

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title	Assistive technology Lab for visual impaired students
Key words	SEN, visual impairment, learning difficulties
Objectives	to make taught material accessible and promote information access technology
Phase of studies <i>(Choose all phases it applies)</i>	Access <input type="checkbox"/> Retain <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Graduation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transition to work-life <input type="checkbox"/>
Type of degree <i>(Choose all degrees it applies)</i>	Bachelor's <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Graduate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Master's <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Level <i>(Choose all levels it applies)</i>	International <input type="checkbox"/> National <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Institutional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Faculty <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Group <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Name of the institution	University of Bucharest
Location <i>(City and country)</i>	Bucharest, Romania
Target group/s	visual impairment, dyslexia
Stakeholders involved	University of Bucharest, Traveling Book Foundation, Orange Foundation
Description of the organisational process <i>Actors, triggering evidence, campaigns, graph... (max. 300 words)</i>	<p>The project is financed through the Orange Foundation and through the EEA grants.</p> <p>The aim of this project is to encourage blind people`s access to higher education programmes and increase the chances of graduation among students with visual</p>

	<p>impairments. It also aims at insuring that blind students will have access to study conditions similar to those of sighted students by using equipment and assistive creation that are available in six centers. The equipment consists of:</p> <p>Machine ZY-FUSE - an excellent educational tool for playing graphic information in the form of tactile images;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Computer equipped with the following additional software: JAWS 6.0, ABBYY Fine Reader; - VictorReader device - allows listening audio books in Daisy format; - Audio books in Daisy format; - Konica Minolta bizhub 215 multifunctional, with a great print speed and an excellent resolution. <p>The actors involved were university teachers and students.</p>
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A. FORMAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

<p>A1. ACCESS TO INFORMATION Provide sources of information (URL, websites, literature, materials)</p>	<p>http://www.fcc.ro/old/</p>
<p>A2. TIMEFRAME Since when has it been in use? What is its maturity level (initial, intermediate, advanced)? Describe if there is evidence of its duration in the long run. (max. 70 words)</p>	<p>The project implementation was divided into two phases:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. between 2013/2014 – there were courses accessible for blind students (this phase was financed through the Orange Foundation) 2. between 2015/2016 – the projects was implemented through the name of Inclusive education for Blind people and was financed through the EEA grants, the fourth component: basic social services <p>The project is now at an intermediate level and it is designed to continue for at least three years after the end of the financing period, that is May 2016.</p>
<p>A3. NUMBER OF STUDENTS How many students are involved? Is the number representative considering the target group?</p>	<p>In general there were 30 students per year. Between 2015-2016 a number of 28 students benefitted from this project. The lab is available for all who request it.</p>
<p>A4. SCALABILITY (“volume”) Describe how it has been or can potentially be scaled up and practiced in a wider scale. Or, has it been or can it potentially be scaled down (e.g., from larger to smaller institutions)? (max. 70 words)</p>	<p>It can be scaled up and practiced to a wider scale by implementing the project in other institutions, such as public libraries or other university institutions across the country.</p>

<p>A5. TRANSFERABILITY (from one context to another) <i>Describe how it has been or can potentially be transferred and applied to different (a) target groups, (b) institutions, and (c) societies. If possible, name also some practices that this initiative was developed from or has inspired to. (max. 70 words)</i></p>	<p>Implementing this project in other centres, such as public libraries can provide access to a relative large number of people, not just those involved in university studies.</p>
<p>A6. ASSESSMENT <i>Describe how it has been evaluated. How has it proved its relevance as the most effective way to achieve the objective? How it was successfully adopted? How it has had a positive impact on people? How the impact has been measured? Shortly describe how various forms of evaluations have been used in the assessment (A6.1 User evaluation, A6.2 Self-evaluation, A6.3 Peer evaluation, A6.4 External expert evaluation). Provide references, if possible. (max. 200 words)</i></p>	<p>The process of evaluation of this project consisted of interviews with beneficiaries through an online platform that allowed them to provide feedback based on their experiences. The online platform was designed by the Traveling Book Foundation and can be accessed at: http://www.fcc.ro/old/</p>
<p>A7. CONTACT <i>Who can be contacted so as to seek support and networks for implementing the practice (name, position, e-mail)?</i></p>	<p>Ruxandra Folostina- Lab Coordinator ruxandrafolostina@gmail.com</p>

B. CONTENT EVALUATION CRITERIA

<p>B1. SOCIAL JUSTICE PRINCIPLES (see Nelson & Creagh, 2013)</p>				
<p>B1.1 Self-determination <i>Rate and Justify (max. 70 words) (how students have participated to its (a) design, (b) enactment and (c) evaluation and how they can (d) make informed decisions about the participation)</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Very weakly <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Weakly <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Well X</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Very well <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Students' opinions were taken into consideration when the materials were designed. They provided feedback in order to develop materials that are accessible.</i></p>				
<p>B1.2 Rights</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Very weakly</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Weakly</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Well X</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Very well</p>

<p><i>Rate and Justify (max. 70 words)</i></p> <p><i>(how it is assured that all participants are treated with dignity and respect. How have their individual cultural, social and knowledge systems been recognised and valued?)</i></p>	□	□		□
<p>All participants received a fair treat regarding their cultural and social background.</p>				
<p>B1.3 Access</p> <p><i>Rate and Justify (max. 70 words)</i></p> <p><i>(how it is assured that there is an active and impartial access to the resources (e.g., curriculum, learning, academic, social, cultural, support, and financial resources))</i></p>	<p><i>Very weakly</i></p> <p>□</p>	<p><i>Weakly</i></p> <p>□</p>	<p><i>Well</i></p> <p>x</p>	<p><i>Very well</i></p> <p>□</p>
<p>There is an impartial access to the resourced assured by the project managers that provided free access to everyone that requested it.</p>				
<p>B1.4 Equity</p> <p><i>Rate and Justify (max. 70 words)</i></p> <p><i>(how if it openly demystifies and decodes dominant university cultures, processes, expectations and language for differently prepared cohorts)</i></p>	<p><i>Very weakly</i></p> <p>□</p>	<p><i>Weakly</i></p> <p>□</p>	<p><i>Well</i></p> <p>□</p>	<p><i>Very well</i></p> <p>X</p>
<p>The center helps visual impaired students to have access to materials (books, manuals, textbooks etc.)for the courses they take</p>				
<p>B1.5 Participation</p> <p><i>Rate and Justify (max. 70 words)</i></p> <p><i>(how it has led to socially inclusive practices. How does it increase students' sense of belonging and connectedness?)</i></p>	<p><i>Very weakly</i></p> <p>□</p>	<p><i>Weakly</i></p> <p>□</p>	<p><i>Well</i></p> <p>□</p>	<p><i>Very well</i></p> <p>□</p>
<p>It increased students' sense of belonging and connectedness by providing them with accessible knowledge, that was adapted to their needs. Students, through acquiring that knowledge, had a sense of empowerment and they were allowed to increase their transversal skills.</p>				
<p>B2. COLLABORATION</p>	<p>Within the projects a series of stakeholders were involved:</p>			

<p><i>Describe what kind of collaboration there is between various stakeholders. (max. 70 words)</i></p>	<p>Universities across Romania, NGO`s and the Central University Library.</p>
<p>B3. STUDENT SATISFACTION <i>Describe the student perception of this initiative. Is there evidence of their satisfaction? (see also A6.1) (max. 200 words)</i></p>	<p><i>Even if there is no written feedback or evaluation, students' opinions were taken into consideration when the materials were designed. They provided feedback in order to develop materials that are accessible.</i></p>
<p>B4. STUDENT WELLBEING <i>How does it influence on students' (a) psychological, (b) social, (c) academic, and (d) physical wellbeing? What kind of evidence there is? (max. 200 words)</i></p>	<p>It has an impact on their social, academic, and physical wellbeing because students were involved in a positive environment that it was highly appreciated by students were requested to provide online feedback.</p>
<p>C. FINAL REFLECTIONS (based on the previous description of you good practice)</p>	
<p>Success factors <i>What are the factors required for the successful implementation? (max. 200 words)</i></p>	<p>Because there were no previous services within this field this programme had a positive impact.</p>
<p>Sustainability <i>What is needed for the practice to sustain? What resources are required? How it contributes to environmental, economic or social sustainability? (max. 200 words)</i></p>	<p>There is a constant need for volunteers to be actively involved and to help in developing a supportive environment .</p>
<p>Challenges <i>What are the constraints identified? How easy it is to learn and implement? (max. 200 words)</i></p>	<p>The resources required were voluntary students that were able to get involved into the project activities, such as scanning books. Sometimes the project managers find it difficult to find volunteers and to keep them motivated.</p>

Sources

Kunttu, K. 2005. The study ability model. The Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS). (http://www.yths.fi/filebank/692-ENG_OPISKELUKYKYMALLI_pdf.pdf)

Nelson, K & Creagh T. 2013. A Good Practice Guide: Safeguarding Student Learning Engagement. Queensland University of Technology. Brisbane, Australia. (http://safeguardingstudentlearning.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/LTU_Good-practice-guide_eBook_20130320.pdf)