Implementation Plan

Student Project & Art Exhibition

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Global Project and Change Management
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Introduction & Background

In the past 6 months, we have dedicated our semester to learning more about the ocean and how to protect it. While most people know that ocean conservation is necessary, it is still a distant problem to many. Therefore, we wanted to raise awareness for the ocean. This document is created by a team of third-year Global Project and Change Management students from Germany and the Netherlands, and made for one of our courses.

While studying, you often hear as a student: you are the future of this country. Even though it is portrayed as if students have a lot of power and would be the ones changing the future for the better, reality looks very different. Often students making decisions are not treated equally as working professionals and are not taken seriously. We want to provide students with the opportunity to let their voices be heard. Art appropriates and transforms the way we question societal norms, values, and practices (Glǎveanu, 2017). Therefore, we want to give art students an opportunity to use their creativity to raise awareness for the ocean. Furthermore, artistic creative activism refers to the deliberate use of art within activist action, which is what we want students to try. We came up with this idea during the school semester, but since our time working on this idea is almost over, we hope you can bring it to life.

We want you to either invite art schools to a national competition where students can submit a piece related to the ocean. Alternatively, organise the competition within one school and have them execute the exhibition as an individual uni event. The best pieces will be selected to be shown in an exhibition organized by you and any partners who might be interested. Right now, we were considering inviting schools from the Netherlands or Germany due to our background. However, this type of exhibition can take place anywhere. Ideally, the students would first receive a class from marine experts to gain a deeper understanding of the topic. Then students learn more about the ocean's current challenges and have a chance to showcase their work to a bigger audience.

Why do this

The exhibition intends to showcase the ocean's beauty and fascinating role in the planet's overall health and thus, it is to contribute to ocean conservation. Based on the motto "You can't protect what you don't love", previous exhibitions present the strategy of combining art and conservation in order to reach people in a different way. Thereby, it is aspired to create an emotional connection to the ocean rather than just being exposed to facts. This initiative does not come by chance. Instead, it is inspired by the four different ways to communicate around nature. The first one is called the loss message and focuses on extinction and habitat loss. Next to that, the need message refers to economic services such as financial value. Beyond that, the love and the action message address the beauty of nature and our fascination, intending to encourage us to take action such as changing our behaviour. In this context, the love message in combination with the action message is assumed to be the most likely to create public change (Prichard, 2020).

love + action = public change

In this regard, by connecting people to nature, the love message can be activated.

Why do this

In addition to that, interviews with experts in the field of ocean conservation have revealed how crucial public attention is for making progress in conservation. Hence, the exhibition can contribute to addressing the lack of awareness in the context of ocean depletion. Moreover, it might reach people who otherwise do not deal with the issue of the depletion of marine biodiversity.

Talking about the target group, with 9.11 million people between the age of 14 and 24 years in Germany in 2021 (Pawlik, 2022), the project offers a large number of people that has an enormous impact on our future. It needs to be considered, that the art students who would be involved in the assignment would only make up a smaller percentage of this number. Nevertheless, it can be expected that, through communication among the students and social media, the topic can attract the attention of a much larger audience than the participating students. Also, reaching out to this generation through the educational sector might even lead to political attention. At least, the project can have an impact on the students' visions for the future of our planet and their perspective on the importance of the ocean. Therefore, drawing attention to the ocean can create a feeling of responsibility.

The benefit for you implementing this idea and facilitating the process is mainly in reaching a target group that is possibly not aware of your organization/company. In general, each step, from the student assignment to the online and/or offline marketing for the exhibition, to the exhibition itself, can generate attention for your organization or company and the work you do.

Step–by–Step Guide

This guide can function as a roadmap and/or checklist when working on the exhibition. Feel free to tweak and adapt the individual points to your opportunities and needs.

1. Present the assignment to the participants

Talk and think beyond the ocean's beauty – it is also mysterious, important, dangerous, undiscovered, complex, surprising and a source of food. The ocean is essential to all life on Earth and increasingly under threat in various ways. There are many ideas that spark hope to preserve oceanic life, art pieces could also show the reasons for hope. Art pieces can be paintings, sculptures, music, and other sound art, videos, you name it. In the end, it is up to you to define requirements based on the time, space, and other resources you have available.

Indicate a deadline for when art pieces need to be completed.

2. Provide background information on the ocean and its impact on humans.

You can find input for example at the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (https://oceandecade.org/) or from the non-profit Mission Blue (https://missionblue.org/ and the documentary Mission Blue). For information on the connection between the ocean and society, the journalism project The Outlaw Ocean (https://www.theoutlawocean.com/) is a great source.

For a list of sources, have a look at the last section of this document called additional information.

3. Invite experts for first-hand impressions and experiences

These can be marine scientists, fishermen, conservationists, marine journalists, divers, or fellow artists, etc who are willing to share their individual connection to the sea and how they perceive it with the participants. You can invite them to join on location or to be present digitally. As already mentioned, at the end of this document you can find a list of organisations and individuals we find inspiring but don't limit yourself to that. Maybe you or the students/participants have your own connections already.

4. Check-in with participants

Give students time to complete art pieces and potentially check in with participants on the progress considering the deadline.

5. Select a location to exhibit at.

This could be at your organisation or school, but also at a local library, museum, or town hall.

6. Promote the exhibition

Make use of different media channels in your own organisation, your network, and in your city. If possible, sign up the exhibition as part of the United Nations Ocean Decade at https://forum.oceandecade.org/events for promotion.

7. Invitations

Remember to invite all experts involved and interested, fellow students, other stakeholders, and the general public to the exhibition to make it a success.

8. Use storytelling

When preparing the actual exhibition, the order, and the way it is shown matters. If possible, make use of storytelling to guide through the exhibition.
Example:
- Start with the fascinating, surprising facts.
- Move over to how the ocean impacts our lives and how we rely on its health.
- Continue with how marine ecosystems are in danger and what that means for us humans.
- Finish with art pieces that show the opportunities and action points to take.

9. Include a feedback and reflection opportunity

At the end of the exhibition, ask the visitors if they enjoyed the exhibition, learned from it, and if their attitude towards the ocean has changed. You could use a simple activity like placing sticker dots in the respective field or throwing table tennis balls into certain boxes or bags shaped like fish. Feel free to adapt the design thematically

10. Enjoy the result of your work!

Checklist

Present Assignment

Provide Background Information

Invite Experts

Complete art-pieces, Check-in

Select a Location

Promotion

Invitations

Order using Story-telling

Reflection Activity

Enjoy the Results

Limitations

The following limitations were identified and need to be considered when executing the idea.

- Budget (the only reward for students is exposure in the exhibition)
- Contacts/Networks (the connection has yet to be made)
- Technological tools (for creating the most immersive exhibition experience)
- Time frame

Risks

The risks are recommended to be kept in mind. However, the next section called mititgation refers to suggestions on how to prevent or respond to those risks.

- No contact from art schools or interest on their side to participate
- No students participating in the contest

Mitigation

- Start the competition only once you have an agreement with several art schools to ensure participation
- Give incentives (e.g. make deal with the collaborating school for the winner in the contest)

Additional Information

The following schools were identified as possible stakeholders for the implementation of the project in Germany.

- Berlin University of the Arts
- Bauhaus University, Weimar
- University of the Arts, Bremen
- Braunschweig University of Art
- The Alanus University of Arts and Social Sciences
- University of Fine Arts, Münster
- State Academy of Fine Arts, Stuttgart
- The Academy of Fine Arts, Leipzig
- Muthesius Academy Kiel
- Hochschule der bildenden Künste Saarbrücken
- Academy of Fine Arts Karlsruhe
- Academy of Fine Arts Dresden
- Kunstakademie Düsseldorf
- Bard College Berlin
- Staatliche Hochschule für Gestaltung Karlsruhe

Some of the following sources were already mentioned in this document. Nevertheless, it is worth listing them again to highlight the value of each source. Each organisation has agreed to let us use their data and information.

- WWF UK (https://www.wwf.org.uk/where-we-work/oceans)
- Sea Shepherd (https://seashepherd.org/iuu/)
- Ocean Decade (https://oceandecade.org)
- Mission Blue (https://missionblue.org)
- The Outlaw Ocean Project (https://www.theoutlawocean.com)

Template Student Assignment

Hello there,

Would you like to show your work to a wider audience and at the same time learn more about the ocean? Then this project is perfect for you!
Our ocean is incredibly important for life on earth but unfortunately is facing numerous challenges. This is why we need your help to raise awareness for these issues and show the beauty and necessity of the ocean. What we want you to do is create an art piece connected to the ocean. It can represent how you feel about a species or one of the issues, or anything else as long as it is connected to the topic. However, this is not just a request, it is a challenge because we are asking schools all over the country to do the same. If your art is selected it will be displayed in an exhibition organized by the [....] This is a chance for you to compete in a national competition and show your talent to a national audience. While at the same time contributing to positive change. Furthermore, you can attend a guest lecture that is given at your school so you can learn more about the ocean. Hopefully, this will give you more information and provide inspiration for your art piece.

Important information for you:

- We are looking for paintings, sculptures, music, animations, fashion, videos etc.
- Fill out an online form informing us of your name, study program, and what kind of art you plan to make. This can help us estimate how many people are participating.
- Submit a picture or video of your art piece before [...]
- The exhibition is on [...]

We are looking forward to seeing your art.

Kind regards,

[...]
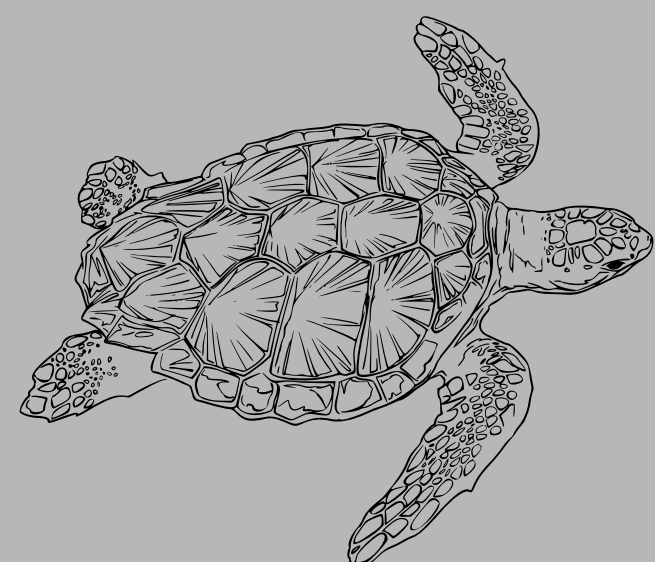
Conclusion

In summary, our team came up with an idea of an art exhibition to showcase the beauty of our ocean and inform about current issues and possible solutions. This can be done in either a national competition amongst art schools, or by one school taking it on as a student project. The idea to involve students is based on the fact that the young generations will be confronted with the consequences of current exploitative practices, so we want to give them a chance to express themselves and become part of the discussion. The details of executing this idea are up to you and we will not interfere with the process at any given moment.
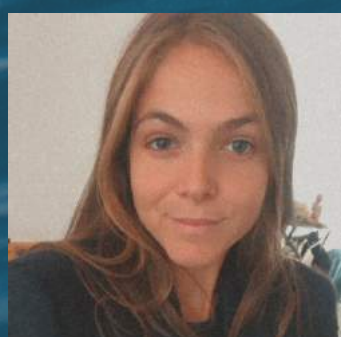
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