

WHAT ABOUT NOW?

Cocktails is an ongoing project. For 2017/18 we are expanding to new homes – 2 new homes in Camden and 1 new in Hammersmith & Fulham. We are also looking at 3 more new homes in Westminster, Lewisham and Lambeth.

OFFENSIVES ALTERN E.V INTERGENERATIONAL HOUSING PROJECT FOR WOMEN

Organisation: Offensives Altern e.V.
Ortolanweg 88, 12359 , Berlin

Website: <http://offensives-altern.de/>

Contact person: Maike Lino info@offensives-altern.de

LOCATION

Berlin

WHEN DID IT HAPPEN?

In May 1999 the first women and children moved in but it started long before that: The idea of women of all ages living together emerged in the beginning of the 1980s by a group of older women in a community centre for women in Berlin-Kreuzberg. They decided to find a suitable building or to build one. It took nearly 20 years to realize that dream – in cooperation with a big communal housing corporation a new house was built. The project is continuing till today.

WHY DID YOU START THIS PROJECT?

Of course the women who have been living here over the years have very different reasons to initiate an intergenerational housing project or to live in it today – so there are a lot of voices on what can be achieved or changed. Some of them are:

- to live together with other women as an alternative to traditional family structures. This can help to counter the isolation and difficulties both younger (especially single mothers) and older women face in their lives.
- to form a community of mutual help in all circumstances, in which women interact tolerantly and openly with each other.
- to strengthen this community by common leisure activities, such as regular house meetings, celebrations and trips and weekly activities such as cooking together, yoga, reading books together or painting
- to further include in all these activities the people from the neighbourhood.

PARTICIPANTS

Throughout the years a lot of different women lived in the project or supported it in many ways. In 2017, there are 27 adult women and 7 children with an age range of 1-87 that are living in the housing project.

ACTIVITIES

Every one of us has their own flat with a balcony.
We share a garden, some common rooms, an elevator and two postal codes.
Whoever wants to, is taking care of a spot in the garden.
We romp around the garden, we argue with each other, we celebrate, because we are in the age of 1 or 87 – or in between age.
We are women and we like to be women.
We like to bring together people and meet new people. We also love men. And turtles.
We are of different ages, we are thick or thin, we have smaller or bigger noses.
We use walking frames, bikes or information highways.
We meet each other, we work in the garden, we read, we cook and eat, we travel.
In fact, eating together is our big passion. Chocolate is the currency.

REFLECTIONS

Sometimes we really love to live together. Sometimes it is really annoying.
Sometimes it is completely normal – that is life!

FUNDING

The house is part of the communal housing corporation “Berliner Bau - und Wohnungsgenossenschaft von 1892 eG “. The house was built by public funding in the context of council housing – the flats were to be given to women with lower income.

OUTPUTS

In 2000, there was a publication about the first year of living together published by the housing corporation. Now, from time to time there are articles about us in the press or a documentation on television. Most recently, we were interviewed and mentioned in the publication “Annerose Siek, Weiberwirtschaften (Gemeinschaftlich wohnen und leben auch im Alter)”, published by ueberreuter-Verlag in 2014. Every year we have a summer fete for the neighbourhood and the public and in the last years we organized two exhibitions of our painting group. We also have a homepage (see above).

WHAT ABOUT NOW?

Yes, the project is going on – we are still living together and learning from each other.



AGE COLLABORATIVE NETWORK

Organisation: Business in the Community
Northern Ireland Bridge House
Paulett Avenue, Belfast, BT5 4HD

Website: www.bitcni.org.uk
Contact details (tel/email): 02890460606
deborah.mcconnell@bitcni.org.uk
Contact person: Deborah McConnell

LOCATION

Northern Ireland (NI)

WHEN DID IT HAPPEN?

June 2016 to March 2017 with view to initiating actions based on the outcome report

WHY DID YOU START THIS PROJECT?

- Need identified due to issues such as; people living longer and wanting/needing to work longer, default retirement age being removed, change in skills required for work and our ability to work as we age.
- We brought together a wide range of businesses from the public and private sector and other stakeholder organisations to discuss the issues and potential solutions.

PARTICIPANTS

Representatives from a wide range of businesses and organisations including community voluntary. Including: Belfast Health & Social Care Trust, First Source Solutions (lead), Belfast City Council, Linking Generations NI, Business the Community, Invest NI, Labour Relations agency, Greiner Packaging, Survitec, Pricewaterhouse Coopers, Ulster University, Police Service of Northern Ireland, NI Housing Executive, Age NI, Bank of Ireland, Addiction NI.

These were recruited through linkages with existing contacts and also through promotion on website, social media and email.

ACTIVITIES

Facilitator recruited to manage the process.

Participants came together as a network over 6 meetings.

Each meeting best practice shared, discussion facilitated and external speakers invited. From discussions key issues relating to ageing workplaces were agreed and sub groups met to discuss solutions.

Final report completed with recommended solutions, actions and projects.

REFLECTIONS

The outcome of this project culminated in a report which has provided recommendations and actions for solutions based on feedback from those involved and wider research.

The purpose of this network approach was to provide an opportunity to discuss the current and real issues faced. The recommendations for action have provided a framework for ongoing work.

FUNDING

Funding came from the Invest NI collaborative network programme which paid for a facilitator.

Participants gave their time in kind to match this.

OUTPUTS

The report is the output which gives recommendations for actions; this process is ongoing.

WHAT ABOUT NOW

One of the recommendations within the report as a solution was to develop an inter-generational vice versa mentoring programme teaming up older and younger workers. LGNI hope to lead on this piece of work and are currently working with the network members to access funding support for this.



PICTURES OF OLD AGE

Organisation: Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth
Glinkastraße 24, 10117 Berlin

Website: <http://www.programm-altersbilder.de>

Contact person: Thomas Bosch 0049-30-18555-0, info@bmfsfsj-service.bund.de

LOCATION

Nationwide programme of Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

WHEN DID IT HAPPEN?

It was started in January 2015 and is still ongoing.

WHY DID YOU START THIS PROJECT?

The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth would like to foster and mainstream realistic and diverse pictures of old age and ageing in the German society. That means discussing the effects of different perceptions of old age in different life spheres, sensitising stakeholders to potential negative effects of some perceptions.

PARTICIPANTS

The website functions as a central resource for gathering information, launching campaigns and fostering discussion on a nationwide level. Everybody can be part of a potential target group, as the whole resource is available online.

ACTIVITIES

On the website there are links to various activities, reports, conferences, competitions, exhibitions, connected to different life spheres, such as work, culture, local communities, education or care issues.

REFLECTIONS

Various life styles of older generations are presented in order to provide realistic perceptions of old age. This encourages older people to engage in society, bringing in their competencies. Younger people are invited to readapt their perceptions of old age. Those realistic perceptions of old age lead towards acceptance, openness and intergenerational dialogue, supporting also social cohesion.

FUNDING The ministry itself funds the programme.

OUTPUTS <http://www.programm-altersbilder.de>

WHAT ABOUT NOW? The Platform will be continued.

GRANDPARENT SERVICE

Organisation: Berlin Women Association
(Berliner Frauenbund e.V.) 1945
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Ansbacher Str. 63, 10777 Berlin-Schöneberg

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Contact person: Ms. Krull
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grosselterndienst@t-online.de

LOCATION

Ansbacher Straße 63, Berlin and Warschauer Straße 58a, Berlin

WHEN DID IT HAPPEN?

The grandparent service has existed since 1989. It was founded to support single parents and to offer older women a useful engagement, once they were not working anymore. Nowadays, however, we broadened our scope and also have wish grandfathers.

WHY DID YOU START THIS PROJECT?

One reason was that children these days often grow up quite far from their biological grandparents and, therefore, rarely have contact to the older generations. We regard it as very important to establish this contact, so that the children are able to get to know intergenerational togetherness and communal life.

Often, the biological grandparents live hundreds of kilometres away and can only see their grandchildren for special occasions. With their wish grandparents, however, the children can also share their everyday lives.

On the other side, the older people stay in contact with younger ones, they can actively take part in their lives and thereby gain new possibilities, for example, to get to know social media in an easy way.

As a result, the appreciation between the different generations increases.

PARTICIPANTS

At this time we have about 430 wish grandparents who are in contact with about 600 families with about 800 children.

We usually get contacted via different media – in earlier years it was mostly via newspaper articles but today the internet is used a lot, as well. Additionally, mouth-to-mouth propaganda and different volunteer agencies play an important role. Many parents and grandparents also do their own internet research and find us there.

In the last years, we have been active at different volunteer markets and promoted our work there.

It became apparent, overall, that the request for wish grandparents exceeds their availability by far.

ACTIVITIES

The wish grandparents have the possibility to take part in different events every month. There are, for example, a monthly breakfast, frequent discussion circles for new wish grandparents, educational workshops and excursions.

REFLECTIONS

The result is that there are so many wish grandparents now, some of whom have been with their families for a long time and have established family-like relationships. Many happy parents, wish grandparents and wish grandchildren have found each other. Our oldest wish grandson is 32 now and is still in regular contact with his wish grandparents.

We have learnt not to take ourselves too seriously as project coordinators. The people need to fit to each other – not to our ideas. Apart from that, a continuous coordination is crucial. Trust and emotions play a big role in our work, this is where consistency becomes very important.

FUNDING

We rarely get any donations. We are financed by contributions of the Senate of Berlin for social issues. It is an uncovered demands financial system, so the donations are set against the contributions and the contributions get reduced accordingly. Only a small part of the donations needs to be present as self-funding for the project.

OUTPUTS

We distribute flyers, postcards and bookmarks. The grandparents get them and the programme 3x a year via post. On Christmas they also get a small giveaway – our way to say thank you. For our booth we also have some pictures, a roll up and a poster.

WHAT ABOUT NOW?

Of course, it is still happening, it is our daily business! We also help others who would like to establish a similar project – we get national and even international requests for that. As a result, there is a small network of grandparent services nationwide.



SUPERGRANDMA AND SUPERGRANDPA SCHOOL

Organisation: Free Polish University Society, Lublin division
Narutowicza 41/1, 20-016 Lublin, Poland

Website: <http://www.superbabcia.org.pl>

<http://superbabciaisuperdziadek.pl/>

Contact person: Zofia Zaorska: z.zaorska@wp.pl

LOCATION

Lublin and other towns

WHEN DID IT HAPPEN?

The first SuperGrandma and SuperGrandpa school was established in 2008 in Lublin and it still operates. In the recent years new branches were created, in Warsaw, Wrocław, Poznań, Białystok, Kraków, Ozimek (nearby Opole) and Rajgród, and more. Some were only active for several months, some lasted longer.

WHY DID YOU START THIS PROJECT?

The School's mission is supporting grandparents in being with their grandchildren, particularly in getting to know the world, acquiring the skills of initiating interesting and stimulating games and playtime activities, and initiating school-related duties. It is also important to support older people in self-development, taking care of their own health and activity.

The School was established by Zofia Zaorska, an educationist and gerontologist. For years she has been the director of the Lublin University of the Third Age. Mrs. Zaorska had a personal motivation for establishing the School - her grandchildren, Kuba, Zosia and Marysia, were born.

- It's been a while since I had any contact with small children. And throughout the years the approach to them has changed significantly. There are different activities and games. And you have to be able to come up with things to do. You need ideas, you need to take care of the children's development - not just make sure they've eaten and went out for a walk. That is why I decided to find women who want to become modern grannies - (founder).

PARTICIPANTS

Each year we have approx. 25 ladies (men are very rare).

Most participants are women aged 55-65, who engage in caring for their grandchildren. They have performed a number of different professions but what they have in common is that they care about the development of their grandchildren and they want to support their children. There are also ladies whose grandchildren live in another town or country, but who want to engage in activities with children in kindergartens and dayrooms.

The call for applicants is advertised in local and national media, parishes, leaflets and word of mouth. The project is very visible in the media, but it is also difficult to break the “granny” stereotype – the image of a lady who raised her own children and so she believes she knows best how to take care of her grandchildren. She doesn’t need to learn anything.

ACTIVITIES

Activities are organised once a week at a local community centre (partner organisation providing rooms for our meetings).

What’s important is that the School is a workshop based environment. There are no lectures. We focus on group work, conversation, sharing information and opinions. This approach results from the conviction that grandmas know a lot – inviting them to come and then just telling them that they should change something in their approach to grandchildren isn’t sufficient.

During workshops participants learn new modes of communication, they get familiar with the rules of a healthy diet, they learn to suggest interesting games, they learn the rules that let kids use modern technology safely. They also learn to support their grandchildren during their first schoolyears. Several times a year we organise family events (holidays) and excursions with grandchildren. There are also activities planned to engage older grandchildren, like location based games and excursions along the trail of cross-cultural historical treasures.

Every year we spend the most time with psychologists specialised in communication with children and their parents. During these workshops grandmas work through difficult situations with their grandchildren. They perform role-play where e.g. it takes their grandchildren longer than agreed to come back home from school with friends. The psychologist acted as the grandchild and 30 grannies gathered in the room had to react. Finally one of them said that she’d hug the kid. The psychologist said: “At last”. The participants remembered this workshop because it let them understand the problem. We are all stuck with the habit of correcting and reprimanding children: “Where have you been?” “Why are you so late?” However first we should hug the kid who took the long way home. We should be glad that they’re back and open the conversation later.

Our graduates who didn’t want to end the meetings established a SuperGrandma Club where they develop theatrical classes for kids. They made puppets and they perform in plays. The theatre has wonderful scenography and it has performed more than 100 shows for local kindergartens and children’s hospitals. One of the project’s participants is the coordinator of the theatre and the director of its plays.

REFLECTIONS

In more than 100 families in Lublin almost 500 children felt that they have SuperGrandmas.

But most importantly the position of grandmas and grandpas in the families has changed. They have something to offer. Families notice that and grandmas are approached like skilled adults. They have better contact with their grandchildren. Their inventiveness is impressive. The children’s theatre lets grandmas discover their creative skills. After a computer workshop most of them opened email addresses.

Our participants are more self-confident now and many friendships have been established... We are glad when our workshops inspire our participants to deeper consideration of numerous stereotypes that are worth fighting.

A suggestion to organisers of such projects would be – remember that this is a common initiative. It is created by all participants and all of them can bring their ideas and turn them into reality. It's advisable to give participants space for individual actions.

FUNDING

The project received financial support of the Association of Creative Initiatives “e” and the Polish-American Freedom Foundation within the framework “Seniors in Action”. The project also received financial support from the Ministry of Family and Social Policy as well as of the local government.

OUTPUTS

A publication “How to Establish a SuperGrandma School”:
<http://e.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/JZSSBiSD.pdf>

WHAT ABOUT NOW?

In 2016 in Kraków we had a meeting of approx. 80 delegates from all active Schools. Their organisers are in touch. They exchange experiences on a regular basis. Everyone who wants to establish a new school is encouraged to come for a study visit at another School that has operated for several years. Zofia Zaorska, the founder of the School, dreams of a special edition of workshops for grandmas and grandpas dedicated to communication with teenage grandchildren.



SCOTLAND'S URBAN PAST

Organisation : Historic Environment Scotland
John Sinclair House, 16 Bernard Terrace, Edinburgh

Website: www.scotlandsurbanpast.org.uk
Contact person: Chiara Ronchini 0131 651 6772
Chiara.Ronchini@hes.scot

LOCATION

Scotland wide. SUP is a five-year nationwide programme about the history of Scotland's towns and cities, led by Historic Environment Scotland and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. We operate in Scottish urban areas of over 3,000 people (as per Scottish Government definition of 'urban')

WHEN DID IT HAPPEN?

October 2014–September 2019 (five-year programme)

WHY DID YOU START THIS PROJECT?

The programme aims to support communities across the country to investigate, record, engage with, and celebrate the heritage of our towns and cities.

The urban environment has a considerable impact on all our lives. More than four million people live in 220 urban settlements across the nation, representing 80% of the population. What this means is that a significant majority of Scottish people have a stake in the urban past.

Through the delivery of 60 projects in different towns and cities, SUP aims to inspire a new sense of value and understanding of our urban past through active participation and collaboration.

PARTICIPANTS

All projects are community-led, and the projects' ideas are spurred on by the communities themselves. Potential community groups apply to the SUP programme by submitting their proposal. The location, nature and scale of each project is therefore determined by the participants and facilitated by SUP. All sectors of the community are encouraged to participate, including local groups already interested in their urban heritage, young people, and 'seldom-heard groups' – i.e. audiences traditionally less likely to be involved in heritage activities.

So far we delivered 33 community projects. Amongst our 33 projects, we initiated four intergenerational projects: Home Educators, Stonehaven, St Stephen's School / Sheltered Housing, Clydebank, Oban Schools and Communities Trust, Oban, Govanhill Baths, Glasgow.

Other projects, such as Glasgow Disability Alliance, Parkour Communities in Edinburgh and Abbot House in Dunfermline have intergenerational aspects, such as interaction during training in filming and oral history recording.

ACTIVITIES

As part of the SUP programme, a dedicated team of eight specialists offers expert (free) training and support to motivate people across Scotland to explore the rich heritage, social and personal histories of their towns and cities. Groups and individuals have grown their understanding of the distinctive characters of their urban environments, exploring how things have changed over time, and sharing their findings with wider communities. Since the start of SUP, currently just over half way through the programme, we delivered 33 projects, covering a total of 26 different urban areas, including four cities (Glasgow, Edinburgh, Stirling and Inverness). These projects include:

- 12 projects led by audiences who never engaged in history projects before
- 8 projects led by a more traditional audience
- 13 projects led by young people

4 of these projects are inter-generational (Home Educators, Stonehaven; St Stephen's School/Sheltered Housing, Clydebank; Oban Schools and Communities Trust, Oban; Govanhill Baths, Glasgow).

As part of these 4 intergenerational projects, we delivered the following:

- oral history training
- ceramic workshops with artists
- film and photography training
- puppetry workshops
- survey and recording training.

Depending on the type of project, participants in our intergenerational projects met with different frequency:

- Home Educators, Stonehaven (7 young people and 4 adults): 1 day training in historical document research, storytelling and filming of their puppet show involving children and parents
- St Stephen's School / Sheltered Housing, Clydebank (51 young people and 7 senior citizens): 2 project development meetings; 4 training sessions (digital mapping, community mapping, ceramic)
- Oban Schools and Communities Trust, Oban (5 young people and 49 adults): 1 historical document research training, 3 filming sessions, 2 oral history sessions (project still ongoing). Training was delivered in Gaelic and English
- Govanhill Baths, Glasgow (19 young people and 12 senior citizens): 2 oral history recording sessions (project still ongoing).

As part of the wider SUP programme, we also delivered (so far):

- 214 special skills training sessions (Surveying and Recording 35, Researching historical docs and maps 34, Digital mapping and illustration 8, Community Mapping 28, Photography 33, Filming 22, Oral history recording 21, How to plan and manage your project 5, Promoting your project 7, How to work with different groups 1, Other 15)
- 5 Teachers CLPL training sessions in Paisley, Elgin and Ayr.
- 29 Digital Crowdsourcing Workshops

- 80 events, including 72 talks and two exhibitions. We also delivered 2 community events as part of our launch; 6 community get-togethers (Oban, Aberdeen, Inverness, Glasgow and two in Ayr); and 2 youth-led events.

REFLECTIONS

In general, SUP has delivered intergenerational aspects for the majority of our projects. Usually, the main outcome is about sharing experience, stories and heritage values across different generations and with a wider audience.

Another example of intergenerational work is our project with Glasgow Disability Alliance, a network of young people and adults with different disabilities who investigated their urban environment. The main outcome of this project was to ensure that this community could have their voice heard and could celebrate what heritage means to them. As a result, new material was added onto the National Record of the Historic Environment and a digital map of their favourite places (and stories) was made available online. As an additional outcome since our project, this community group was invited to participate in policy discussions about heritage and accessibility.

FUNDING

The SUP programme is funded almost entirely by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the remainder is funded internally by Historic Environment Scotland

OUTPUTS

The Home Educators project produced a film of their puppet show inspired by the fishing industry of Stonehaven. St Stephen's Primary produced community maps and ceramics in conjunction with the residents of the nearby Sheltered Housing. Their work was inspired by the Clydebank blitz during the war and its impact on the town. Both, Oban Schools and Govanhill Baths projects are still ongoing.

WHAT ABOUT NOW?

We have a few more intergenerational projects in the pipeline, which will be delivered as part of SUP up until the end of the programme in September 2019. A legacy for sustaining SUP activities beyond its life is currently being explored.

The organisation does not have a dedicated intergenerational programme, but currently has only ad hoc projects. We are in the process of establishing a more all-encompassing engagement strategy, which will look into inter-generational issues as well.



LIVING LIBRARIES ON FLIGHT AND SEEKING REFUGE – STORIES FROM THE PAST AND THE PRESENT

Organisation: Anne Frank Zentrum (“Anne Frank Centre”)
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LOCATION

The project took place in 4 different smaller cities or communities in the rural areas of Eastern Germany: Fürstenwalde an der Spree, Kyritz & Wusterhausen (neighbouring communities), Greifswald and Königstein. The Anne Frank Zentrum provided high quality training and coaching for the project partners. In total 3 seminars took place in Berlin.

WHEN DID IT HAPPEN?

The project took place from January 2016 until April 2017.

WHY DID YOU START THIS PROJECT?

Anne Frank Zentrum - remember and engage.

The Anne Frank Zentrum is the German partner organisation of the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam. The Centre reminds visitors of Anne Frank and her diary with exhibitions and an array of educational programmes. It facilitates learning opportunities in which children and young people can examine history and link it to the world in which they live today. They learn how to take on social responsibility, and how to engage with freedom, equal rights and democracy.

We have had prior experiences with intergenerational dialogues, especially in rural areas of Eastern Germany. Based on our experiences with testimonies of eye-witnesses, we were intrigued to try out a format that would provide space for dialogue and mutual exchange of life stories.

Furthermore, the arrival of many asylum seekers to Europe and Germany in the year 2015 created a new discourse on flight and refuge. Racist attacks against asylum seekers and/or refugee centres were dramatically on the rise. Therefore, we aimed at creating spaces for dialogue, story-telling and personal encounter.

PARTICIPANTS

Intergenerational dialogue events have taken place in 4 different cities or communities. Around 300 people took part in those events. In each of the project cities, around 10 – 15 people of all ages and backgrounds were recruited as so-called »living books«, meaning they told their life stories within the living library events. They took part in a preparation

as well as a follow-up meeting. A number of 15 people took part in the training course and individual coaching provided by the Anne Frank Zentrum.

ACTIVITIES

In spring 2016, the Anne Frank Zentrum published a call for application for small cities or communities in the rural areas of Eastern Germany to take part in the project. From all applications, 4 cities (mentioned above) were chosen. The neighbouring communities Kyritz and Wusterhausen took part as senior partners, as they had already participated in prior intergenerational projects conducted by the Anne Frank Zentrum.

A training course as well as individual and network counselling on-site were mandatory for the project partners of all cities. At the same time the dialogue events were prepared. For the most part, the preparation consisted in finding people who were interested in telling their stories, in creating a well-rounded set of participants and preparing the »books«, meaning the people sharing their life stories during the events.

The living library events themselves took place in all the partner cities over the autumn month.

The Anne Frank Zentrum organized a conference, in which over 70 educators, researchers, community workers and social workers participated.

Following the conference, a brochure was published as well as a set of 4 video clips giving an insight into the project.

REFLECTIONS

In all the partner cities unique and successful events in intergenerational dialogue on life stories and flight took place. With one exception, the format »living library« has been completely unknown to the project partners. Many people came in touch, who probably would not have met otherwise. Many of the elderly participants never told their life stories before. As a consequence, the social cohesion within the cities and communities grew.

Our most important lessons learnt: The living library is a very suitable format for creating a space for dialogue and bringing different stories and experiences together. It does not take much to organize such an event, both financially as well as logistically. However, the most important preparation is to be completed with the »books«, those who tell their stories. Another focus of our consulting was laid on the reflection of the commemoration discourse in Germany. Which stories are being told? Which aren't so much spoken of in public spaces? How is it possible to integrate life stories of people, who has been perished and whose stories are present through their absence?

FUNDING

The project has been fully funded by the programme "Zusammenhalt durch Teilhabe" of the Federal Ministry of Interior.

OUTPUTS

As part of our media partnership with the Couragiert-Magazin, 4 short video clips have been produced. In addition to that, a brochure has been published, which includes aids and tools for multipliers, who are interested in organizing a living library on life

stories and flight themselves. All media have been published online www.annefrank.de/lebendige_bibliothek

The brochure is also available in a printed version.

WHAT ABOUT NOW?

The intergenerational dialogue is still relevant in our educational programmes. It is very much linked to the approach of biographical learning, meaning that historical and political topics are being taught through concrete biographies.



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