

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project organisation and goals

The project Springboard is supported by the association “SPRINGBOARD – Association for the Promotion of Talents”, founded in June 2015 by Robert Gulla and Michael Schaumann in Vienna. The Association is primarily concerned with assisting young migrants integrate into social circles and providing support for financially disadvantaged Austrian minors in their first professional steps. Our wide network of contacts, supporters and partners provides a greater support base for job application procedures, financial possibilities, grant appliances and scholarships. This enables minors to explore and develop their potential more sufficiently.

The main objective of the association is to "enable others to help themselves", although it also provides in-service training for its apprentices. These factors contribute to a more elaborate structure of the organization, which prompts the ability for many to evolve as efficient and organized learners. The association and its founders are to an extent backed by their office organization to provide a larger apparatus; however, the projects are exclusively and voluntarily carried out by the founders and their assistants.

Implementation

Already implemented projects include following activities:

- Coaching and mentoring,
- Internships and job search,
- Scholarships provided by Springboard or by the affiliated partners

Our work with the adolescents (clients) starts with an introductory discussion to discover one's potential and abilities. We discuss their already obtained skills, as well as interests, and their potential goals. This allows for us to understand their characters and adjust their pre-existing expectations in the right direction. We consider a variety of aspects such as, talents, skills, personality traits, family backgrounds, etc. Although such an intricate procedure may seem overwhelming it enables us to form more personal and direct relationships with these adolescents. Providing mentors helps them feel more confident about their futures as they are able to discuss their concerns and ask for advice.

Subsequently, we uncover more required formalities such as the CV. They get adjusted and improved according to the EU standards and to the requirements of the Austrian labour market. Together we work out individual goals and propose the strategies to fulfil them. According to these strategies we help establish the right training, the right internship, or the right job.

As the young people are advised and promoted by experienced specialists and senior management, we call this process mentoring. A mentoring project is considered completed as soon as a young person has received an internship, a job or a position as an apprentice.

The procedure is the following:

1. Introductory meeting and first interview -> personal impression, assessment of potential and motivation, confidence building;
2. CV analysis -> review; if necessary, improvement;
3. Discussing opportunities and generating new creative professional approaches -> selection: training, education, language skills, internship, job -> determination of objectives;
4. Motivation and reinforcement of ideas;
5. Selecting the means to achieve the goal;
6. Intensive efforts to find a suitable internship / job or organization for job interviews;
7. Recording of success or follow-up mentoring.

The positive feedback from our clients makes us even more motivated to proceed with our project.

Here is an example of our work. In June 2018, one of the partner organisations contacted Springboard and asked to help a qualified asylum-seeking Syrian, experienced in accounting and HR, in his job search. In the first interview round, it became clear that Mr. A. was a perfect candidate to undertake an accounting job, with his motivation being his driving force to find a job. The only problem was to find a company that would agree to employ an asylum-seeker. We asked a tax adviser from our network to evaluate the professional skills of Mr. A. As a result, Mr. A was invited to make an internship in a tax advisory company. Currently, the company is financing his professional training (a course on personnel accounting), and afterwards it intends to employ him on a full-time basis.

We also aim to organize work experiences abroad, much appreciated by our protégés and extremely valuable for the future career developments. For example, in September 2017, we managed to organize extremely interesting internship for a young watch-maker in Switzerland. The most challenging proved to be communication in three languages: English, German and French. But the result is what it counts!

Cooperation

The young people, whom we mentor, are introduced to us either through personal contacts or by already existing well-functioning network. We closely cooperate with the association "Wirtschaft für Integration" (CEO Peter Wesely, Tel: +43 (1) 9444846), "Interface Wien GmbH" (Managing Director Margit Wolf, Tel: +43 (1) 524 50 15 52), Fonds Soziales Wien (Abteilungsleiterin Wiener Flüchtlingshilfe Mag. Renate Schober, Tel: +43 (1) 4000 66491), and "Integrationshaus" (Head of Department Psychosocial Care Mag. Emira Ulrich, Tel: +43

(1) 2123520 – 25). These organisations procure the talented youth for us for further coaching and mentoring.

As our cooperation partners we also see the organizations and companies that support our project in various ways: procurement of internships, financial support, professional advice or a free course (German course or training course). Here are some of the companies we cooperate with: WOLF THEISS Rechtsanwälte GmbH&Co (Dr. Andreas Theiss, Tel.: +43 (1) 515 10 - 5020), KPMG (Dr. Ferdinand Kleemann, Tel.+43 (1) 31332 - 306), GRAF &PITKOWITZ RECHTSANWÄHLTE GMBH (Dr. Ferdinand Graf, Tel.: +43 (1) 4011728), FRESHFIELDS BRUCKHAUS DERINGER (Dr. Farid Sigari-Majd, Tel.: +43 (1) 51515679). In a certain way, our project motivates top managers to social engagement.

Financing

Up to now, the projects were exclusively financed by the private funds of the managing directors and private donations.

Results to date

Year	Mentoring projects	Internship	Full-time job	Apprenticeship	Scholarship
2015 (July-December)	22	3	2	-	1
2016	65	28	3	2	11
2017	80	38	6	2	44
2019 (by 15.01.2019)	20	3	3	1	4

Innovation

Our origin and our environment often dictate our future and our capabilities. They create limits which often enable inequality to prosper, hindering progress, innovation and solidarity. Projects such as Springboard allow those who fall victim to unjust disposition to find a road out of poverty, out of oppression, out of inequity. Springboard allows for minorities to find a place of comfort, a place of learning and a place for free exchange of ideas.

It offers collaboration between those who can provide and those who wish to have the opportunity to do the same. Our clients are treated with respect and are offered incomparable advice, guidance and counselling from experts. We offer a much more direct approach to our clients.

We are advocates of equality and innovation, and for whom we can provide service we can provide a future. Our doors are always open.