

Eko Limach Fest was built as an inspiring and educative daily platform made for future generations - the ones inheriting the sustainable development concept of the community. The mission of Eko Limach Fest is supporting young generations to consciously and responsibly take care of their environment, community and nature. The behavior towards nature and community – since very early age – through strengthening their individuality, creativity, expressing their positive thinking and habits which would consequently mirror their lives and the lives of their families towards the whole society and eco-system.

In order to make our community better and sustainable, we operate in terms of forward thinking. We influence young generations, from 3 to 12 year olds, who are the ones inheriting the world. We believe that each child holds the potential of creative ingenuity. If we direct their focus – early enough – on the values and the importance of sustainable way of life, health, and brotherhood, we participate in making of generations who don't take anything for granted; they do research, they are widening their horizons etc. In that way, they make healthy preconditions for the prosperity and benefit of the entire society.

The festival consists of interactive, educative and creative workshops, sports and entertaining program, as well as of educative discussion panels for their parents. Interactive workshops are creative and educative, covering different topics like ecology, biology, taking care of the environment, recycling, rational approach to natural resources, energy sources and waste; art, health and diet.

Interactive workshop is not a one way street; it includes participant and facilitator equally. The important element of interactive workshops is critical opinion, the method by which the participant is not put into passive mode. Quite the opposite, their cognitive activity is stimulated. By doing that, the themes are being fragmented in order to reproduce many original, creative thoughts and conclusions. The participants discuss the answers and the ideas for problem solving, in which way they are taking their part in their impact to one another. By expressing their critical opinion, they are enabled to find the weak points of the ideas, presumptions, claims and theories they heard, in order to make new ones or to complete the existing ones. The participants express themselves creatively; they create new things, gain new knowledge and skills, answer questions, participate in quizzes, communicate in various ways, by strengthening their belonging to the community, and their feeling of brotherhood in the group. In this way, they participate in making of the programme. The theme is given to facilitators' response under which they have complete freedom to comply it with the spirit and interests of the participants. In that way the result of the workshop is not predefined, but mostly in compliance with the needs of all participants. The creative process is unpredictable and often we come to sudden and unexpected discoveries, by trying different combinations.

Only when the mind is playful with the experiment, as well as when it is free from the strict image, the innovation is coming to fruition, strengthening the creative appetite. The society in which we are pushed to grow up as fast as we can, playing becomes a tool for survival of our own creativity.

By doing sports, we help our overall wellbeing, by which we empower our competitive spirit and our ability for being a team player. It is highly beneficial for our psychological,

social, physical and motor development of children. Children who play sports are generally healthier and more successful in school; they have better developed social skills and are better team players. Those children are more persistent as well as more skillful when playing, and to some extent they are under lower obesity risk. Sports activities influence our growth and development. Children are strengthening their muscles and bones, which contributes their overall body posture. On a psychological level, their cognitive and social skills are being well shaped, influencing their temperament and personality in a positive way. Doing sports for a long term positively influences their self esteem, emotional development and adopting social values and their daily habits. Knowing that *ELF* promotes sports activities and spending time in nature, we have taken care of promoting as many different sports as possible, such as football, basketball, taekwondo, softball, paintball. This is a great opportunity for many parents and their children to get to know with different sport activities, choosing sports as a way of life. For the youngest participants and their parents, as well as for all participants of workshops and sports programme who are in need for a break, we created an entire day entertainment in cooperation with art and culture organizations, children's choirs, various entertainers and theatres. By this part of our programme we want to make additional show in the city in which small entertainers would be able to show their artistic skills. The important part of *ELF* project is discussion panels about sustainable way of living, suitable household waste treatment, composting, quality family time as well as creative daily life. The discussion panels are facilitated by field experts.

The discussion panels are opened to the public who can find answers for their questions there. In this way we are opening a dialogue and encouraging public for further research of the subject, while putting it into practice –in their everyday life – is the most important. The change for the better starts in their homes.

Communal sustainability criterion that we encourage:

- encouraging of rational and responsible waste treatment through reduction, separation, and further treatment
- safe waste material usage, for example product packing and material wrapping for reusing or making of new products, such as educative and didactic tools (toys); by doing that the recycling process becomes a creative catalyst for problem solving
- encouraging creativity - as a lifestyle- in facing challenges of everyday life
- supporting the ideas for product reusing, instead of wasting it or buying a new one
- giving priority to biodegradable products and packing
- rational usage of water, resources and energy sources
- responsibility for the environment and nature

Since sustainable family is the basis for the sustainable community, we equally promote following values:

- health, giving priority to healthy, non processed food

- conscious food treatment, making minimum waste
- quality time, family time, spending time together, making and eating healthy meals together
- spending time in nature
- doing sports, physical activity
- kindness and solidarity toward others
- empathy towards people and animals

Up till now, the festival has been visited by 20 000 people and in the next 5 years we are planning to organize at least 15 events, that will attract more than 100 000 visitors.

ELF is not only innovative educational platform, but also a mutual network supporting participants, exhibitors and partners from local community with the purpose of their creative, social, and eco-responsible cooperation.

Creating the programme, we recognized the importance of branding implementation and local companies into content made for the wellbeing of the community and environment.

Concerning the fact that brands and companies - directly or indirectly – exist and work because of community, we think that they need to be responsible for bringing back the value to the community as well. Our opinion is that their focus must be on people and their wellbeing.

Socially responsible trading is an important part of growth strategy in every company; it is one of the safest ways of building positive image and recognition. By sustaining the production, creative and educational workshops, the *ELF* brands and local companies have a chance for positive impact on their community.

In compliance with that, the festival has been financed mostly by the sponsorship of the local companies.

