The Sound Of Entrepreneurship - Leveraging the Entrepreneurial Competences of Musicians To Extenuate the Business Knowledge in time of COVID

Project n° 2021-1-FR01-KA220-ADU-000033675

Protocol for Certification of Competencies

The partnership:

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Introduction

Background

The music industry has been significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, with its main activities put on hold since March 2020 across Europe. It is likely to not recover fully for at least another two – three years. Those working in the music industry are now facing unprecedented financial disaster due to coronavirus. Musicians and music workers are in a social and economic uncertainty and as a consequence they feel frustrated, depressed and disengaged in the music community.

The OECD June 2020 report, "Evaluating the initial impact of COVID-19 containment measures on economic activity" demonstrates the risks are high for creators, artists and those working in the entertainment sector – a group of workers who are already vulnerable. Artists could be uniquely vulnerable to psychological challenges associated with the COVID-19 outbreak through the forced separation of material, social, and mental spaces, in addition to general psychological distress related to the pandemic and unemployment.

About the Project

The Sound Of Entrepreneurship (SOE) project aims to encourage unemployed/disengaged musicians and music industry workers to adopt a more inclusive and sustainable personal development through empowerment, self-marketing and entrepreneurial skills. Musicians, music industry workers and aspiring music industry entrepreneurs will be provided with a new learning path related to the development of basic and transversal skills, innovative managerial competencies and entrepreneurial spirit and to validate the updated and transferred competencies. Through the learning tools provided, they will be able to empower themselves and improve their working conditions, thus having a positive impact on their physical and mental health and personal development. The project will also help build their resilience on how to overcome issues brought on by the pandemic. Adult educators who work closely with musicians and music industry workers will be engaged from the start of the project and trained on how to use non-formal approaches within entrepreneurship education for musicians, music industry workers and aspiring music industry entrepreneurs, based on art and music business experiences.

A consortium of six European organisations from Italy, France, Cyprus, Spain, and Ireland worked together on the project "The Sound Of Entrepreneurship (SOE) - Leveraging the Entrepreneurial Competences of Musicians To Extenuate the Business Knowledge in Time of COVID" [2021-1-FR01-KA220-ADU-000033675]. The project was funded through the Erasmus+ Key Action 2 Cooperation partnerships in adult education, by the European Union and was implemented for two years (Jan 2022 to Jan 2024).

Project's results

The central outcomes of the SOE project:

1. The Training Tools (R1) for Music Entrepreneurship Education and the Learning Platform (R2) are an interactive learning resource that equip adult educators who work closely with musicians and music industry workers with the knowledge and tools to lead face-to-face or virtual training activities with their learners based on music entrepreneurship education. The target group of musicians, music industry workers and aspiring music industry entrepreneurs can have access to a learning platform that facilitates self-directed learning in a safe learning environment as well as access to a wide range of innovative learning resources that are available to download from the platform.
2. The Learning Documentary (R3) provides further exploration of the project themes but in a fun and educational way to demonstrate to musicians, music industry workers, and aspiring music industry entrepreneurs the key learning concepts.
3. The Protocol for Certification of Competencies (R4) which is a competence validation model that will ensure the sustainability of the learning path created for the adult learners.

All of the project's results can be found on our website https://soundofentrepreneurship.eu/

The Protocol

Purpose and field of application

The Protocol serves as a comprehensive reference for verifying and endorsing the skills of adult educators and professionals who adopt an innovative learning approach centred around the History of (Rock) music and the training materials developed. It also outlines the procedures for certifying the skills acquired through the identified methodologies, enabling trainers or professionals utilising the training tools to request certification. Consequently, the Protocol is designed with the purpose of serving as a definitive "validation/certification guideline" for its application.

Within the framework of the SOE project, we recognize that while technical skills can be assessed with relative ease, the evaluation of vital transversal skills presents a more intricate challenge due to their qualitative nature, making quantification a demanding task. Thus, the SOE Protocol endeavours to establish a robust methodology for the cultivation and certification of fundamental transversal skills, entrepreneurship, and business innovation proficiencies. This endeavour is closely aligned with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the Entrepreneurship Competence Framework (EntreComp). The EQF provides a common reference framework to understand and compare qualifications across different European countries. The SOE Protocol ensures that the skills cultivated conform to the standards set by the EQF, thus facilitating their recognition and comparability on a European scale.

Moreover, the Entrepreneurship Competence Framework (EntreComp) serves as a valuable guideline for developing entrepreneurial competencies. The SOE Protocol harmonises with EntreComp to ensure that the entrepreneurship and business innovation skills cultivated through this project adhere to internationally recognized standards. This framework empowers individuals to enhance their entrepreneurial spirit, creativity, and innovative thinking.

In practical terms, the SOE Protocol operates by providing a structured and comprehensive methodology for the development of these skills. It outlines the steps, criteria, and assessment methods for acquiring and certifying transversal skills and entrepreneurial competencies. This certification, based on established standards such as EQF and EntreComp, not only adds value to an individual's skill set but also ensures their qualifications are recognized and transferable within the European context. Ultimately, the SOE Protocol acts as a bridge, connecting individual skill development with European-wide qualifications, enhancing opportunities for personal growth and career advancement.

The learning outcomes of the SOE Protocol (Knowledge, Skills, Responsibility and autonomy) are equivalent to Level 5 of EQF and 0.8 ECVET credits.

Protocol's Objectives

While evaluating technical skills is relatively uncomplicated, assessing essential cross-cutting skills poses challenges due to their inherent difficulty in quantification. Consequently, the objective of this Protocol is to establish an approach for the creation and certification of fundamental transversal skills, along with entrepreneurship and business innovation capabilities. EntreComp (2018) defines entrepreneurship as "The capacity to act upon opportunities and ideas, and transform them into value for others. The value that is created can be financial, cultural or social."

The Protocol aims to ensure that adult educators, professionals and workers in the music industry acquire the necessary competencies through training tools and the learning platform. Additionally, it seeks to validate and certify the competencies of professionals in the music industry, using an innovative learning approach based on History of (Rock) music and following the competency framework for entrepreneurship, through the following specific objectives:

1. To provide musicians and music industry workers affected by the pandemic with a formal validation of their non-formal competencies, recognizing their skills and knowledge in the field.

2. To support the requalification and upskilling of musicians and music industry workers, particularly in basic/transversal skills and entrepreneurship, to enhance their employability and career opportunities.

3. To establish a transparent and standardised validation process that aligns with industry standards and meets the needs of the target group.

4. To foster collaboration between relevant stakeholders, such as music industry associations, training institutions, and employers, to ensure the recognition and utilisation of validated competencies

Validation of Non-formal Competencies

'Validation means a process of confirmation by an authorised body that an individual has acquired learning outcomes measured against a relevant standard and consists of the following four distinct phases: identification, documentation, assessment, and certification" (Council Recommendation, 2012).

The validation of informal and non-formal learning rests on two core principles. Firstly, recognizing the inherent value of all learning, regardless of the time or context in which it occurred. Secondly, understanding that informal, non-formal, and formal learning are mutually enriching and complementary. To achieve successful implementation and maximise its benefits, these straightforward principles must be embraced and shared among all relevant stakeholders (Cedefop, 2023).

Microcredentials, the new stars of the education world, have become a modern way to recognize skills. They're like the bite-sized snacks of learning, serving up knowledge in easy-to-digest pieces. Why are they causing such a buzz? Well, they're super flexible. You can pick and choose exactly what skills you want to add to your toolkit. In today's fast-paced world, they're the express lane to learning. Plus, you don't have to travel far to get them; they're often just a click away. It's like assembling your personal skill set, one microcredential at a time. And the best part? Employers love them. Microcredentials are like mini endorsements of your skills. So, if you want to stay ahead of the game, think small and go for microcredentials. They're the future of skills recognition. If you're into gaining skills on your own terms and showing the world what you're made of, microcredentials are the way to go. They're your passport to the world of non-formal competence, recognized and appreciated.

The acceptance of skill validation acquired through non-formal and informal learning is growing significantly as a crucial component in European skills policies. Key initiatives like the European Skills Agenda, the European Area of Education, the reinforced Youth Guarantee, and the European Social Pillar Action Plan all recognize validation as a vital enabler of lifelong and comprehensive learning. It empowers individuals to transfer and accumulate their learning experiences across various institutions, sectors, and countries. The emphasis on upskilling and reskilling and substantial investment in skill development is becoming increasingly imperative.

Introducing the SOE Protocol: A Path to Recognition

Step 1: Understand the SOE Protocol Imagine the SOE Protocol as a new friend. Begin by getting to know it well. Understand what it represents, the skills it emphasises, and its overall goals in the music and education world.

Step 2: Align with International Standards Think of the SOE Protocol as a puzzle piece in a larger picture. Ensure it fits with global standards such as EQF (European Qualifications Framework) and EntreComp. It should harmonise with what the world acknowledges as essential skills and competencies. The learning outcomes of the SOE Protocol (Knowledge, Skills, Responsibility and autonomy) are equivalent to Level 5 of EQF and 0.8 ECVET credits.

Step 3: Tailor to Local Needs Every place has its unique flavour. Assess how well the SOE Protocol adapts to your local requirements. If it needs a bit of customization to better suit your community, consider those adjustments.

Step 4: Establish Recognition Guidelines Picture the SOE Protocol as a game with rules. Define clear guidelines on how external bodies will recognize the competencies and certifications granted through the protocol. These guidelines are the ground rules everyone follows.

Step 5: Engage the Community Gather your community around the table. Connect with musicians, educators, and all those deeply involved in the music and education domain. Their insights and suggestions are like ingredients that enrich the protocol's acceptance.

Step 6: Pilot Test in a Smaller Circle Before going all-in, take the protocol for a test drive on a smaller scale. Try it out with a select group of institutions or organisations. This is your chance to iron out any wrinkles and ensure it operates effectively in the real world.

Step 7: Seek Official Accreditation Similar to a movie receiving a rating, your protocol should aim for official recognition. Approach accredited educational and industry bodies to provide their seal of approval. This is akin to receiving validation from the experts.

Step 8: Promote and Share Widely Spread the word! Let the music and education community know about the SOE Protocol. This is like sending out invitations to a grand event; the more attendees, the better.

Step 9: Continuous Improvement Remember, this isn't a one-off endeavour. Regularly monitor the protocol's performance and actively gather feedback. Just as a chef refines a recipe, keep enhancing the protocol to make it even more effective and appealing.

By following these steps, you'll introduce the SOE Protocol to your community while ensuring it adheres to international standards and resonates with your local context. This approach will help establish the protocol's validity and ensure broad acceptance within the music and education community.

Conditions for the concession of Certification

Educators, professionals and workers in the music industry, without any discrimination for nationality, sex, religion, race, and political orientation, can register on the project's platform and have a chance to receive the Certification of Competences, by completing the requirements, explained below.

To obtain the certification, the applicants must meet the established requirements for the specific certification:

➢ Successfully complete all the required phases:

      I.   **Phase 1: Register to the [Platform](#)**
     II.   **Phase 2: Assessment and Verification of Skills.**
    III.   **Phase 3: Generate the Certificate**

Certification of competences procedure

Phase 1: e-Platform Enrollment

Register through the [project's platform](#) by providing your personal information, such as your full name, age, and email address. The User Guide (Annex 1) will guide you through. Rest assured that all provided information will be treated with confidentiality and used solely for project-related purposes. Once registered, you can access a range of Training Tools, and innovative learning resources that empower participants to develop their entrepreneurial skills, thrive in the dynamic music industry, and ultimately get their certification.

Phase 2: Assessment and verification of Skills

2.1 Training Tools

The Training Tools consist of five Modules, which each on has a number of Units:

Module 1: Soft Skills For Musicians
    Unit 1.1: Time management
    Unit 1.2: Emotional Intelligence; Self-Motivation, Dealing with Frustration
    Unit 1.3: Self – Discipline
    Unit 1.4: Adaptability and Empathy

Module 2: Networking

    Unit 2.1: Fundamentals of Networking

    Unit 2.2: Digital Network Platforms

    Unit 2.3: Co-Writing and Collaboration In Music Industry

Module 3: Communication

    Unit 3.1: Basics of Communication Theory

    Unit 3.2: The Communication Strategy

Module 4: Marketing

    Unit 4.1: Let's Brand Yourself! Building A Personal Brand

    Unit 4.2: Analogue Or Digital? Selecting The Right Tool

    Unit 4.3: Keep It Simple: Basic Tools to Sell Your Music

    Unit 4.4: Drawing On Canvas: Developing Digital Contents

Module 5: Project Cycle Management

    Unit 5.1: Project Cycle Management

    Unit 5.2: The Process of Project Planning

    Unit 5.3: The History of Rock and PCM

Module 6: Business Model Canvas

Before starting the course, participants are advice to refer to the Use Guide (Annex 1) for tips and guidance. After reading the Training Tool by studying each Module participants can be required to take the Assessments related to each of the Units. In addition, after each Module there are available free resources (articles, videos) for further studying.

2.2 Assessments

The e- learning Platform, the Training Tools and the Assessment, are integral parts of the second phase of the certification process. All of them are available and conducted online.

The purpose of the Assessments is to evaluate the candidate's Competences concerning the application of their specific knowledge, skills, and tools in music Entrepreneurship.

The Assessments consists of a short assessments containing different types of questions including multiple choice, True or False, Fill in the Blanks questions at the end of each Unit of each Module. The questions cover all topics addressed in the Training Tools. Participants are required to select or write the correct answer(s). Each correct answer is awarded one point, and there are no points for incorrect or omitted responses.

Each Assessment is allotted 10 minutes for completion. To pass each Assessment, participants must achieve a minimum score of 70%.

Phase 3: Grant the Certification

After the completion of the whole course, participants' performance will be evaluated based on the results, with a minimum passing score of <u>70% required to successfully complete each Assessment</u>.The learning e-Platform's automated system will instantly analyse the responses and determine whether the participant has achieved a passing score.

For those who meet the minimum score requirement, an automated certificate will be promptly generated by the e-learning platform. This certificate will serve as a recognition of the participant's successful completion of the Assessment and their demonstrated understanding of the course's content. The certificate will contain essential details, such as the participant's name, the title of the quiz, the date of completion, the project's title and the project's and EU logo. In addition, on the certificate will be demonstrate the total hours for the completion of the course and the corresponding EQF Level 5 as well as the 0.8 ECVET credits.

The automated certificate will then be sent to the participant's email address, which they had previously registered on the platform. This email notification will serve as confirmation that they have attained the certificate and provide them with easy access to download or print the certificate for their records.

Issuing automated certificates streamlines the certification process, ensuring quick and efficient delivery of recognition to successful participants. It encourages and motivates participants to strive for excellence and demonstrates their competency and achievement to potential employers, peers, or other stakeholders. Moreover, receiving the certificate via email adds to the overall user experience, making it convenient and readily accessible for participants to showcase their accomplishment in the assessed quiz.

Annexes

Annex 1: User Guide

SOE e-Learning platform – User Guide

Annex 2: Certificate template