

Research project

PROGETTO HORIZON EUROPE ALPHABETICA (GA: 101177819): Assessment of the impact of arts-based education

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Duration: February 1, 2025 - January 31, 2028

Venue: Dipartimento di Interpretazione e Traduzione – Campus di Forlì and Dipartimento di Sociologia e Diritto dell'Economia, Campus di Bologna

1. Introduction

ALPHABETICA aims to provide effective solutions that allow children and young people at risk of poverty or social exclusion to access arts and arts-based education through co-creative participatory research actions. For some young people, access to ‘art’ is limited; often understood as a luxury or a leisure activity that may feel inaccessible or irrelevant. For others, their creative endeavours might not be recognised from their own perspective, as being ‘art’. ALPHABETICA will carry out 12 pilot actions across 8 European countries aimed at enhancing the transformative effect of active participation in community-driven artistic co-creation activities. Collectively, the research pilot actions cover a range of school settings and out-of-school community settings with children from 3 to 18, as well as young people and adults of various ages.

The project is informed by a synthesis of theories of youth participatory action research, Theory of Change, pedagogies of care, love and enchantment, pedagogies of past, present and the imagined future, and the more-than-human approach. This conceptual framework invites a reflexive and in-depth exploration of children and young people’s complex everyday realities, while offering opportunities for creative self-expression and meaning-making, participation, skills-development, and relationship-building.

ALPHABETICA will take a transformative approach by:

1. providing qualitative and quantitative data on attitudes towards and perceptions of arts by children, families, educators and policymakers,
2. using participatory and caring approaches and pedagogies to provide an evidence-based assessment of the instrumental outcomes of arts-based education, their transformative impact,

- and their transferability to children and young people’s other life domains,
3. taking and teaching a caring approach that through arts-based education will sustain a commitment to lifelong learning,
 4. providing scientifically robust recommendations for policy action.

2. Research Objectives

The post-doc research project is embedded in the ALPHABETICA project and will contribute to the development and implementation of four pilot actions:

Artistic and experiential approaches in plurilingual youth community education (ARTEAPPYCOM)	This pilot action aims to overcome the increasing cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity and socio-economic inequalities that formal and informal education systems are facing as multiple challenges. It aims to develop both youth’s multilingual and artistic awareness , and its far-reaching implications, through the affordances offered by experiential, arts-based approaches.
IntegrArte	The pilot aims at co-constructing arts-based tools to fight against discrimination and sustain respect for diversities (gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion etc.) among youngsters (11- 13 years-old). It proposes innovative artistic activities to prevent discrimination, marginalisation, hate speech and racism. Such devices will be co-constructed by teachers, researchers and artists to understand what forms discrimination can take and reflect with the students on how social media can amplify its impact on youngsters’ lives.
Sharing dreams (SHARD)	Imagination as a tool for social transformation through the metamorphosis of exchanged and shared dreams into artworks. This metamorphosis is possible through artistic language. The pilot aims to recover the dreams of a community in order to construct, through aesthetic and artistic experience, a possibility of transforming reality. Building the future by imagining it.
(FOSTERART) / Italy and Poland	FOSTERART takes inspiration from an initiative experimented in a few Italian cities. By collaborating with schools, the pilot action will set up in Forlì, Italy and Krakow, Poland a network of families accustomed to attending cinemas, theatres, libraries, and museums to accompany families that do not have access to these places for a variety of reasons. In this way, a set of shared cultural experiences is created, between resource families and recipient families.

By relying on Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR), pedagogies of care, love and enchantment, pedagogies of past, present and the imagined future, and the more-than-human approach, and in order to produce scientifically robust research aimed at corroborating and promoting the pivotal role played by arts and arts-based education, the post-doc research project has the following objectives:

1. Develop collaborative and participatory practices with stakeholders aimed at providing all children and young people with competences to nurture cultural awareness and expression and assess.

2. Contribute to the drafting and piloting of the international survey on attitudes towards and perceptions of arts in education.
3. Contribute to the dissemination of the project results.

4. Research plan

In this section we indicate a tentative timeline of the project:

	MONTH																								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Research objective 1 – Development of co-participated research																									
Networking and engagement activities	■	■				■	■	■	■																
Co-creation and implementation of pilot action activities										■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
Reporting of project activities																									■
Collection and analysis of evaluation data										■													■		
Pilot action materials																									■
Research objective 2 – Survey data																									
Drafting of e-questionnaire	■	■	■	■																					
Piloting of e-questionnaire					■	■	■	■																	
Coding of collected questionnaires								■																	
Data Analysis									■	■	■														
Drafting of report and policy brief											■	■													
Research objective 3 - Dissemination																									
Submission to conferences													■	■	■										
Paper writing															■	■	■	■							■

The post-doc fellow will develop the project's activities with the tutor. These activities will include: networking and engaging with participating stakeholders; implementation of pilot action activities in schools and other participating institutions/organizations; reporting of project activities; collection and analysis of data of pilot action activities; drafting and revisions of pilot action materials; drafting and piloting of the e-questionnaire for the international survey on attitudes towards and perceptions of arts in education.

The research fellow will be directly involved in interactions with teachers, families and pupils in Schools and associations of the Forlì and Bologna municipalities.

The post-doc fellow will also contribute to the development of indicators aimed at assessing the transformative impacts of arts-based education, and their transferability to children and young people's other life domains.

5. Policy Implications

The drafting of a survey report and a policy brief on attitudes towards the arts and arts-based education.

6. Expected Scientific Outputs

At the end of the 36 months of the project, the post-doc fellow should provide:

- 2 papers presented in primary international conferences
- 2 papers in international peer-reviewed journals
- a survey report for WP2
- a policy brief on attitudes towards the arts and arts-based education in Italy