



## THE CASE: "Street Art in the Small Village"

### Context (where, who, how)

At Tallinn University, second-year youth work students were involved in the Winnovator project through a study course called "Project Work in Youth Work." The course aimed to equip students with the skills needed for project execution in a youth worker's daily tasks, including securing funding for youth projects and supporting young people through project work. Given that young adults are an underrepresented group in youth work, the course specifically targeted this age group, with the aim of preparing youth work students for professional practice in empowering young adults.

A Problem-Based Learning pedagogical approach was adopted, where learning was primarily self-directed through cooperation in teams, guided by a jointly formulated problem question: "How can we engage young adults in an e-learning environment through project work?" This question was explored through a collaborative, real-life learning task where students engaged with the target group to support and empower young adults through project work. This process involved identifying the needs of young people in the local social context and, in collaboration with the young women involved, designing a concrete project proposal in the form of an concrete application.

### Activity description (what, how, why)

The student, who worked at a youth center in a small village and had previous contact with the young women, formed the core of the team, around which cooperation quickly developed with a sense of trust, support, and synergy among the team members.

The overarching goal was to involve youth in the project from planning to execution, allowing them to participate in discussions, idea generation, decision-making, and drafting a funding applications, ensuring that the project addressed their needs and expectations. Roles were assigned based on each individual's skills and strengths, such as managing project applications, handling administrative duties, and providing guidance and monitoring throughout the process. This organic division of roles ensured that everyone felt comfortable and confident in their tasks.

Challenges arose, primarily due to time constraints and difficulties in finding suitable meeting times, as the students and young participants had different day-to-day realities – one was finishing high school, while the other was a young mother with small children. To overcome these challenges, team members worked independently on their tasks when they couldn't find a common schedule, ensuring continuity. Digital tools like video calls, group chats, emails, and shared folders were instrumental in maintaining communication and sharing project-related information. As the process evolved, an online task chart was created, which provided a clearer understanding of completed and pending work.

The collaboration resulted in a project aimed at offering young people aged 16 to 26 from a rural area the opportunity to participate in a two-day graffiti workshop. This workshop allowed them to acquire street art skills, express their creativity in public spaces, build new friendships, and discuss their future perspectives. The project received funding from KULKA (Cultural Endowment of Estonia). The two young people involved in creating the proposal joined the organizing team alongside one student, who worked as a youth worker in the local community. The project was successfully implemented during the summer of 2024.

The main outcomes of the collaboration were a successfully executed project and the development of essential skills among participants. Tangible outcomes included a youth-centered project and activities, effective resource management, and a successful funding application. More importantly, the process

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enhanced the participation of young women, who were actively involved at every stage, contributing ideas, engaging in decision-making, and implementing project activities. This allowed them to take ownership of the project and resulted in learning outcomes, such as improved communication, problem-solving, project management, and team work skills.

### **Conclusion**

The main insights from this case include the importance of having a well-balanced team with diverse experience and mutual respect. Effective collaboration requires clear communication, shared goals, and a willingness to compromise.

Another critical lesson was the necessity of time management and realistic planning, utilizing digital tools to maintain communication and manage time efficiently.

The project's success was largely due to the team's ability to adapt and resolve challenges as they arose, as well as engaging participants at every stage of the process, from planning to execution. This approach fostered a sense of ownership among the participants and ensured that the project aligned with their needs and aspirations.

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