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Project: “Establishment of a transnational network of adult education providers for the promotion of social inclusion of vulnerable groups” – STEP UP

*Project N° 621376-EPP-1-2020-1-EL-EPPKA3-IPI-SOC-IN*

Title: “Formal agreement for the establishment of the Network”



## **Agreement for the establishment of the “Network of adult education providers for the promotion of social inclusion of vulnerable groups through cultural and artistic activities”**

### **Background**

The Network is established in the context of the Project “Establishment of a transnational network of adult education providers for the promotion of social inclusion of vulnerable groups (STEP-UP)” funded under the Erasmus+ project No 621376-EPP-1-2020-1-EL-EPPKA3-IPI-SOC-IN.

Today, on **24.03.2021**, the below organizations, hereinafter referred as party individually and collectively as parties, agree to establish the **“Network of adult education providers for the promotion of social inclusion of vulnerable groups through cultural and artistic activities”**:

- EQUAL SOCIETY – KOINONIA ISON EUKAIRION, Kodrigtonos 33, 10434 Athens, Greece, represented by Mr. Spiridon Frementitis
- CENTRO SOCIAL DE SOUTELO, Rua de Macau 100, 4435-313, Rio Tinto, Portugal, represented by Mrs. Sandra Cristina Rocha Sousa Felqueiras
- ESPACIO ROJO, ASOCIACION, Calle Carlos Daban 20, 2o –B. Madrid -28019, Spain, represented by Mr. Alberto Vazquez
- NYITOTT KOR EGYESULET, Juranyi street 1-3, Budapest, HU-1027, Hungary, represented by Mr. Zoltán Meszlényi-Bodnár
- OBA ÜTOPYA EĞİTİM SANAT VE MEDYA TİCARET LİMİTED ŞİRKETİ, Bahtılı Mh. 3366. Sk. 41/1 Konyaalti, Antalya, Turkey, represented by Mr. Mevlüt Öncel
- BIELSKIE STOWARZYSZENIE ARTYSTYCZNE TEATR GRODZKI, Sempolowskiej 13, 43-300, Bielsko – Biala, Poland, represented by Mrs. Magdalena Wojtczak.

### **Article 1. Mission and vision of the Network**

- Culture has proven to be a cost-effective and flexible tool for promoting social inclusion and development objectives. The Agenda for Sustainable Development of 2030 clearly supports the increasing contribution of cultural activities to sustainable development.
- Art is a tremendously positive force in bringing people together, promoting a more inclusive and peaceful world through its universal values and principles. Regular participation in cultural activities provides various social and health benefits. Not only does it have a direct impact on social skills, but it also creates a new perspective in life.
- In order to achieve its ambitions, the founding members of the Network have set the following mission:

- ✓ To inform and raise awareness about the positive impact of cultural and artistic activities in the social inclusion process of various vulnerable groups;
  - ✓ To promote and enhance the effectiveness of cultural and artistic activities, as a tool for the promotion of social inclusion of vulnerable groups (i.e. women, minorities, immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees, and other disadvantaged groups such as elderly, people with disabilities, unemployed, homeless, etc);
  - ✓ To advocate for the adoption of cultural and artistic activities in the programmes and projects aiming at the social inclusion of vulnerable groups;
  - ✓ To empower the people who are socially excluded.
- The Vision of the network is the empowerment of vulnerable groups through their participation in cultural and artistic activities. The Network aims at strengthening social inclusion, empowering vulnerable groups and promoting equal access to cultural activities, while providing innovative cultural solutions and implementing initiatives and activities that help vulnerable groups overcome barriers to participation in socio-economic life.

## **Article 2. Objective of the Network**

- The general objective of the Network is to bring together and foster the European cooperation of adult education providers of informal and non-formal educational activities with the aim to contribute positively to the social inclusion process and empowerment of vulnerable groups.
- The Network will facilitate the cooperation and exchange of experiences among its members, and promote the role of culture and arts, in the context of adult education, in facilitating the social inclusion of vulnerable groups. The establishment of the Network will result in the accumulation and dissemination of relevant experience, which derives from the implementation of relevant projects and initiatives, and in the production of recommendations for the implementation of relevant activities at the local, regional, national and European level.
- The aim of the Network is not set in stone, it may be altered and broaden at any given time on the basis of a relevant decision of the Governing Body of the Network.

## **Article 3. Structure of the Network**

- The structure of the Network is presented below:
  - ✓ **The Steering Committee**, which will be the Governing Body of the Network.
  - ✓ **The administration** of the Network, which will provide support to the Steering Committee and the members of the Network
  - ✓ **The members of the Network**

### **The Steering Committee**

- The Network shall establish the Steering Committee as the joint Governing Body, which shall be the ultimate decision-making body of the Network. The Steering Committee shall consist of 6 members and in particular:
  - ✓ The Chair of the Steering Committee
  - ✓ The deputy Chair of the Steering Committee
  - ✓ The Secretary of the Steering Committee
  - ✓ Member of the Steering Committee
  - ✓ Member of the Steering Committee
  - ✓ Member of the Steering Committee
- Each party may be represented to the Steering Committee by up to 1 member.
- Every year a new Steering Committee will be elected by the General Assembly and the composition of the Committee will be stated in the respective “Decision on the establishment of the Network’s Steering Committee”.
- The Steering Committee decides on a majority voting, unless a unanimous decision is required. Unanimous decisions are required in the case of:
  - admission of new members in the Network;
  - approval of the Network’s Strategy;
  - any decision related to the resolution of disputes.In the cases where no unanimous decision is achieved for any of the above cases, then the Steering Committee will discuss alternative options/solutions/proposals until an unanimous decision is reached.
- The process of voting is as follows: Following the discussion of an issue by the members of the Steering Committee (either in face-to-face or virtual meetings), the Chair of the Steering Committee will ask the members of the Steering Committee to vote for this issue by voice. Once all members of the Steering Committee have voted, the Chair and the Secretariat of the Steering Committee will count the votes. A simple majority, i.e. 51% majority, is required for the approval/non-approval of the issue for which the voting process will take place. In the event of a tie, a second round of discussions will take place and upon its finalization, a second vote will take place. In the case of reaching in a tie again, then the Chair of the Steering Committee has a second, casting vote.
- Overall, the Steering Committee shall:
  - ✓ Be the ultimate decision-making body of the Network
  - ✓ Be in charge of the design and implementation of the Network’s strategy
  - ✓ Monitor the achievement of the Network’s Strategy and proposes means to ensure the long term sustainability of the Strategy
  - ✓ Resolve any disputes
- The Steering Committee shall hold monthly meetings (virtual or face-to-face meetings), while additional meetings may also be held if and when necessary. Changes in the frequency of the Steering Committee’s meetings require the majority vote of the members of the Steering Committee.

### **Administration of the Network**

- The Administration of the Network shall provide all necessary administrative support to the Steering Committee and the members of the Network.
- For the first two years of operation of the Network, each signatory party of this Agreement will assign one person as an administrative staff of the Network.
- The selection of the administrative staff that will provide support following the end of the initial period of two years will be made by the Steering Committee based on the proposals of the General Assembly.

### **Members of the Network**

- The General Assembly of the Network will be organized once per year.
- The members of the Network elect on an annual basis (during the General Assembly’s meeting) the Steering Committee. Each member of the Network can select up to one candidate for the elections for the Steering Committee.
- The process for the election of the Steering Committee is as follows: A) the Steering Committee will announce each year the date for the meeting of the General Assembly and the election of the new Steering Committee, B) an Election Committee, consisting of 3 delegates of members of the Network, will be established for the purposes of the election of the Steering Committee. The selection of the members of the Election Committee will be made randomly (a draw will be conducted from a list of all members’ delegates) and it is noted that these members will not have the right to be candidates for the positions in the Steering Committee. C) The Election Committee will ask the members of the Network to send a notification regarding their potential candidate for the elections for the positions in the Steering Committee. Each member of the Network must send the information regarding their candidate at least two weeks prior to the meeting of the General Assembly. D) Following the receipt of the applications for the candidates, the Election Committee will prepare a list of the candidates which will share with the members of the Network, prior to the elections. E) the voting for the election of the Steering Committee will be made by voice. F) Following the counting of the votes, the Election Committee will produce the “Decision on the establishment of the Network’s Steering Committee” and the Steering Committee will start its term the day that the abovementioned Decision is signed by all members of the Election Committee.
- The members of the Network hold the right to submit written proposals to the Steering Committee for the development of the Network’s Strategy and any other related issue.
- The members of the Network have the right to request from the Steering Committee any information concerning its decisions.

### **Article 4. Obligations and responsibilities of the members of the Network**

- The members of the Network commit to collaborate actively for the development and operation of the Network, the implementation of its Strategy and the promotion of the Network at a national, European and international level.

- The members of the Network commit to use all of their existing as well as new networks to disseminate and increase the visibility of the Network and of the European Union financial support under the Erasmus+ project “Establishment of a transnational network of adult education providers for the promotion of social inclusion of vulnerable groups” – STEP UP, Project N° 621376-EPP-1-2020-1-EL-EPPKA3-IPI-SOC-IN as widely and as effectively as possible.

#### **Article 5. Admission of new members in the Network**

- New members may be admitted to the Network. The organization interested to join the Network must file an electronic application to any member of the Steering Committee. In its application, it shall describe in which way or form it shall contribute to the Network, and how it aims to facilitate the scope and objectives of the Network. Its application must be filed with all the relevant documents that prove the basis of the application.
- Upon receipt of the application the Steering Committee shall discuss whether the scope of the organization will enhance the scope of the Network, facilitate its objective etc. The Committee shall decide on an unanimous basis.
- If a new member is admitted in the Committee, it has the right to select and propose a candidate for the elections for the Steering Committee after 1 year of membership.
- Any new member shall have a right to vote in the elections for the Steering Committee.

#### **Article 6. Withdrawal of a party**

- All signatory parties are committed to participate in the Network for a minimum duration of 2 years.
- A party may only withdraw from the Network after giving notice of 60 days. The party upon withdrawal shall provide the Network all input and relevant documents for the period of its participation.

#### **Article 7. Strategy for the development and operation of the Network**

- The Strategy for the development and operation of the Network constitutes the guiding document for the Network as it includes the priorities set and the means for achieving the Network’s objectives and priorities.
- A Strategy shall be developed, reviewed and agreed every two years by the Steering Committee. The Strategy will include:
  - the Action Plan of the Network, which will include the activities and actions that will be undertaken by the Network within the next two years in order to achieve its objectives;
  - the dissemination and communication activities, channels and target groups for informing and disseminating the work undertaken by the Network and its members;

- If the majority of the members of the Steering Committee submit a proposal for the revision of the Strategy of the Network before the end of the reference period, the Steering Committee will hold a meeting so as to discuss the proposal. A vote will take place, and upon positive vote of the majority of the members of the Steering Committee, the Strategy shall be revised accordingly.

## **Article 8. Financial rules**

- Each member of the Network is responsible for covering the costs for its participation in the Network’s activities.
- During the first two years of the operation of the Network, the costs related to the operation and development of the Network will be co-funded under the Erasmus+ project “Establishment of a transnational network of adult education providers for the promotion of social inclusion of vulnerable groups” – STEP UP, Project N° 621376-EPP-1-2020-1-EL-EPPKA3-IPI-SOC-IN, in accordance to the financial conditions and rules applied under the relevant Grant Agreement.
- Any new member of the Network cannot benefit from the financial support provided under the Grant Agreement for the Erasmus+ project “Establishment of a transnational network of adult education providers for the promotion of social inclusion of vulnerable groups” – STEP UP, Project N° 621376-EPP-1-2020-1-EL-EPPKA3-IPI-SOC-IN.
- All signatory parties commit that they will comply with the financial rules and conditions stated in the Grant Agreement and its Annexes as regards the financial support provided under this Grant Agreement.
- Any cost that is not foreseen in the Grant Agreement will be undertaken by the member(s).

## **Article 9. Code of Conduct**

- The Steering Committee has adopted a Code of Conduct in order to:
  - (a) Promote honest and ethical conduct, including the ethical handling of actual or apparent conflicts of interest;
  - (b) Promote full, fair, accurate, timely and understandable disclosure in reports and documents that the Network and its signatory parties produce;
  - (c) Promote the protection of the Network;
  - (d) Promote fair dealing practices;
  - (e) Ensure accountability.
- The objective of this Code of Conduct is to ensure that the members of the Network meet the highest levels of professional conduct and ethical standards in supporting the operation of the Network and that they act in the spirit of international cooperation and with commitment to fostering the development of the Network. It applies to all members.
- All the members of the Network are required to be familiar with the Code of Conduct, comply with its provisions and report any suspected violations.

- Each member must act with integrity and comply with the ethical standards of conduct in the Network’s internal and external communications.

### Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest occurs when an individual’s private interest (or the interest of a member) interferes, or even appears to interfere, with the interests of the Network as a whole.

- A conflict of interest can arise when a member takes actions that may make it difficult for the Network to work objectively and effectively.
- Conflicts of interest also arise when members receive improper personal benefits as a result of his or her position in the Network.
- Members who have questions about a potential conflict of interest or who become aware of an actual or potential conflict should bring the matter in to discussion in the Steering Committee in order the matter to be examined.
- In general each member of the Network should:
  - ✓ Be transparent;
  - ✓ Provide sufficient information to the other members of the Network and give them sufficient time to make their voice heard in the consultation process;
  - ✓ Ensure that members are involved in all stages of the process;
  - ✓ Support the vision of the Network;
  - ✓ Create platforms for mutual learning and exchange of information.

### **Article 10. Liability**

- The members of the Network shall be responsible for the implementation of the Strategy, as it will be outlined in the relevant documents.
- In particular, all members shall be jointly responsible for ensuring the implementation of the Network’s strategy.
- Each member shall release the other from any civil liability in respect of damages resulting from the performance of this Agreement.

### **Article 11. Settlement of disputes**

- Any dispute arising out of or in connection with the administration, scope etc of the Network shall be fully discussed in the meeting of the Steering Committee.
- Any member concerned must inform in writing by email all the other parties of the Network about the issue/issues to be discussed.
- The issues are discussed in the first meeting that will take place. The Steering Committee discusses the issue(s) and decides on a unanimous basis.

### **Article 12. Confidentiality and intellectual property**

- The ownership and/or control of intellectual property generated by the Network will be managed by the Network’s Steering Committee.
- During the first two years of operation of the Network, the intellectual property rights generated under the activities of the Network shall be managed in accordance with the provisions included in the Grant Agreement for the Erasmus+ project “Establishment of a transnational network of adult education providers for the promotion of social inclusion of vulnerable groups” – STEP UP, Project N° 621376-EPP-1-2020-1-EL-EPPKA3-IPI-SOC-IN.

### **Confidentiality**

- No party to this agreement shall divulge to any person any confidential information or any financial information which it acquires as a result of its participation in the present and is liable and shall endeavor to prevent its employees from doing anything which would be a breach of this clause. This restriction shall continue to apply for ten years after the expiration or termination of this agreement. The institutions shall each individually confirm that strict confidentiality will be observed in all communications relating to intellectual property created under the activities of the Network.
- For the purposes of this agreement confidential information is any information that the Steering Committee decides to be treated as confidential.

### **Article 13. Duration and validity of the Agreement**

- The minimum duration of the Network is for 5 years.
- After this period of time the parties may jointly decide –in accordance with the decision making policy described in article 3, subsection “The Steering Committee”, that the Network acquires a certain legal form.
- The Agreement enters into force following its signature by the Parties and remains in force until the termination of the Agreement.

### **The signatory parties**

EQUAL SOCIETY

Mr. Spiridon Frementitis, Legal representative

Signature and stamp

CENTRO SOCIAL DE SOUTELO

Mrs. Sandra Felgueiras, Legal representative

Signature and stamp

ESPACIO ROJO

Mr. Alberto Vazquez, Legal representative

Signature and stamp

OBA ÜTOPYA EĞİTİM SANAT VE MEDYA TİCARET LIMITED ŞİRKETİ

Mr. Mevlüt Öncel, Legal representative

Signature and stamp

NYITOTT KOR EGYESULET

Mr. Zoltán Meszlényi-Bodnár, Legal representative

Signature and stamp

BIELSKIE STOWARZYSZENIE ARTYSTYCZNE TEATR GRODZKI

*“Establishment of a transnational network of adult education providers for the promotion of social inclusion of vulnerable groups” – STEP UP*

Mrs. Magdalena Wojtczak, Legal representative

Signature and stamp