



Enzim - Seminar on Graphic Design (Slovenia)

Summary

Emzin Institute of Creative production organises twice a year a three-day seminar to promote creativity and innovation in graphic design. Enzim seminar is organised around a series of lectures, real-life examples and practical workshops. The event is open to students and professionals operating in visual communication related fields and brings together world-famous graphic designers, providing a unique opportunity for training and professional development. The seminar has a strong focus on interdisciplinary, social and environmental responsibility, and participatory learning through workshops.

The project

Graphic design is a challenging job that requires continuous professional development and training in creative skills in order to innovate the product and remain competitive.

Emzin Institute of Creative production, a non-profit organisation, organises twice a year a three-day seminar providing a unique learning opportunity to boost innovation and creativity in the Slovenian visual communication sector by bringing together world-famous graphic designers.

The main purpose of the project is to create a setting in which emerging trends and issues in graphic design are presented and discussed with the view of promoting innovative approaches in the Slovenian context and to foster international cooperation.

The seminar is open to anyone involved in creative communication, from graphic design students and professionals, to students of fine arts, architecture and fashion, advertising and marketing agencies, illustrators, art directors, as well as journalists, public relations and human sciences experts.

Approach

Enzim seminar is organised around a series of lectures, real-life examples and practical workshops.

More specifically, lectures typically present some specific themes and topics which are discussed and analysed from different perspectives. In the workshops, participants have to find practical solutions to the issues presented. For example, a workshop focused on how to present Ljubljana to a visitor in a creative way, another on designing a CD cover of a famous singer, and another on creating a European logo.

Sector(s) covered

Main sector

Arts and Creative Industry:
Visual arts, Performing Arts,
Heritage, Media, Music, Book and
Press, Design/Architecture,
Advertising

Other sectors

Business and Entrepreneurship:
Business
creation/support/development
Society: Improving quality of life
Education/Training/Lifelong learning:
Vocational Training, Lifelong
learning, Education and training for
employability



A special focus is given to the generation of creative solutions by promoting discussions amongst participants, sharing knowledge and experiences, and presenting general and specific problems related to graphic design.

The social responsibility of the profession is particularly promoted as participants are invited to critically reflect on the social implications and impact of their work and on how they should bring social and environmental benefits to society and people's everyday life.

Furthermore, the seminar actively promotes a multi-disciplinary approach by enriching graphic design with contributions and experiences from other sectors such as marketing, arts and human sciences.

Element of innovation – the process

Innovation and creativity take place on different levels:

- Different ideas, approaches and methods are presented and discussed;
- Open inter-disciplinary discussion is strongly encouraged as this paved the way to critical thinking and the adoption of a new perspective;
- Workshops are teamwork exercises in which participants are required to develop and apply their creative ideas; and,
- The need to be socially and environmental responsible results in the generation of new ideas on working practices and product development.

In particular, it has been observed that the presentation of real problems and the request to identify practical solutions in multi-disciplinary workshops is the best way to motivate participants to generate new ideas and working methods.

Key successes

(outcomes, results, impacts)

Emzin has seen the participation of numerous students and professionals of different disciplines. The activities have been evaluated and participants have given very positive remarks about the seminar. Positive feedback has been received from businesses, cultural and education institutes as well as from newspapers and TV.

In more detail, the key successes identified are that:

- The seminar has created the basis for new forms of cooperation and partnerships at national and international levels;
- Participants have been exposed to new trends and issues that will be reflected in their future work - in particular students have acquired additional knowledge and practical skills outside their study curriculum;
- Graphic designers have become more responsible towards the society and the environment they live in and work in; and,



- The promotion of creative thinking and innovation in top-quality design enable participants to compete and be commercially successful.

It is also remarkable that many students and professionals that were awarded prizes at competitions on graphic design, marketing and advertising festivals had previously participated at Emzin seminar.

Challenges

The main challenge is to have world famous and renowned graphic designers as lecturers. It is also important that participants come with an open mind and take into consideration intercultural and sector differences. When these conditions are in place, the seminar becomes very productive and inspiring to all participants and to lecturers as well.

Transferability and sustainability

Emzin seminars have been organised since 2000. The event benefits from the support of key stakeholders, such as the city of Ljubljana, the Ministry of Culture, and the Academy of Fine Arts and Design. The plan is to keep running Emzin for years to come.

Special Highlights

Emzin has raised the quality of graphic design and visual communication in Slovenia by focusing thoroughly on the transfer and application of creativity and innovation.

International cooperation, multi-disciplinary and critical approaches are among the main strengths of the seminar as they facilitate additional creative boosts.

Key characteristics

General purpose of the practice	Stimulating innovative/creative behaviours in people and implementing an innovative/creative solution to society problems
Target group	Graphic designing students and professional, as well as people working/studying in related disciplines
Type of learning	Informal
Level of implementation	National
Funding	Public (Ministry of Culture, City of Ljubljana)
Time frame	The project started in 2000
Leading organisations	Emzin Institute of Creative production, non-profit organization