



Fostering
Social
Justice



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TOOLS AND METHODS

Music as a universal
language
to connect people

Germany 2021



IFS FOSTERING SOCIAL JUSTICE

TOOL'S SUMMARY

Tool/method name	Music as a universal language to connect people
Tool/method summary description	Nusz as a neighbourhood center started an initiative called SPIRALE: it is meant to be an open space for children, youth, and adults to come together to connect and create. They offer equipment, education in dance and music for everyone to foster self-expression and empowerment.
Country observed	Germany
Year observed	2021
Programme area	Social inclusion and active citizenship
Tool type	Musical training, workshops using music and dance as a gateway to foster inclusion and active participation within the community.
Specific topic	
Beneficiaries of tool:	Kids and young adults (up till 27) but also adults, especially as volunteer teachers.
Can this tool be applied to other beneficiaries: yes/no	Yes.
What type of beneficiaries: ALL, or specific ones?	All
If specific ones, which?	specifically for kids and youth (up till 27)

Tool full description

“Spirale” offers an easily accessible space for learning about, making and creating music and dance. Everybody can join. A team of staff and volunteers administer the connection that is happening through the common base line: music and participation.

Since it is located within ufafabrik there is a wide range of other (peer)support options.

Context

For Spirale, the beneficiaries are also the community, because Spirale is helping the youth to be active citizens, strengthen the social cohesion by connecting different kinds of youth (age, gender, nationality...). This is a place for education within a tolerant environment.

In creating music, one faces different challenges. To overcome those helps to educate young people to face other challenges in life together.

The range of the network connections makes it easy for workers to guide people to other institutions.

Could it be used in other contexts? If yes, which ones?

Yes, music as a universal language can resonate well with for example elderly people as well. Music and art as a universal “language” creates a low-threshold and unconditional environment. Therefore, it is applicable for migrants as well.

What is innovative about this method or tool?

Common baseline → music, known to all ages and cultures. Making it accessible to everyone within every socio-economic spectrum creates equality and active (voluntary) participation.

Expressing emotions through music.

Detailed Methodology

Inviting everyone to participate. Spirale can be seen as a gateway to other institutions within the network of Nusz and ufafabrik to solve deeper, maybe even more personal problems.

Within Spirale people can find support by peers, volunteers, and social workers as staff members. In case of other challenges popping up Spirale is connected to a very wide network of institutions to tackle different challenges. This one institution is really part of a wide network of social, economic, peer and neighborhood support.

Pedagogically the approach followed is mostly flipped as it realizes objectives based on the needs and teaches of its participants, with a strong inclination towards near-peer learning as a many of the people that initially were learners in SPIRALE are now working there exchanging experiences.

The project is mainly funded by the local government, like most NUSZ projects, but supports a great deal of its endeavors in volunteering or initiated projects like festivals and concerts.

Specific advice for staff/volunteers/adult educators:

- The importance of safe space creation, recognition, and maintenance.
- Always welcome and always connect!
- Don't care about numbers and schedules but the realities of the people you are working with.
- Build a solid ground for expression, creative in any means.
- Help people to help themselves, to teach together. That method is important, for giving dignity to the people.

- Grow and change without losing your values. For this, always keep a democratic organization, maintain relationship inside the organization (between workers, volunteers), and know how to negotiate.
- Maintain a strong and good network.

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