Where poetry lives – Opportunities and challenges of European platform projects as experienced through Versopolis platform

Slide 1: Beletrina

Slide 2: Facts

The idea of the project:
- we are organizing our festival Days of Poetry and Wine for the past 20 years, so we have been working with young, perspective poets for a while now
- we find it challenging to promote our, Slovene poets abroad – get them invited to other festivals, arrange new translations of their poetry (foreign publishing houses prefer novels and short stories to poetry)
- it is also difficult to find out about young talents in other countries
- since one of the priorities of Creative Europe programme is support of artists’ mobility, this was the perfect opportunity to deal with this problem

Definition of emerging artist/poet:
Defining emerging artists was difficult, but we knew that we wanted to promote high quality poets and their poetry and that we wanted to give the opportunity to those poets who haven’t gotten a chance outside their own countries so far, so we developed the following criteria:
- the poet should be recognized as high-quality author in his home country (literary prizes, scholarships, residencies, etc.)
- the poet shouldn’t have more than three independent book translations of his work published abroad
- it shouldn’t be more than 20 years since the publication of his or her first book

Slides 3 and 4: Goals

Our goal for the project is of course that after three years most of the poets won’t fit the criteria anymore and will have more than three published translations, will be recognized also internationally, will receive regular invitations to literary manifestations abroad, will be a candidate for scholarships, residencies, etc.

Another important goal is audience development (one of the priorities of the Creative Europe programme), which means more readers of poetry, more visitors at the festivals,
but also better awareness about the position of poets in the society (most of them cannot live solely from writing but have other jobs as well) and therefore more scholarships, governmental support, etc.

**Activities:**
We built our activities and our entire application around these goals, which means we worked backwards: first we defined what we want to achieve and then we developed the activities, which would help us achieve these goals.

Versopolis work programme for the first year December 2014 – November 2015 contains 6 main Activities:

1. **ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DIGITAL PLATFORM AND ITS OPERATIONS** ([www.versopolis.com](http://www.versopolis.com))
2. **SELECTION OF THE E-MERGING AUTHORS**
3. **AUTHORS MOBILITY**
4. **NETWORKING ACTIVITIES**
5. **EVALUATION**
6. **KICK OFF MEETING**

When developing a project of such scale it is of course essential to have reliable members. We knew most of our chosen members before and they were all highly esteemed organizations of different types. We haven't worked with them before on such projects though, which means we had to check their references and the projects where they have cooperated before. So far the work is going well – there are great differences in their structure, the way they function, etc., but the important thing is that they are reliable, communicative and that they keep the deadlines in mind.

**What is essential for successful management of a project supported by the Creative Europe programme:**
- to be familiar with Creative Europe guidelines (goals, emphasizes, etc.)
- experience with other projects
- team-work of the coordinating entity
- regular communication with member organizations

**Some financial facts:**

Beletrina - Academic Press is the **Project coordinator and the General beneficiary**. This means that Beletrina is the **operational and financial leader** of the project. Each member organization has a special status within the Creative Europe – platform projects (2014 novelty).

Member organizations do not act as project co-beneficiaries or project partners but as **Third parties or sub-contractors of the general beneficiary** (connected to distribution of the EU grant and reporting obligations). Financial shares of member organisation are equal. Grants are distributed in three rounds: 30% advance - 40% after successful interim reports to project coordinator (Beletrina) - 30% after the end of the first year and confirmation of the final report by the EU.