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Digital social innovation: new educational competences for social inclusion (DSI)

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Competence essential to implement ICT-based social inclusion initiatives/services

1. Facilitating individual and group learning in an enriching environment

...means establishing dialogue and ensuring cooperation mechanisms with individuals, groups and communities. This means that the youth worker has the attitudes, knowledge and skills to support young people in identifying and pursuing their learning needs and to then choose, adapt or create methods and methodologies accordingly. Ideally, the youth worker and the young person trust each other. The youth worker actively supports and enhances young people's learning processes, self-responsibility, and motivation, and the youth worker empowers young people to improve their personal situation.

Attitudes:

- Readiness to improvise & accept ambiguity
- Being open towards learning/unexpected learning (for oneself & others)
- Readiness to upskill & stay up-to-date with existing methods & related sources
- Readiness to be challenged & take risks
- Readiness to trust young people's capacity to direct their own learning
- Being open to using different ways & methods to encourage creativity, problem solving and 'out-of-the-box' thinking
- Willingness to address ethical issues as a source of learning about & from others. Being open and accepting that failure is a part of learning

Skills:

- Skill of choosing appropriate methods & assessing young people's learning needs & objectives
- Skill of identifying, organising & referring to appropriate resources to support one's own learning

- Skill of initiating & supporting self-reflection on learning
- Skill of identifying dimensions & stages in group processes
- Skill of building up & supporting the self-confidence of young people
- Skill of empathising in a way that others can learn from one's experience
- Skill of addressing crisis situations
- Skill of enabling individual and/or group reflection on ethical issues

Knowledge:

- Knowledge of learning styles, knowing methods to identify them & to work with them
- Knowledge of group processes, mechanisms & principles (including power relations)
- Knowledge of competence assessment principles & related methods
- Knowledge on how to look for information about methods & methodology & how to share the resources adequately
- Knowledge of the principles of methodologies used in the field of youth
- Knowledge about emotions & emotional mechanisms
- Knowledge about crisis mechanisms & management

Behaviours:

- Motivates & empowers young people
- Is honest, respectful & transparent
- Fosters democratic & active participation
- Respects ethical boundaries when working with (the group of) young people
- Raises young people's awareness of the power of change
- Supports young people in dealing with crisis situations in a fair & constructive manner
- Generates trust & maintains confidentiality
- Acknowledges the experiences of others
- Encourages & actively supports collective actions
- Addresses factors supporting & blocking creativity
- Has the courage to improvise & experiment & recognises the importance of this
- Aims at reaching educational aims by using specific ways & methods that encourage creativity, problem solving, 'out-of-the-box' thinking, in different environmental aspects
- Is OK with imperfections, failures, and mistakes

2. Designing programmes

...involves a good understanding of the different groups and environments that a youth worker works with. This pre-condition is essential to being able to develop and design programmes – be it with an explicit educational purpose or not. The youth worker applies non-formal learning values and principles in the programmes and responds to the needs and realities of young people, which are more complex in an international context. This competence area includes, implicitly, how designing programmes can involve addressing political, societal and cultural issues in youth work.

Attitudes:

- Willingness to research & stay up-to-date with the newest developments in non-formal learning-related practices
- Readiness to accept the 'unexpected' (elements, learning, etc.)

- Readiness to allow one's own views on educational approaches to be challenged & to revise one's views where needed
- Readiness to face external factors that can influence the development of the programme/practice
- Displaying genuine interest in the group's needs
- Willingness to see each young person in a holistic way

Skills:

Skill of working with & on values through different [learning] approaches

- Skill of developing meaningful programmes that motivate & engage young people
- Skill of identifying external influences on the development of practice of youth workers
- Skill of assessing/analysing the needs of young people & then involving them in developing a corresponding programme
- Skill of adjusting the educational approach to the needs of the young people
- Skill of taking the socio-political & economic contexts of the young people into account & from this deriving an appropriate educational approach
- Skill of adjusting approaches & methods based on [youth] research outcomes

Knowledge:

- Knowledge of the values & key principles of non-formal learning
- Knowledge of the socio-political & economic contexts of young people
- Knowledge of project management processes
- Knowledge of different educational methods & concepts; knowing how to tailor & apply these to respective needs
- Knowledge of assessment practices in non-formal learning
- Knowledge of appropriated methods of transferring knowledge to young people
- Knowledge about value systems & related mechanisms
- Knowledge of how to apply research into practice

Behaviours:

- Assesses the needs of the young people before or at the very beginning of the activity (and proceeds with tailored adjustments if needed)
- Involves the young people in designing the programme, where possible
- Considers & applies the principles of non-formal learning when designing the programme with a particular focus on 'youth-centredness', 'transparency', 'democratic values', 'participation', 'empowerment' & 'social transformation'
- Keeps an eye on the objectives of the activity & the young people's needs
- Deals with programme-related ambiguity
- Deals with unexpended elements & dimensions that influence the development of the programme
- Is willing to challenge the values behind the programmes
- Sees the young person in a holistic way

3.Organising and managing resources

...means understanding the values and working culture of youth projects and youth organisations. The youth worker understands the factors that influence such projects and

organisations and that these are even more varied in the context of international collaboration. The youth worker identifies leadership styles and assesses the impact he/she has on the target groups during an activity. He/she understands what motivates young people to take part in projects, how to nurture this motivation and manage risks accordingly. This competence also includes knowledge of national legislation and financial resources management..

Attitudes:

- Willingness to take on tasks that perhaps are not normally a part of one's role
- Readiness to be challenged with regard to leadership styles
- Readiness to share & to be open about one's own intentions
- Readiness for continued learning, e.g. on financial management
- Sincere interest in the young people's well-being
- Awareness of one's own competences and resources • Readiness to work on becoming an 'inspirational leader

Skills:

- Knowing how to apply human resources management tools to non-formal learning settings & to specific target groups
- Ability of using an inspirational leadership approach
- Skill of adjusting programme elements to resources management
- Knowing how to empower young people to organise & manage resources
- Ability to manage/deal with frustrations, conflicts cc& risks
- Ability to work with diverse groups in a non-formal learning context
- Strength in knowing how to foster collaboration among the members of the group, while taking their [individual] surrounding environment into account

Knowledge:

- Knowledge of human resources management & inspirational leadership
- Knowledge about system dynamics & systemic approaches to human relations
- Knowledge of emotional mechanisms in groups & with individuals
- Knowledge of the target groups & their surrounding community (e.g. friends, family, colleagues, etc.)
- Where relevant, knowledge of financial management (with a focus on projects/programmes)
- Where relevant, knowledge of fundraising
- Where relevant, knowledge of relevant policy & legislation on specific topics (e.g. health

Behaviours:

- Demonstrates self-management skills
- Develops programmes or activities based on a needs and opportunities analysis, including socialising activities
- Builds and maintains a good relationship with individuals and the entire group of young people, taking their environment into account
- Provides support for young people to take risks
- Acknowledges and celebrates young people's efforts
- Recruits and manages volunteer and paid staff
- Pays particular attention to the young people's well-being
- Fundraises and manages financial resources

- Encourages and supports young people in managing resources – if possible in an environmentally-friendly way

4. Collaborating successfully in teams

...means that the youth worker contributes to team work and maintains good working relations with everyone involved with the project. The youth worker motivates and supports colleagues in achieving given objectives. This competence area also includes systemic cooperation and responsibility in an international context.

Attitudes:

- Willingness to take on tasks that are not normally a part of one's role but that will ensure safety for the team and the group
- Being open to & ready for new challenges
- Readiness for continued learning • Being open to different sources of learning
- Being aware of one's own competences
- Being aware of how much others can teach you & of the principles of 'to get and to give'
- Readiness to reflect upon & rethink one's own role
- Readiness to ask for support and to admit personal limitations in the context of the activity/group
- Readiness to support colleagues' learning needs
- Being aware that one is a role model, both as an individual & as a team

Skills:

- Mastering methods and techniques that support a clear & fair division of roles and responsibilities
- Ability to contextualise and conceptualise team work practices with the principles of non-formal learning
- Ability to match team members' competences to the objectives of the activity and to the young peoples' profiles
- Ability to foster collaboration among the team members
- Ability to deal well with crisis/conflicts in the team
- Ability to work with various approaches, e.g. co-vision, supervision, collegial feedback, and cooperation
- Ability to develop a continued learning plan for oneself
- Ability to deal with emotions

Knowledge:

- Knowledge about team work mechanisms in different contexts & of the possible outcomes of different approaches
- Knowledge about one's personal limitations & how to overcome them
- Knowledge about coaching methods
- Knowledge how to deal with emotions
- Knowledge about conflict prevention and transformation
- Knowledge about feedback techniques (how to give feedback, how to receive it, etc.) Knowledge regarding individual vs. collective interests & focuses

Behaviours:

- Promotes communication & collaboration amongst the team members to nurture qualities & deal with resistance
- Identifies diversity, strengths & weaknesses in the team
- Requests and offers support where needed
- Ensures that knowledge, skills, styles & preferences in the team are shared & communicated
- Deepens knowledge of particular topics/issues
- Coaches colleagues – where possible and requested – based on the approach of non-formal learning
- Helps build team spirit & trust
- Demonstrates empathy
- Acts authentically
- Applies feedback techniques
- Allocates adequate resources & time to team building
- Steers collective and individual emotions in a positive direction
- Receives & expresses criticism in an open, respectful & constructive way
- Deals with frustration in a constructive manne

5. Communicating meaningfully with others

...means building positive relationships with individuals and groups. The youth worker is a master in interacting well with young people as well as with international partners and contributes to smooth communication regarding programmes and projects. Communication is one of the key aspects of youth work. This competence area goes beyond simple communication models and tools. The youth worker also constructively handles emotions, inspiration, intuition, empathy and personalities.

Attitudes:

- Openness to expressions of feelings & emotions (one's own & others')
- Readiness to challenge oneself & others
- Readiness to take a step back & reflect (e.g. on one's own perceptions, understanding, feelings)
- Being aware of the unique yet complex approach to one's identity & how to deal with it when working in a group
- Sensitivity & openness to diversity
- Willingness to learn about the backgrounds/contexts/realities of the young people

Skills:

- Ability to actively listen
- Being able to encourage sharing & mutual support within the group
- Knowing how to develop, adapt & apply methods that support awareness of one's own identity & its intrinsic elements
- Ability to demonstrate empathy in a way that others can learn from it
- Ability to deal with emotions and to ask for support when needed
- Ability to speak in another language than one's mother tongue, where needed

Knowledge:

- Knowledge of the different dimensions & elements of active listening & non-verbal communication
- Knowledge of empathy-related mechanisms
- Being up-to-date on current concepts & theories with regard to diversity
- Knowing about the different dimensions of identity
- Knowing various methods & approaches in working with different groups of people

Behaviours:

- Matches knowledge, theories & experiences to the reality & the identities in the group (explicitly or implicitly)
- Listens carefully to others, without judgement, interruption &, if possible, in an unbiased manner
- Is attentive to body language
- Demonstrates understanding of what sparks emotions & how to deal with this accordingly
- Identifies feelings and emotions & understands their impact on others
- Addresses others' unexpressed concerns, feelings, or interests
- Is transparent about his/her personal emotional state & shares thoughts in a simple manner
- Creates a safe environment where feelings & emotions can be freely and respectfully expressed

6. Displaying intercultural competence

...is the ability to support successful communication and collaboration among people from different cultural contexts and backgrounds. The youth worker has to address and deal with attitudes and behaviours behind this intercultural competence in [international] training and youth work. He/she approaches 'culture' from an identity perspective and understands ambiguity, human rights, self-confidence, acceptance versus own limits, and how geopolitical conflicts influence one's understanding of these aspects. The youth worker takes these intercultural dimensions into account in their work.

Attitudes:

- Being open towards the unexpected and towards ambiguity in the group & in the learning process
- Openness and willingness to look at identity, culture & related aspects from different perspectives
- Readiness to confront others and be confronted in a respectful & constructive way
- Willingness to support & empower individuals and groups
- Being careful not to use methods which implicitly reinforce stereotypes and discrimination mechanisms
- Being aware that culture is a dynamic & multifaceted process

Skills:

- Being able to deal with ambiguity & change
- Being able to deal with tension & conflict
- Ability to raise awareness about each other within the group

- Ability to work with interrelated dimensions of culture and identity
- Being able to initiate critical reflection
- Being able to address human rights topics through different methods (human rights education)
- Being able to recognise discrimination & to understand the related mechanisms in order to react properly
- Being able to conceptualise, apply, analyse, synthesise & evaluate information about or in the group
- Being able to speak at least one foreign language

Knowledge:

- Knowledge of the notions & concepts of acceptance of ambiguity & change
- Knowledge of identity-related mechanisms & theories (with a focus on cultural contexts)
- Knowledge of the theories & concepts of power relations
- Knowledge of the mechanisms linked to stereotypical constructions of reality
- Knowledge of discrimination mechanisms & how to address them
- Knowledge of human rights, human rights education methods
- Knowing how to speak at least one foreign language

Behaviours:

- Reflects on theories, concepts & experiences & applies these with regard to ambiguity & change
- Explicitly wrestles with his/her own biases, assumptions & behaviours regarding stereotypes
- Uses appropriate tools & methods to support the group in deconstructing & reconstructing reality (wrestling with stereotypes, prejudices, assumptions, etc.)
- Encourages young people to reflect on their own identity & related elements
- Explores the complex connections, among others, between identity, politics, society & history
- Identifies and deals with issues of power in & with the group
- Facilitates awareness-raising with regard to conflicts that exist in the society & how they relate to intercultural dialogue
- Recognises and interprets words, body language & non-verbal communication in a culturally-appropriate manner
- Encourages self-confidence & demonstrates [a framed] flexibility in cultural & communicative behaviour
- Is willing to speak a foreign language & overcomes resistances and inhibitions
- Encourages young people to reflect and exchange ideas regarding issues such as solidarity, social justice, promoting/protecting human rights, discrimination, dignity & equality

7. Networking and advocating

...involves developing and managing partnerships with other relevant actors. Youth work does not happen isolated from the rest of the world. Youth workers facilitate networking with others and advocate for the value of youth work. They are conscious about (political) values and beliefs at play in youth work and support young people in developing independent 'political thought'

Attitudes:

- Willingness to collaborate with other actors & stakeholders
- Appreciation of the added value of new partnership & collaboration opportunities
- Being careful regarding young people's safety & well-being (and of all people who are involved)
- Readiness to allow being confronted with other views & work approaches
- Readiness to accept compromise while guaranteeing young people's interests & rights

Skills:

- Being able to identify relevant partners in different environments (especially in an international setting)
- Being able to identify & name the European/international dimension in one's work
- Ability to network with a variety of external systems and actors
- Ability to transfer/communicate & share the learning potential of international mobility experiences
- Ability to identify underlying power relations & mechanisms & to assess the consequences
- Ability to research & access relevant information
- Ability to use media in an appropriate manner, being aware of their possible influence

Knowledge:

- Knowledge about youth policy & youth work in one's own context (community, region, etc.)
- Knowledge of the socio-economic background of the young people
- Knowledge about youth rights
- Knowledge about mobility-related regulations regarding young people
- Knowledge about media & promotion mechanisms with regard to youth work, including digital tools for networking & collaboration
- Knowledge of advocacy approaches & methods in a youth work context

Behaviours:

- Supports partnerships with other actors
- Takes a pro-active role in networking with other actors & organisations/structures in line with the interest of the young people
- Takes a pro-active role in working on the political dimension of networking, making steps towards concrete actions
- Promotes & explains the [learning] potential of international mobility experiences
- Transfers/shares knowledge of youth & social rights & related formal regulations with potential partners & the young people
- Where relevant, overcomes resistance to new partnerships through assessing the potential of that given partnership
- Addresses power relations in a way that primarily focuses on the interest of the young people
- Deals with & uses media in a careful manner, ensuring the safety & rights of young people

8. Developing evaluative practices to assess and implement appropriate change

Attitudes:

- Openness to different evaluation & [self-] assessment approaches in non-formal learning environments
- Readiness to learn about evaluation & assessment
- Readiness to be challenged & challenge other with regard to transformation
- Interest in processes of change
- Readiness to present & share the outcomes of a programme/project with a wider audience
- Being aware of the fact that no information/data is 100% reliable (with regard to its collection & use)

Skills:

- Being able to identify the most appropriate evaluative approach with regard to the needs of the young people & to the objectives of the activity
- Skill of ensuring that the impact assessment of the young people's needs suit the objectives identified
- Skills to write reports & to present them to diverse audiences
- Ability to work with both quantitative & qualitative information/data
- Ability to interpret information/data according to the context of the activity
- Ability to plan an experience's follow-up while taking into account the outcomes of the programme/project

Knowledge:

- processes, assessment mechanisms & tools
- Knowledge about where & how to secure adequate data/material for evaluation
- Knowledge about how to apply the different/chosen evaluation approaches to a non-formal learning context
- Knowledge about quality assurance & what it includes
- Knowledge of the different phases of impact assessment
- Knowledge of ICT-related techniques with regard to assessment & evaluation
- Knowledge of what can generate change & of how to adjust the dissemination & use of results accordingly
- Knowledge of different methods to collect data
- Knowledge about current [youth] research which can support the evaluative process

Behaviours:

- Plans & applies a range of participative methods of assessment & evaluation
- Develops adequate assessment approaches
- Verifies that the outcomes of an evaluation properly match the methods used for the evaluation design & impact assessment
- Deals explicitly with the notion of change & transformation
- Supports young people in challenging their views & capacity to envision next steps
- Encourages creativity when dealing with the follow-up of a given experience
- Demonstrates skills in report writing and presentations geared towards a variety of audiences
- Defines appropriate ways to collect relevant information/data

- Uses findings to influence practice
- Interprets information/data according to the profile & contexts of young people
- Where relevant, uses ICT to support the assessment & evaluation process, or the data analysis