

Viola Tamasova – Silvia Barnová

Days of Miloš Ruppeldt – Music Competition and Festival

1. Best practice selection criteria

The Days of Miloš Ruppeldt are a very good example of a cooperation between a school, school community and the local authorities in organizing a special event with the participation of young people under 25 years of age from different regions of Slovakia and from abroad. In the organization of the festival, a big role is played by the Parents Board at the Primary Arts School of Miloš Ruppeldt, which not only co-finances it, but also helps in creating positive relationships with the public and in marketing the festival. The program of the festival is open to everyone interested in classical music, the wider public is welcome, too.

Another positive aspect of the project is that the involvement of the school's teachers, students and their families, and the close environment of the arts school brings the opportunity to create a community of people connected with the school, to get to know each other better and to develop positive relationships based on a common interest. Such a kind of cooperation promotes learning from each other, intergenerational learning but also helps involve people who otherwise would not take part in the organization of a cultural educational event, which can be considered an innovative form of bringing arts closer to people.

2. Organization(s) / person(s) the best practice can be related to

The Primary Arts School of Miloš Ruppeldt was founded in 1919 as a music school by Miloš Ruppeldt and has been attended by many outstanding musicians. It has the longest tradition in whole Slovakia and it has the reputation of a modern arts school realizing high-quality music projects and is a well-known institution among professional and also lay public. Currently, the school has five departments, in which its students can study singing, keyboards, strings, wind instruments and theory of music. The school opens courses for both children and adults and gives all its students an opportunity to develop their talents in one of the fields of study and prepares them for their further studies on a higher level of education and becoming a professional musician or singer.

3. Stakeholders and beneficiaries of the best practice

The Days of Miloš Ruppeldt are a combination of a competition and a festival for primary arts schools, their students (children, youth and adults) and graduates (adults). The audience of the concerts consists of young musicians, their family members, professionals, people working in the field of music, but also the wider public.

The event is financially supported by the Parents Board at Primary Arts School of Miloš Ruppeldt and the local authorities. Teachers, students and their families volunteer during the event.

Primary arts schools mainly from Bratislava region, but also from the whole country and from abroad participate in the competition and the festival. Young artists from Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland regularly take part in the event.

4. Objectives and activities of the best practice

The aim of the festival is to show the wider public the cultural and social contribution of Slovak primary arts schools and to develop the existing international cooperation between high-quality European arts schools.

The two-day competition of young artists under 25 years of age organized within the Days of Miloš Ruppeldt has been held every year since 2000 and it is the continuation of the educational and artistic work of the school. Its aim is to give an opportunity to young talented people to present themselves, to stimulate and develop the young generation's musical activities by means of individual and systematic work. Not only solo musicians and singers, but also ensembles, choirs and orchestras are given space. The competition gives an opportunity to compare the work of the teachers and the whole educational process at the participating primary arts schools.

Every two years, a gala concert of the winners and laureates of the competition is organized by the Primary Arts School of Miloš Ruppeldt, which is held on the second day of the festival. It provides young musicians and singers with the opportunity to present high-quality performances in a concert hall.

5. Area(s) affected by the best practice

Although the project is realized by an institution of formal education (a primary arts school), the festival is also an activity of cultural education, which is not focused exclusively on professionals in the field of music, arts

students or their families. The programme of the festivals is targeted at the wider public with the aim to educate them in the field of music in a non-formal educational environment of a concert hall.

6. Territorial scope of the best practice

The Days of Miloš Ruppeltdt is an international event of regional importance, so far it is a V4 project in which primary arts schools from Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland participate.

7. The conditions (human, financial, technical) required for the best practice

The management and the teachers of the school have a key role in ensuring the high quality of performances not only by educating young people in their primary arts schools, but also in finding other institutions joining the festival both from Slovakia and abroad and building good (not only) professional relationships with them. As for the gala concert, the participation of the winners of the competition is not enough, if the organizers want to attract the wider public. To make the festival attractive, also performances by the laureates and other well-known musicians are necessary.

The budget of the primary arts school is limited, therefore, some financial participation of the school's partners is important, as well as other forms of support. The school regularly applies for grants, cooperates with the local authorities, and makes efforts to find local sponsors as well. Not only sponsors, but also hands-on volunteers are of a significant importance for lowering the costs as there are many activities they can do and so, the organizers do not need to outsource them to external agencies or companies.

The primary arts school can use its own technical devices and provide its building for the purposes of the competition, but for the gala concert, a big concert hall is needed.

8. Results and short-, mid- and long-term impact of the best practice

Having an opportunity to perform and compete can be a source of motivation for the participating young artists to improve their skills and to continue in their studies in the field of music. For the primary arts schools participating in the Days of Miloš Ruppeltdt, it is an opportunity to develop professional, social and cultural relationships between schools as well as

music teachers both on national and international levels, exchange their experiences and to cooperate with each other. Especially the gala concerts have attracted the lay public who has had an opportunity to see high-quality performances. The festival and its accompanying activities are a proof of the saying that art brings people closer to each other.

9. Sustainability of the best practice

The festival has quite a long tradition of 18 years and, during its existence, it has built a solid base of people who have supported the festival and who are willing to participate in its organization in the future as well, so, the sustainability of the project is more or less secured but, on the other hand, its dependence on all the partners must be admitted.

10. Adaptability of the best practice

This example of best practice is easily adaptable in every region of Slovakia as well as abroad. The project can be considered innovative in the specific conditions of our region and in other countries where close cooperation between schools and their environments is, due to historical and cultural reasons, not as frequent as in other countries. The main obstacle in its implementation can be in the motivation of people to participate in the organization of the event and finding sponsors.