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Empowering Women: Building Leadership And Advocacy Skills For Young Europeans

Toolkit



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the European Union

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Sector: 210YOU

Duration: 20 months

Main aim

This project is dedicated to empowering young European women by developing their leadership and advocacy skills and promoting gender equality and women's rights.

Objectives

- 1.To enhance the leadership skills of young European women through targeted training programs, workshops, and mentoring.
- 2.To provide the necessary tools and resources for these women to develop robust advocacy skills, advocating effectively for gender equality and women's rights.
- 3.To raise awareness about gender inequality and the specific challenges women face in various life aspects, including education, employment, and leadership.
- 4.To foster cross-cultural exchange and cooperation among young European women to address gender inequality and advocate for women's rights.
- 5.To encourage and increase the active participation and representation of young European women in decision-making processes, striving for a greater gender balance in leadership positions.

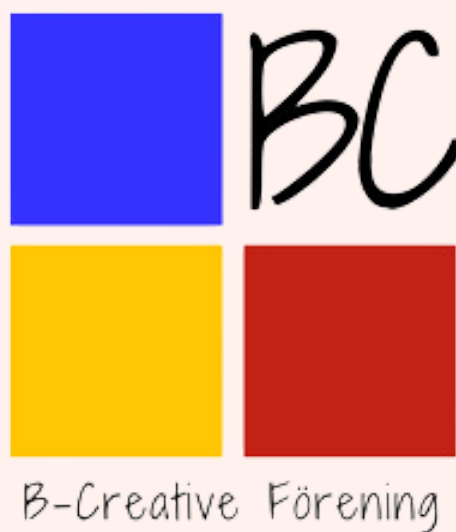
Activities

1. A kick-off meeting for project coordinators in Malta.
2. An international workshop in Sweden for exchanging experiences.
3. A midterm online meeting for progress assessment.
4. Local training programs complemented by study visits for immersive learning.
5. Creation of tangible outputs to encapsulate project learnings.
6. A final meeting and dissemination event – a conference held in Lithuania.

Expected results

1. Participants will see enhanced leadership skills, ready to tackle gender equality projects.
2. Young women's advocacy skills will be significantly strengthened, propelling gender equality and policy change.
3. Increased knowledge and understanding of gender issues, including the facets of intersectionality.
4. Production of educational materials, such as handbooks and toolkits, on leadership and gender equality.
5. Promotion of cross-cultural understanding and cooperation among European women.
6. Empowerment of participants, instilling confidence to take active roles in community and gender equality initiatives.
7. Dissemination of project outcomes through multiplier events in partner countries.
8. Enhanced visibility and awareness of the importance of empowering young European women.
9. Establishment of sustainable networks and partnerships for continued efforts in gender equality.

PARTNERS



PARTNERS



Lithuania

Asociacija IVAIGO

Asociacija IVAIGO is a prominent organization dedicated to gender equality, youth empowerment, and the active engagement of young women in policymaking and leadership roles. With a commitment to addressing contemporary challenges related to gender inequality and women's rights, the organization leverages its expertise in fostering creativity, critical thinking, and advocacy among youth. It actively supports the development of leadership and professional skills in young European women, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, promoting their active participation in ERASMUS PLUS programs and other international forums. Asociacija IVAIGO collaborates with NGOs and educational institutions and municipalities to promote education and empower young women. The organization fosters cross-cultural exchange and advocates for women's representation in decision-making, aiming for a more equitable society.

Website: www.ivaigo.lt

Instagram: www.instagram.com/ngoivaigo

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ivaigongo

PARTNERS



Malta

Innovative Youth

Innovative Youth is a platform providing moral and directional support to young people as they foster the necessary life and entrepreneurial skills to pursue their goals.

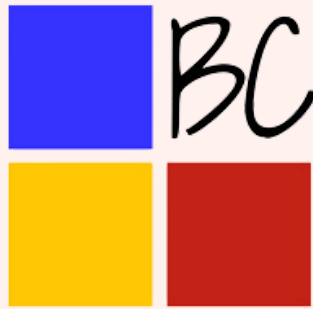
Our mission is to promote measures and mechanisms for youth entrepreneurship, to influence the policy of national institutions, and promote a culture among young people of job creation rather than job seeking.

Innovative Youth is a non-governmental, independent and non-profit making national and regional youth platform that works towards empowering young adults to foster entrepreneurial skills in order to try and generate a business activity by seeking new and innovative opportunities for the benefit of the society and the economy.

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/innovativeyouthmalta>

PARTNERS



B-Creative Förening

Sweden

B-Creative Association

B-Creative is an association that are developing courses, event, workshops in different topics such as language learning, virtual travelling, education concepts and cultural concepts.

B-Creative have a large network in Sweden and in Europe with NGOs, education organisations and associations.

The staff in B- Creative have experience of European projects, development of education material, marketing, networking and focus on the individual are central values for us.

Website: <https://b-creative.link>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/be_creative_link/

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/BCreativeAssociation>

Introduction

This section of the toolkit outlines the significant results and best practices derived from the "Empowering Women: Building Leadership and Advocacy Skills for Young Europeans" project. Each partner organization has contributed three distinctive best practices aimed at enhancing advocacy, leadership, and the promotion of gender equality and women's rights. These practices are intended to serve as valuable resources for youth workers seeking to empower young women in their communities.

The shared best practices encompass a range of strategies, activities, and methodologies proven to be effective in fostering leadership skills, strengthening advocacy efforts, and promoting gender equality. These include innovative approaches to training, community engagement, and awareness-raising activities. The practices are designed to be adaptable and applicable in various settings, providing youth workers with the tools and insights needed to support and guide young women in their advocacy and leadership journeys.

By integrating these best practices into their work, youth workers can significantly impact the lives of young women, encouraging their active participation in society and contributing to a more gender-equal world.

IVAIGO

Artivism Workshops



Place of implementation:

Vilnius, Lithuania

Name of the organization/Institution implementing practice

Asociacija IVAIGO

Target group / Beneficiaries:

10 women seeking for a new job

Experts/staff:

Gender Equality Expert

The main objectives

The objective of the Artivism Workshop for women seeking a job is to empower participants to use art as a tool for self-expression, confidence-building, and advocacy for gender equality in the workplace.

The description of the practice

The Artivism Workshop for Women Seeking Employment provides a dynamic platform for participants to harness the power of art as a means of self-expression, empowerment, and advocacy in the context of job seeking. Through a series of interactive sessions, participants explore the intersection of art and activism, reflecting on their experiences, aspirations, and challenges in the job market. Facilitated discussions and creative activities enable participants to express their unique perspectives on gender equality in the workplace and to develop artwork that serves as a catalyst for change. The workshop conduct over the course of a full day.

Methodology/Didactic tools

- **Introduction to Artivism and Job Seeking:** The workshop begins with an introduction to the concept of artivism and its application in addressing issues related to job seeking and gender equality in the workplace.
- **Creative Expression:** Participants engage in creative activities such as drawing, painting, or collage-making to express their thoughts, feelings, and experiences related to job seeking, career aspirations, and workplace gender dynamics.

- **Guided Reflections and Discussions:** Facilitators lead guided reflections and discussions on key themes emerging from participants' artwork, such as challenges faced in job seeking, stereotypes in the workplace, and visions for gender-inclusive workplaces.
- **Building Confidence and Skills:** Through activism principles and techniques, participants build confidence in expressing themselves and develop skills in storytelling, advocacy, and self-empowerment.
- **Practical Applications:** Participants explore practical applications of activism in job seeking, such as creating visual resumes, designing portfolio pieces, or using art to showcase their skills and strengths to potential employers.
- **Networking and Support:** The workshop provides opportunities for networking and peer support among participants, fostering a sense of solidarity and empowerment in their job-seeking journey.

Additional materials /Equipment needed

- Assorted art supplies such as markers, colored pencils, pastels, and charcoal to accommodate varying preferences and artistic styles.
- Easels for participants to display their artwork during the workshop, as well as display boards for showcasing completed pieces.
- For participants to capture photos of their artwork for documentation and sharing purposes.
- To display presentation slides, visual aids, and examples of activism initiatives for reference and inspiration.

- Printed handouts containing workshop agenda, prompts for reflection, and resources related to activism and job seeking for participants to reference during and after the workshop.

Conclusion

The Activism Workshop empowered 10 women seeking employment to express themselves creatively and advocate for gender equality in the workplace. Through the day-long event, participants created 15 pieces of artwork, fostering meaningful dialogue and connections. 80% reported increased confidence in advocating for gender equality, with 90% expressing a desire to continue integrating activism principles into their job-seeking strategies. As participants move forward, their artwork serves as a powerful reminder of their voices and commitment to driving positive change. The workshop has ignited a spark of creativity and advocacy, paving the way for continued growth and empowerment in the pursuit of gender-inclusive employment opportunities.

Recommendation and guidelines

Offer practical resources and tools for participants to integrate activism principles into their job-seeking strategies, such as visual resume templates or portfolio-building guides.

IVAIGO

Digital Advocacy Bootcamp



Place of implementation:

Vilnius, Lithuania

Name of the organization/Institution implementing practice

Asociacija IVAIGO

Target group / Beneficiaries:

14 Young Women from rural areas

Experts/staff:

Digital Advocacy Trainer, Social Media Specialist, Technical Support from IVAIGO team

The main objectives

To empower young women from rural areas with the tools and knowledge to advocate for gender equality using online platforms.

The description of the practice

The Digital Advocacy Bootcamp is a hands-on training session focused on empowering 14 young women from rural areas with the tools and knowledge to advocate for gender equality using online platforms. Participants engage in interactive activities such as creating social media campaigns, drafting digital petitions, and crafting compelling messages for online advocacy. Experienced facilitators provide instruction on key concepts and strategies for leveraging digital tools effectively, enabling participants to amplify their voices and advocate for women's rights online. To reach the objective, the practice is organized as a 5-day-long event.

Methodology/Didactic tools

Start with an introduction to digital advocacy and its role in promoting gender equality.

Break down key concepts such as social media campaigning, digital storytelling, and online activism.

Provide hands-on training through interactive activities such as creating mock social media campaigns or drafting digital petitions.

Demonstrate tools and platforms commonly used for digital advocacy (e.g., Canva for graphic design, Change.org for petitions).

Facilitate group discussions on ethical considerations and online safety in advocacy work.

Encourage participants to develop action plans for implementing digital advocacy strategies in their communities.

Additional materials /Equipment needed

- Computers or tablets with internet access
- Presentation slides or visual aids on digital advocacy
- Sample social media posts and campaigns
- Templates for creating digital content (e.g., graphic design templates)
- Handouts with resources on online activism and advocacy tools
- Flipchart paper and markers for brainstorming sessions

Conclusion

The Digital Advocacy Bootcamp equipped young women from rural areas with the skills and knowledge to leverage digital platforms for advocating gender equality. Through hands-on activities and expert guidance, participants learnt to craft compelling messages, engage with online communities, and mobilize support for women's rights issues. By harnessing the power of digital advocacy, participants amplified their voices and drive meaningful change in the online sphere, contributing to a more inclusive and equitable society. Each participants reached at least 4 people.

Recommendation and guidelines

Offer continued support and resources beyond the bootcamp sessions to help participants implement digital advocacy strategies effectively.

IVAIGO

Intersectional Storytelling Workshop



Place of implementation:

Vilnius, Lithuania

Name of the organization/Institution implementing practice

Asociacija IVAIGO

Target group / Beneficiaries:

12 Women refugees

Experts/staff:

Intersectionality Facilitator, Facilitator Assistants from IVAIGO team

The main objectives

To understand how intersecting identities shape individual experiences and perspectives on gender equality

The description of the practice

2-day long The Intersectional Storytelling Workshop provides a platform for 12 women refugees to explore the concept of intersectionality through personal storytelling. Participants divided into small groups based on shared identities or experiences, where they engage in guided discussions and shared their stories related to gender and intersecting identities such as race, ethnicity, sexuality, or disability. Facilitators led discussions on the importance of intersectionality in advocacy and leadership for gender equality, fostering increased awareness and empathy among participants.

Methodology/Didactic tools

- *Begin with an icebreaker activity to build rapport among participants.*
- *Introduce the concept of intersectionality through a short presentation or interactive discussion.*
- *Divide participants into small groups based on shared identities or experiences.*
- *Facilitate guided storytelling sessions where each participant shares a personal story related to gender and intersecting identities.*
- *Encourage active listening and respectful dialogue within the groups.*

- Reconvene as a larger group to debrief and reflect on the stories shared.
- Facilitate a discussion on the importance of intersectionality in advocacy and leadership.

Additional materials /Equipment needed

- Presentation slides or visual aids explaining intersectionality
- Flipchart paper and markers for group discussions
- Printed handouts or worksheets with prompts for storytelling
- Name tags for participants
- Audio recording equipment (optional) for capturing stories

Conclusion

The Intersectional Storytelling Workshop served as a platform for young women to deepen their understanding of intersectionality and its implications for gender equality. Through personal storytelling and guided discussions, participants gained insights into the complex interplay of identities and experiences, fostering increased awareness and empathy. By recognizing and valuing diverse perspectives, the workshop empowered participants to advocate for inclusivity and diversity in their communities, contributing to the advancement of gender equality efforts.

Recommendation and guidelines

Foster opportunities for participants to reflect on their own experiences and engage in dialogue with others to deepen their understanding of intersectionality.

Innovative Youth

Women's Discussion Circles



Place of implementation:

Safi Malta

Name of the organization/Institution implementing practice

Innovative Youth

Target group / Beneficiaries:

Women involved in the NGO's work, as well as new participants looking for a supportive space to share their experiences.

Experts/staff:

Facilitators or moderators experienced in group discussions, mental health professionals if needed.

The main objectives

To provide women with a platform where they can freely discuss their challenges, ideas, and goals in a supportive environment.
To build confidence and solidarity among women within the NGO.

The description of the practice

The Women's Discussion Circles create a safe, non-judgmental space where women can meet regularly to discuss topics relevant to their personal or professional lives. Each session focuses on a particular theme, such as personal development, leadership, work-life balance, or community involvement. Facilitators guide the discussions, ensuring all voices are heard and respected. The sessions promote emotional support, idea exchange, and collective problem-solving. Women can also build strong networks and friendships through these circles, further strengthening their commitment to the NGO's mission.

Methodology/Didactic tools

Group facilitation techniques, open dialogue, reflective activities, and storytelling.

Additional materials /Equipment needed

Comfortable meeting space, discussion prompts, notebooks, and refreshments.

Conclusion

The Women's Discussion Circles have fostered a strong sense of community among participants, empowering them to actively engage in the NGO's work. Women feel more confident and supported in both their personal and professional journeys.

Recommendation and guidelines

Regularly rotate discussion topics based on participant interests and ensure that all sessions are moderated to maintain a respectful, inclusive environment

Innovative Youth

Only Volunteer Drives



Place of implementation:

Safi Malta

Name of the organization/Institution implementing practice

Innovative Youth

Target group / Beneficiaries:

Women of all ages interested in volunteering for community work and those seeking a safe, supportive space to get involved in NGO activities.

Experts/staff:

NGO coordinators, volunteer managers, and experienced female leaders who can guide the process.

The main objectives

To create an inclusive, supportive environment where women can volunteer and contribute to social causes without barriers.
To build a sense of community and engagement among women.

The description of the practice

The Women-Only Volunteer Drives aim to attract more female volunteers by creating a safe and welcoming environment. Women are invited to take part in various volunteering opportunities tailored to their interests and skills. The drives offer a chance for women to work together on projects, share their experiences, and support one another. Experienced coordinators and female leaders guide the volunteers through the process, ensuring everyone feels empowered and valued. The initiative helps break down barriers that might prevent women from volunteering, such as time constraints or lack of confidence.

Methodology/Didactic tools

Open recruitment sessions, team-building exercises, and group discussions to promote engagement and comfort.

Additional materials /Equipment needed

Flyers for recruitment, sign-up sheets, meeting space, snacks, and refreshments for volunteer drives. Flyers for recruitment, sign-up sheets, meeting space, snacks, and refreshments for volunteer drives.

Conclusion

The Women-Only Volunteer Drives have proven to increase female participation in volunteer efforts. By creating a safe and inclusive environment, women feel more encouraged to contribute to the organization's mission.

Recommendation and guidelines

Ensure regular drives and provide flexible schedules to accommodate women with other commitments. Focus on creating a supportive atmosphere where women feel comfortable expressing their ideas and participating.

Innovative Youth

Skill-Sharing Sessions



Place of implementation:

Safi Malta

Name of the organization/Institution implementing practice

Innovative Youth

Target group / Beneficiaries:

Women involved in the NGO or the broader community who want to share or learn new skills.

Experts/staff:

Facilitators or skilled volunteers who can teach various topics; coordinators to organize sessions.

The main objectives

To provide women with opportunities to learn practical skills from one another, build confidence, and empower them to take on more responsibilities within the NGO.

The description of the practice

Skill-Sharing Sessions bring together women to teach and learn from each other. These sessions focus on practical skills, such as digital literacy, project management, arts and crafts, or public speaking. Women volunteer to lead sessions based on their expertise, encouraging peer learning and collaboration. The sessions are informal yet structured to maximize learning while building a sense of camaraderie among participants. By sharing their knowledge, women not only learn new skills but also gain confidence in their abilities and feel more empowered to contribute to the NGO's projects.

Methodology/Didactic tools

Peer-led learning, hands-on workshops, collaborative learning, and demonstrations.

Additional materials /Equipment needed

Materials specific to the skill being taught (e.g., laptops for digital skills, art supplies for crafts), projector, whiteboard, and markers.

Conclusion

Sharing Sessions provide an empowering platform for women to learn and grow by exchanging valuable knowledge and skills.

Recommendation and guidelines

Regularly rotate the skill topics to keep sessions fresh and ensure diverse participation from women with varying backgrounds and expertise.

B-Creative Association

Gender equality in society



Place of implementation:

Kristianstad Sweden

Name of the organization/Institution implementing practice

B-Creative Association

Target group / Beneficiaries:

Young women

Experts/staff:

Staff from B-Creative Association

The main objectives

- Promote awareness and understanding of societal inequalities and their impact on individuals and communities.
- Empower marginalized groups to have a voice and demand their rights and equal opportunities.
- Encourage dialogue and collaboration among diverse groups to address shared challenges and promote social cohesion.
- Educate the women about the importance of equality and diversity in fostering a more just and harmonious society.

The description of the practice

4 hours long exercise – could be longer depends on the target group and the discussions.

This exercise is a discussion activity about equality in the society. Facilitators will prepare an presentation about equality and will lead the discussions.

Methodology/Didactic tools

The facilitator makes a presentation on Gender Equality based on the following:

Most people nowadays say they are in favour of gender equality, but what they are in favour of is not always clear. What gender equality is is rarely defined in public debate. A common answer to the question of what gender equality means is 'equal pay for equal work'. Another commonly held view is that gender equality means "treating everyone equally"

After the presentation:

Reflect and discuss

1. How are there different expectations for girls/women and boys/men in society?
2. 'Feminine' and 'masculine' can be described as frames. We are brought up to stay within these boundaries. What happens if we go outside?
3. Have you ever experienced a negative reaction from others because not staying within the boundaries? What was it that happened?
4. Imagine that you would turn into a man if you are a woman, and into a woman if you are a man. What would be the main benefits? The main disadvantages?
5. What ideas about male and female would you like to change? Is there anything you would absolutely not want to change? If so, what are the reasons?
6. How do our perceptions and different expectations of women and men affect women and men affect everyday life at school?
7. Linguists have shown that we judge not only actions but also texts in different ways depending on whether the text is said to be written by a woman or by a man. How common do you think this is and what are the consequences

Conclusion

The aim of this activity is to promote and advance equality and diversity in order to create a more inclusive and fair society. This can involve raising awareness of discrimination and biases, challenging stereotypes, promoting equal opportunities, and advocating for equal rights and treatment for all individuals regardless of their background or characteristics. The ultimate goal is to create a society where everyone has equal access to opportunities and resources, and where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect.

Recommendation and guidelines

As an extra activity, you can discuss femininity and masculinity in other cultures.

Think about the quote below.

When we compare our (often unspoken) perceptions of femininity - male with those of other cultures, we suddenly see what we previously taken for granted and natural in a new light, and our ingrained beliefs may no longer appear to be universal and self-evident. We can observe our own cultural assumptions from new perspectives and with fresh skepticism.

B-Creative Association

Increase communication skills
and empathy



Place of implementation:

Kristianstad Sweden

Name of the organization/Institution implementing practice

B-Creative Association

Target group / Beneficiaries:

Youngsters

Experts/staff:

Facilitators from B-Creative Association

The main objectives

Help young people adapt their communication to different groups.

The description of the practice

2 hours long exercise – could be longer depends on the target group and the discussions. This exercise promotes listen and communications skills. Facilitators will prepare and explain the exercise and lead discussions about the importance of communication and listening in a correct way.

Methodology/Didactic tools

Divide the young people into pairs and tell them that the purpose of the exercise is to share a situation where they felt afraid. Give them about one minute to think of an event and then 1-2 minutes to share the story with their partner. Prepare the listener that they need to listen carefully and take note of details. When the storyteller has finished, ask the listener to answer the following questions:

- How would you describe (in your own words) what happened?
- What was it that made them afraid?

Once the 'listener' has told their version of the event, ask the 'narrator' the following questions:

- Did they describe your story correctly? If not, can you clarify what was wrong?

Methodology/Didactic tools

Once the 'narrator' has clarified what happened, you can go on to ask the 'listener' the following questions:

- Have you ever felt as scared as they just told you?
- How did the fear feel inside you when you experienced it?
- Can you imagine what their feeling was like in their body when it happened?
- If you had been present when they experienced this feeling, what could you have done?

Once they have gone through the process, ask them to switch roles. When all groups have finished, bring them together and discuss the following questions:

- What do you understand now about your partner that you didn't understand before?
- What did you learn about yourself by doing this exercise?

Additional materials /Equipment needed

Paper and pens.

Conclusion

This exercise increases communication skills and empathy in young people and this is a skill you need in leadership and also to communicate about gender equality.

Recommendation and guidelines

Another example is that you could look at advertising clips or newspaper articles and then analyze which groups in society

they are targeting. Discuss their ideas and thoughts on why their communication differs depending on the group they are targeting and the purpose. This promotes critical thinking and increases the ability to take in multiple perspectives at the same time.

B-Creative Association

Gender equality home



Place of implementation:

Kristianstad Sweden

Name of the organization/Institution implementing practice

B-Creative Association

Target group / Beneficiaries:

Immigrant youngsters

Experts/staff:

Staff from B-Creative Association

The main objectives

The project aimed to provide unaccompanied youngsters with knowledge about work in the home and increase their understanding of how Swedish society works.

The description of the practice

The participants are taught in the kitchen by staff from B-Creative Association, who have cultural and linguistic competence and an understanding of the young people's way of thinking. There is also a clear integration between language teaching in the theoretical and practical elements of the project. Duration of the project could be that you meet 5 to 10 times and around 2-3 hours every time.

The time depends on how large the group is, best is to be 5-6 participants.

Methodology/Didactic tools

During the cooking when they eat the dinner the staff talk about gender equality and how Swedish society works.

There are discussions and the staff can ask questions about the topic.

Through a friendly and cozy area it's easier to have discussions and also easier for the youngsters to open up and ask questions about the topic.

Additional materials /Equipment needed

It's a need to have a kitchen and food the participants can cook and a place to eat the food.

Conclusion

The aim is to increase the unaccompanied young people's knowledge of what gender equality is and means in Swedish society, and how to make conscious choices that have a positive impact on health, the economy and the environment, both for themselves and for society.

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**Innovative
Youth**



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