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SECTOR SKILLS ALLIANCES

575907-EEP-1-2016-1-EL-EPPKA2-SSA

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**PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF
MENTORING IN THE CULTURAL SECTOR:
BEST PRACTICES AND PROJECTS**

GIULIA FIACCARINI

MELTING PRO



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

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Module:	<i>Mentoring and coaching skills</i>
Unit:	<i>Unit 2</i>
Learning Object:	<i>Practical applications of mentoring in the cultural sector: best practices and projects</i>
Author:	<i>Giulia Fiaccarini, Melting Pro</i>
Technical Reviewer:	<i>Christos Pierrakeas, Panagiota Polymeropoulou, HOU</i>
Scientific Reviewer:	Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, HOU
Abstract:	This learning object is a presentation of 5 significant mentoring programmes and projects implemented in recent years in the arts sector at international level.
Keywords:	<i>Mentee, professional growth, soft skills, European projects, mentoring programmes, best practices</i>



The document created in 2018 for the project Mu.SA – Museum Sector Alliance, funded under the Erasmus+/KA3 programme (project number 575907-EEP-1-2016-1-EL-EPPKA2-SSA).



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Layout design:

DAISSY research group, Hellenic Open University
(<http://daissy.eap.gr>)

Project coordinator:



Project partners:



More information about the project:

 www.project-musa.eu

 musa@daissy.eap.gr

 @MuseumSectorAlliance

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Aim and objectives

The aim is to close the Module providing learners with concrete examples of how mentoring has been developed and applied in the arts sector to empower its students and professionals in different ways and contexts.

Learning outcomes

After studying this resource, you will be able to: (followed by a list of outcomes).

Illustrate a mentoring programme for your existing or ideal workplace

Evaluate 3 benefits of being in a mentoring programme both for the mentor and the mentee

Keywords

Mentor, mentee, mentoring, best practices, soft skills.

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1. Introduction

To wrap up this Module, 5 examples of mentoring programmes and projects designed to empower students and professionals in the cultural and creative sector were selected and are presented here.

They all incorporate elements of mentoring that were described in the previous materials and prove how versatile and effective this

methodology can be in different learning environments and contexts.

The following best practices show how mentoring can be used to offer guidance and orientation to arts leaders in their emerging phase (as in the case of Emerging Arts Leaders/LA) or to empower the leadership skills of established professionals who want to take their careers to the next level (like in the Clore Fellowship).

They include a mentoring scheme specific to the world of museum professionals, the one offered by MA, the Museums Association, that went through a piloting phase to become more accessible and inclusive.

Amongst them, the mentoring scheme designed by University women in the Arts helping women transition from studying to working in the cultural field, proves how mentoring can be key to address gender or other types of equality issues in the arts leadership.

And with the last two examples of European projects researching effective mentoring applications in the cultural field, we see that mentoring can exist as a standing learning scheme or embedded in more extensive and structured training initiatives, as one of the methodologies to support cultural professionals in the complexity of their work lives.

In all these cases, mentoring is used as a powerful practice to inspire people and empower them with the development of qualities and skills that are unique to their learning path and fulfillment.

2. Best practices

2.1 PROTÉGÉ: A MENTORING PROGRAMME BY EMERGING ARTS LEADERS, LOS ANGELES

In 2007 during a convening for arts professionals promoted by the Los Angeles branch of the national Emerging Leaders Network, in association with Americans for the Arts (the US leading organization for advancing the arts and arts education), the growing concern for sustainable leadership in arts and culture organizations led to the idea of a special programme for the advancement of future arts leaders in the greater Los Angeles arts community.

Emerging Arts Leaders Los Angeles (EAL/LA) was created to champion policies and practices of cultural equity, a mission that has always included guidance for the next generation of arts leaders, to ensure that all people, especially the marginalized ones, are represented in the development of arts policy and programming.

Therefore the Protégé programme was designed to mentor emerging creative professionals and offer them guidance and encouragement to strengthen their leadership capacity. It consists of an open application process in which selected participants are paired with seasoned local arts professionals in the Los Angeles area to foster a reciprocal professional development experience.

The programme runs over the course of one year in which Mentors and Protégés meet regularly to discuss upon mutually agreed topics with an emphasis on the Protégé's areas of interest and desired professional growth. In addition to the one-on-one meetings, participants take part in a launch event, professional development workshops and a culminating event open to all the EAL/LA members and the broader community.

Protégé is a free programme, self-administered by its participants with guidance from programme coordinators and Mentors engage on a voluntary basis.

2.2 The CLORE Fellowship within CLORE leadership programme

Clore Leadership is an initiative started in London in 2003 by the Clore Duffield Foundation with the aim to inspire and equip leaders to have a positive impact on society through great leadership of culture.

The leadership development programmes provided by Clore Leadership offer cultural and creative leaders at all stages of their career the opportunity to develop and strengthen their leadership skills, competencies and performance.

The CLORE Fellowship, in particular, targets established leaders who have ambition and vision, and want to take their leadership to the next level. The Programme selects 25 exceptional leaders across the cultural sector (visual and performing arts, museums, libraries, archives and heritage, broadcasting and digital media, cultural policy and practice) from September to the following July each year and offers them an individually tailored leadership development programme through programmed leadership talks and workshops, two residential courses, a secondment in a UK art organization, research, study visits, external courses and conferences and guidance from a Mentor and a Coach.

Mentoring and Coaching are here incorporated in the Fellowship programme to support participants' overall leadership development. The Programme doesn't establish a set scheme for these activities and stigmatizes that it is a self-guided learning process, so Fellows need to be highly motivated and deeply curious. Mentoring and coaching not only guide them through this primarily experiential learning programme, but they are also key to make them part of the CLORE extensive network of cultural leaders spread throughout the UK and beyond. The Programme stresses the bond aspect which

participants develop with one another and with leaders encountered throughout the experience at CLORE. Mentoring facilitates the networking between Fellows and the opportunities for its legacy to last beyond the end of the Programme.

2.3 The Mentoring for All programme by the Museums Associations

In 2017 the Museums Association, the oldest museums association in the world, established in 1889 and based in London, launched a pilot mentoring scheme called Mentoring for All. The aim was to strengthen the mentoring programme already offered within their Associateship, based on the pairing of the new network's Associates with over 160 AMA mentors and built for participants to share ideas, expand networks, improve interpersonal skills and gain confidence and enthusiasm over the course of 2 to 3 years.

The pilot "Mentoring for All" was designed to make the programme more accessible and able to empower more professionals and museums. It was tested in England and Scotland, where eighteen mentoring pairs completed the programme taking part in 86 mentoring sessions.

It incorporated aspects of mentoring programmes from different sectors, tailored to meet the requirements of the museum sector. Created to grow a more diverse participation in the existing mentoring for museums professionals, Mentoring for All reached a more diverse pool of participants, achieving its primary aim of "running an inclusive, flexible programme designed to stimulate personal and professional development and increase the confidence and resilience of those involved", an independent evaluation has found.

MA has started to integrate some of the insights from the pilot scheme into their mentoring offer and the work they do with museums.

2.4 University women in the arts

University Women in the Arts is a mentoring scheme promoted by a consortium of organizations and companies in the UK to help transition women from studying the arts to working in the arts. The programme is targeted at fifteen female university students, studying any arts subject at foundation, undergraduate or postgraduate level in the UK that are given the opportunity to meet and be mentored by some of the leading women in the arts in the UK over the course of 2016 – 2019.

The scheme provides a mentoring toolkit for the 15 chosen female University students as well as mentoring from some of the leading art leaders in the UK who decided to give their time voluntarily within this Programme. Over the course of two years the enrolled participants are provided with mentoring on how to work in and become a leader in the arts, covering advice on leadership skills, careers, work/life balance, how to succeed at University and beyond, finances, how the arts sector works, helping their transition from studying to working.

Complemented by a series of free public events, University Women in the Arts is an initiative whose next round beyond 2019 is currently under development.

2.5 CREA.M AND CONNECT: 2 European projects on mentoring for the arts sector

Over the course of the last 10-15 years the European Union has stimulated education providers to research and test non formal learning approaches in many fields through the Lifelong Learning and Erasmus+ programmes. In the cultural sector it is worth mentioning at least two pilot projects that applied mentoring as a new learning methodology to empower arts professionals and help them face their new and old challenges.

CREA.M – Creative Blended Mentoring for Cultural Managers was a Leonardo da Vinci project financed within the EU Lifelong Learning Programme, which ended in November 2013. The CREA.M partnership was composed by a mix of eight different institutions from seven countries, including vocational educational training organisations, cultural organisations, a small/medium sized enterprise and a public administration.

At the core of CREA.M was a mentoring scheme based on creative play, appreciative enquiry, design thinking and targeted at emerging cultural professionals that wanted to pursue a career in the arts sector. The project mapped out the competencies needed in the sector by involving different stakeholders and, from there, it elaborated a mentoring programme to foster creativity, entrepreneurial and intercultural skills for beneficiaries. Mentors were trained in the use of creative techniques to work with their mentees, as a way to stimulate their personal and professional growth. The CREA.M piloting took place in 6 European countries, with 18 mentoring couples working together for 6 months. Laura Bove, whose mentoring experience is presented in Unit 1, was one of the mentees taking part in the CREA.M testing.

CONNECT is a project co-funded in 2017 by the Erasmus+ Programme to establish a Knowledge Alliance between 10 partners from 6 countries to promote innovative cooperation between universities and enterprises in the cultural sector across Europe. The focus of the project is the design and testing of a Twin-track programme in audience development for students and practitioners working in arts management with a strong emphasis to multidisciplinary training modules and a mix of formal and informal learning methodologies. One of CONNECT's most innovative aspects is that it brings together students and practitioners in a process of mutual learning where the taught elements coming from the course and workshops are immediately applied to the real contexts where the professionals work. To strengthen this learning approach, both groups – university students and professionals – are paired with mentors selected from the arts sector, all along the training programme.

The aim of the mentoring scheme supporting the Twin-track programme is to provide participants with guidance from experts in the field that are external to the actual training initiative. The recruitment and matching of mentors were crucial phases of the project, under the responsibility of the Alliance's partners. Common guidelines on how to manage these steps were shared, to ensure an alignment between the learner's needs in terms of ambitions, skills base, previous experience, confidence and the mentor's profiles. Before being matched and starting their 6 months mentoring process, mentors were trained and introduced to mentees for a first collective meeting. Partners from Spain, UK, Italy, Denmark and Poland then matched each Twin-track Programme participant with a mentor and the mentoring scheme began being tested.

The results from the CONNECT piloting are currently under evaluation.

2. Synopsis

This learning object provides learners with an overview of some of the most relevant experiences where mentoring was tested and applied to boost growth amongst cultural professionals. It presents some past and current mentoring programmes and projects where art practitioners enrolled to manage their work challenges, update their skill sets and 'pass on the torch' in an intergenerational and intercultural exchange.

List of references

Emerging Arts Leaders Los Angeles (EAL/LA)

<https://www.ealla.org/protege>

Americans for the Arts

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/about-americans-for-the-arts>

Emerging Leaders Network

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/networks-and-councils/emerging-leaders-network>

CLORE Leadership Programme

<https://www.cloreleadership.org/programmes/clore-fellowship/fellowships-overview>

University Women in the Arts



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<http://universitywomeninthearts.com/>

Mentoring for All by the Museums Association (MA)

<https://www.museumsassociation.org/professional-development/mentoring>

The mentoring kits developed within the CREA.M project

<https://culturalmanagers.com/wp-content/uploads/5.Creative-blended-mentoring-kit-for-mentors.pdf>

<https://culturalmanagers.com/wp-content/uploads/6.Creative-blended-mentoring-kit-for-mentees.pdf>

The mentoring programme within the CONNECT Twin-track Programme

<http://connectingaudiences.eu/resources/a-toolkit-of-exercises-for-mentors-in-the-connect-programme>

3. Glossary

Mentoring: Non formal learning approach based on a one to one relationship between a mentor a mentee.

Mentor: A more experienced person who is willing to guide another one through a path of personal and professional development.

Mentee: Someone who wants to change their personal and professional life through the support of a mentor.

Secondment: is the assignment of a member of one organization to another organization for a temporary period.

4. Further reading

Diary of a Clore Fellow on her mentoring experience

<https://www.cloreleadership.org/resources/diary-clore-fellow-leadership-lag>

Reverse mentoring according to one of the CLORE leaders

<https://www.cloreleadership.org/resources/respect-your-youngers-wisdom-reverse-mentoring>