



RURAL YOUTH WORK 101 TOOLKIT



RYE STUDY SESSION, APRIL 2024

Rural Youth Europe with the support of the Council of Europe brought together 35 representatives from 12 countries from the 22nd of April 2024 to the 26th of April 2024, for the Spring Study Session in Budapest Hungary. The topic for discussion during this week was rural youth work. The participants were between the ages of 18-30 years old. Some participants are employed by their Member Organisations and many volunteer their time with their local, regional, federal, national and/or international level for their organisation.

The participants contributed the below tools across six areas of activity which were recognised as salient to rural youth work during the week. These six topics were, project management, visibility and outreach, funding, sustainability and impact, inclusion and accessibility and advocacy and campaigning.

Once the idea of a tool kit was explained to the participants, they selected the topic which they felt most passionate about and they had 55 minutes to discuss and produce the below toolkit through electronic means. We provided the below information on the topics to assist in the discussion while the groups created the tools.

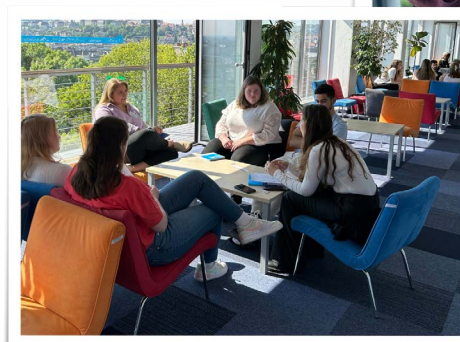
Should you have any queries with regard the tools in this toolkit, please feel free to contact Rural Youth Europe at office@ruralityoutheurope.com. Should you wish to contribute a tool which might be useful to a future version of the toolkit, please also submit this to the Rural Youth Europe office using the below template for structure of your tool.

We hope the following toolkit is of value to you and your organisation.



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PROJECT MANAGEMENT

This category includes successful tools and techniques that your organisation uses to plan, implement, monitor and control projects. It covers various aspects such as internal communication, financial management and recruitment/retention of staff and volunteers, etc.

Young Leaders Training



Type of tool: General Practise



Target group: Members, Local Boards and potential board members



Context

Depending on the length and target group of the course, they can take place in educational centres, youth centres or in local clubhouses. There is ideally an age and gender balance among the participants; however, it is normal to have more young members participating. The courses can take place on regional and national level with minimum two phases (main course and a follow-up meeting) where ideally (at least) the main phase should be in-person.

Overview

Regional and national level can organise young leader trainings where besides other topics, 'Project Management' is covered. Those courses benefit also from a practise part, where the participants are asked to implement a small project back in the home context and a follow up meeting to evaluate the projects. If the regional and national organisations organise campaigns which include or demand local projects, it is best-practise for the organisation to provide at least one-day trainings in Project Management and supporting material for the members in need. Organisations can also offer low-threshold annual one-day-introduction courses for new local board members with knowledge-building about the network, communications, project management and social skills.

Implementation process

1. Identify good dates and venues to have a training
2. Define aims, objectives and programme length of the training (maybe even a suitable national framework exists)
3. Find the right funding and reserve the venue
4. Find experienced team members, experts or trained staff to run the training
5. Search for participants enough time before the start
6. Prepare materials and examples (maybe including a field visit)
7. Run the main training (optional: have practises)
8. Meet for a follow up for exchange and learning from the practises (possibly online)

Key Outcomes

- Project management knowledge on all levels
- A better understanding about each other's processes
- More successful projects and more confident members

Success Factors

- Good connection with members, to spread the word.
- Space and funding (one-day courses are easier than week-long)
- Common framework and goals for the members and local clubs

Festival BajoTeja

UnderTheTile Festival

 **Type of tool: Event**

 **Target group: All ages**



Context

The festival happens in a small village (33 inhabitants) in the region of Avila, Spain. The Valley is one of the most depopulated areas of the province and the main economic activity is agriculture. Cultural policies are reduced to patronal celebrations (celebration of saints days).

Overview

'UnderTheTile' Festival is a multidisciplinary event of three days that has been celebrated since 2020 in a small village of Spain. The programme includes concerts, performances, films, workshops and mediation activities with the local population, to acknowledge better the territory. The idea behind the project is to bring closer contemporary art and tradition, adding art mediation processes in cultural project management, promoting citizen participation and encouraging the exchange between artists, locals and visitors.

Implementation process

1. Participation of local population in the curating process and during the festival.
2. Look for alliances with local producers and sponsors, making this alliance visible in the communication strategy.
3. Create and develop a caring, environmental, diversity and accessibility protocol including a Violet Dot for preventing assaults and sexual aggression.
4. Employ a professional art mediator to work as a bridge with population and audience.
5. Curate a programme based in local needs and hybrid contemporary art and traditional artworks/practices, focusing on the importance of culture as a building community strategy.



[Manual against violence at events guide.](#)

Key Outcomes

- Better understanding and connection with the territory / building bridges between urban and rural areas
- Visibility of the zone and its needs / development of local economy and producers
- Diverse educational and cultural experience / Guarantee cultural rights (create, access and participate) in rural areas



[Watch the festival video!](#)



Success Factors

- Mediation and educational process during the whole project
- Community campaign to promote the diversity of participants (gender, LGBT+ etc.)
- Building bridges between tradition and contemporary art, between rural practices and urban knowledge
- Accessibility of the project in economic terms

VISIBILITY & OUTREACH

This category includes successful tools and techniques that your organisation uses to increase visibility and reach. It covers various aspects such as event promotion, making it accessible and enlarging target groups, fun and leisure coupled with engagement etc.

Roadshow

-  **Type of tool: Event**
-  **Target group: Members – individuals between the age of 17-35**

Context

Team of volunteers from the organisation which travels around to clubhouses to highlight opportunities and the work carried out by the organisation.

Overview

The volunteers will explain the current work and opportunities within the organisation to the members. They will also highlight the aims of the projects implemented by the organisation. The members will be able to ask questions about the work done.

Implementation process

1. Put out a call for volunteers.
2. Provide trainings for these volunteers.
3. Map out the venues.
4. Advertise it (newsletters, social media, etc.)
5. Plan the discussion topics and prepare presentations.

Key Outcomes

- Make members more knowledgeable.
- Good engagement from members.
- Create new ambassadors.

Success Factors

- Hosting at least one event
- Members attending the event(s)
- Positive feedback

Materials and Resources

- Cars/Train tickets/etc.
- Social media accounts
- Team leader
- Venues/clubhouses
- Posters
- Social media manager
- Presentation with required information



The Food School

Day Camp

 **Type of tool: Event**

 **Target group: 7-12 year old participants**
15-17 year old group leaders

Context

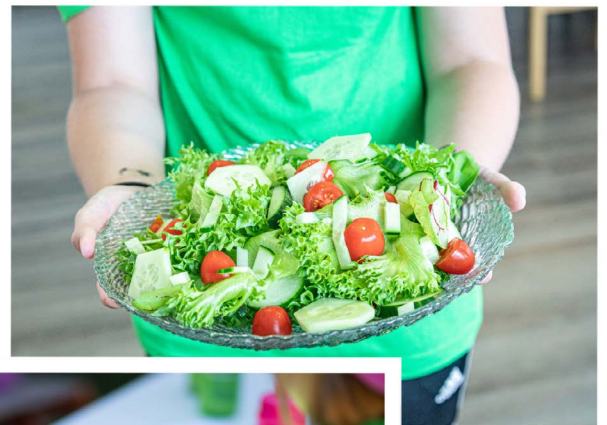
The organisation runs 1-2 camps per municipality per year. Every local association organize their own camp, but they all use the same framework. The camps are organised during school holidays (usually during the summer) to give children whose parents must work, an activity which is fun and includes non-formal education. They are generally located in the lower secondary school's education kitchen facilities, which is designed for teaching young people household skills.

Overview

The food school is a Danish 4H concept which was introduced to Finland's 4H in 2012 and spread over the country in 2013. It has become a widespread concept appreciated by children as well as parents. As this event is not a members' only camp it has brought attention and visibility to the organizations and associations on both a local and national level through radio, tv and newspapers as well as through social media. This visibility has helped us grow and gain members who discovered our activities as a result of the outreach The Food School had through media.

Implementation process

1. Planning: program, menus, hiring group leaders, etc.
2. Marketing: bringing the event to people's attention (through the primary schools) and informing previous participants about the event being arranged again.
3. Practical prep: contacting local producers for sponsoring, buying the rest of the material, finding accommodation for hosting the camp, educating the group leaders and informing local and regional media about the event.
4. The camp is hosted.
5. Afterwork: analysing, evaluating, and reporting the execution of the camp. Gathering participation fees, publish pictures and memories on social media and website to market the success and attract people's attention for coming camps and other organisation activities.



Key Outcomes

1. Teaches children and youth about healthy habits, circular economy and basic everyday life skills.
2. Creates increased interest in the organization and an interest in engaging in our activities
3. Creates a group dynamic and gives children opportunities to meet new friends and explore new environments from a young age.

Success Factors

1. The children are allowed explore food in a non-formal setting and not controlled by the authority of a parent. Creates a free learning environment that is very encouraging.
2. Gives them a fun day care activity during the summer holiday. A different but yet rewarding environment for learning.
3. Material and ideas produced in large scale gives local associations a solid foundation to organize the event.
4. It's a very versatile event attracts many different people with different interests to get together and cooperate for a common purpose.

Materials and Resources

1. Facilities for cooking, outdoor space for games and workshops, teen volunteers as group leaders.
2. Knowledge (internet) for producing material and planning the program

[Food School Website](#) (photo credit)



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Social Media Campaign

 **Type of tool: Strategy**

 **Target group: General Public**

Context

Various social platforms, set yourself an engagement-target (e.g. 5000 new followers)

Overview

Social media campaign to recruit new members by pointing out the various activities and campaigns carried out by the organisation:

- Personal development
- Leadership-skills
- Travel opportunities
- Friendship/Networking
- Communication skills
- Non-formal education
- Fundraising

Implementation process

1. Design a template (Canva)
2. Contact current members to get their views and opinions
3. Record videos and audio clips
4. Photos
5. Schedule posts

Key Outcomes

1. New members
2. Gaining likes and shares and therefore increasing engagement and visibility
3. Highlight the good work done by the organisation

Success Factors

1. Continued engagement on the social media platforms – new followers
2. More new members
3. Sponsorship and funding opportunities
4. Reached the target of 5000 new followers

Materials and Resources

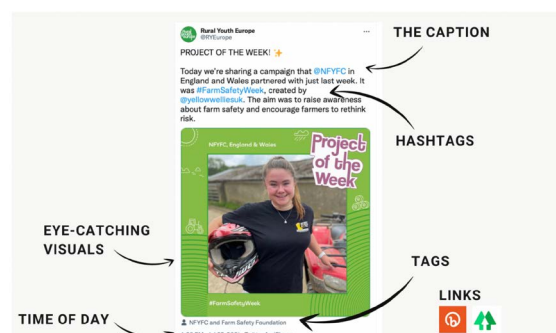
1. Phone/Laptop/Camera
2. Social media accounts
3. Communication-manager
4. Real-life stories
5. List of accounts to tag



[Set up an account on Canva!](#)



[Top 10 Elements of a Great Post](#)
[Read more.](#)



FUNDRAISING

This category includes successful tools and techniques that your organisation uses to increase fundraising. It covers various aspects such as fundraising strategy, donors management, financial resources diversification, creating and maintaining partnership and cooperation etc.

Charity Fundraising

 **Type of tool: Strategy & Event**

 **Target group: All**

Context

In Northern Ireland (Young Farmers Clubs of Ulster) each year we select a charity to fundraise for. This year our chosen charity was Life Beyond a charity which supports bereaved rural families including members of our clubs.

Overview

Over the past 12 months we raised £10,170.62 through various events. One method we used this year was raffling a signed Irish Rugby jersey. This was done through social media and PayPal and therefore open worldwide. We set the ticket price of £5 so it was affordable.

Implementation process

1. Agree at committee to run the fundraising method and create a plan
2. Our president donated the IRFU jersey to the club.
3. Club leaders contacted the IRFU, and they agreed to sign the shirt
4. Create a separate pay pal account and advertised on social media and the rugby club
5. Set the end date for the last day of the six nations to create clubs a large interest

Key Outcomes

1. Reach a wide audience
2. Raise awareness of the charity
3. Raise money

Success Factors

1. We had no costs, so all money raised was profit
2. We raised over £1000 from this raffle
3. Raised awareness of the charity, the issue and the rural youth organisation

Materials and Resources

1. Donation
2. PayPal Account



YFJC

Fiskeskolan Fishing School



 **Type of tool: Strategy**

 **Target group: Youth aged 8-29**



Context

Coastline regions of Finland, countryside, summer activity for school kids.

Overview

Finland's Swedish 4H new project Fiskeskolan (Fishing School) is aimed at enhancing children and youth's understanding of fishing and the blue industries. It is an educational initiative that fosters active citizenship and promotes knowledge in local fish stocks, seamanship, and sustainable fishing practices. The Fishing School offers for example summer fishing camps where kids engage in hands-on activities. Older members (14+) serve as leaders under professional supervision, alongside local fishing experts

Implementation process

1. Finding the opportunity where a new revenue stream can be found (blue economy)
2. Start mapping out what we already do in fishing and how to conceptualize it into non formal education
3. Put together an internal reference group from the grassroots to gather good ideas and implement the project in our own organisation from the start
4. Write a detailed project plan
5. Talk to the funding source (leader money) and adapt the plan towards common goals

Key Outcomes

1. The process was smooth
2. We got funding in all leader areas within our scope
3. The fishing school could start summer of 2024

Success Factors

1. We worked hard to explain how we fit the values and goals of the fund
2. Very detailed project plan
3. Reference group within the organisation that have done much fishing activities already
4. Consulting people on every level to gain perspective and knowledge

Materials and Resources

1. Project planning tools and templates online
2. AI to check the texts and tone are formal and its contents the right terms and wording
3. [Find out more](#)



Fundraising for a local charity



Type of tool: Strategy & Event



Target group: All



Context

In England (National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs) each year we select one local charity to work with and support. This year we are working with Nelson's Journey who support children and young people in Norfolk who have suffered a bereavement of a loved one. Provide bereavement training for professionals e.g. teachers and offer early support service for families



Overview

Organised and hosted a pantomime in a local community hall after Christmas. Three days with an evening and afternoon time to attract more people and cater for different work commitments etc. Ticket prices varied from £5 to £30 to increase accessibility.

Implementation process

1. Involved all club members and committee through different roles e.g. Cast team, marketing programme team
2. Worked with local printing company to create programme to sell.
3. Write hand written letters to local businesses to ask if they would be willing to donate raffle prizes.
4. Involved younger members in creating props in meetings using second hand resources

Key Outcomes

- Raised awareness of our club
- Raised £6,500 for Nelson's Journey
- Created a sense of community

Success Factors

- Involving a diverse audience – young and old members advisory
- Marketing on social media and in local community
- Large accessible venue in local community
- Preparing and practising in club meetings.

Materials and Resources

- Donations
- Refreshments
- Costumes
- Large venue
- Hall with stage
- Card machine
- Treasurer

SUSTAINABILITY & IMPACT

This category includes successful tools and techniques your organisation uses to assess your efforts' success through monitoring and evaluation. It also involves replicating successful results, fostering innovation and institutional development, and mobilizing resources to ensure continued growth and progress. This includes financial and human resources, which are crucial for creating a sustainable and impactful organisation.

Sportfeesten Sports Event

 **Type of tool: Event**

 **Target group: 15-35 years**



Context

The events are organised on a field, there must be sufficient space for an athletics track, but also for food stands and a stage for the jury. Everything is arranged and paid for by the organizing local club, the final profit will also belong to this club. The local clubs will train multiple times a week in spring to prepare for the competitions.

Overview

 [Watch the video!](#)

In July and August, sporting KLJ clubs can go somewhere in Flanders almost every Sunday for a day full of sports, games and spectacle, organized by a local KLJ club. You can divide the day into two parts: the morning with selections and competitions in the 5 KLJ sports (dancing, wimpelen (dancing on a specific way with a flag), vendelen (dancing with a heavy flag), tug of war and building pyramids) for a jury and the afternoon with awards ceremony and demonstrations for the public. In between there are also folk games, athletics competitions, drinks and food stalls...

Implementation process

1. Evaluate previous edition
2. Meetings about the new edition
3. Add a nice innovation
4. Advertise the event (this is also with a party with all local clubs)
5. Host the event, don't forget the prizes for the winners
6. After the summer there is a final party to give closure to the sports summer and a challenge cup for the winners of



Key Outcomes

- Feeling like one team
- Profit
- Visibility

Success Factors

- Tradition
- Competition
- Feeling like one team
- Good weather

Materials and Resources

- Field, tent, different fences, chairs, hay
- Sportfeestbox (it's like a box with all rules and materials)
- [Find out more](#)

Best Of

Project Competition Weekend

 **Type of tool: Event**

 **Target group: Clubs and members from local and regional level**



Context

The “Best Of” is One of several National Competitions organised by Rural Youth Austria. Each year the Award Ceremony and accompanying programme is co-organised with a different regional organisation and therefore held in a different region and city. It brings together members from the regional organisations but also local clubs and the national level. The main event takes place in late Autumn while the voting itself takes place a few weeks prior the event in Vienna, involving the national board, partners and senior members of the organisation.

Overview

While the “Best Of” is a national Competition, it brings together members from all levels of the organisation, connects well to other projects and programmes of the organisation, adds a competitive element to the voluntary work and involves fun and partying for the participants. Therefore, it strengthens the network, works as a platform to exchange good practises and showcases the charitable acts of rural youth in the whole country. It helps sponsoring partners and the broader public to understand the level of involvement, impact and engagement of the organisation.

Implementation process

1. Announcing the event one year in advance
2. Implement Campaigns or Courses where Projects are implemented all over the country to take part in the competition
3. Search for sponsoring partners to offer good prizes for the winners
4. Make sure to have a reasonable panel of judges
5. Have multiple categories, so there are winners on every level (e.g. prizes for 1-3rd place)
6. Have an award ceremony including celebrations in a different region every year.
7. Connect side programme to the ceremony, so it makes a larger programme and justifies longer travel time (e.g. holding the GA and some workshops at the same weekend)
8. Include other content like announcements of next year’s annual projects and events or results from the GA in the ceremony, making it visible to the large audience from all levels present and including them in the processes.

Key Outcomes

- Stronger internal network across all levels
- Good visibility for (potential) partners
- Better connection of programme

Success Factors

- Participation on all levels
- Being a long run annual event
- Suitable projects and programme throughout the year to connect to it
- Having it in different spots every year (closer to the members)
- Gamification of voluntary work and connecting it with fun



[Find out more!](#)



ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION

This category includes successful tools and techniques that your organisation uses to consider the diverse needs of individuals and ensure that everyone is able to participate meaningfully, reaching out to marginalised groups and ensuring that they are not left behind, considering connectivity and infrastructure etc.

Inclusion of the intellectually disabled

 **Type of tool: Project and Strategy**

 **Target group: Rural Youth Workers**

Context

For people with ADHD, autism or Downs Syndrome to have the same rights to attend activities as healthy and neurotypical individuals. For this to happen smoothly it needs special organising of clubs and activities so that they can be understood easily.

Overview

It is good practice to provide information easy to read and understand descriptions of the activity and have a hired and specialized worker during the activity in case participants need help. Also planning the activities so those who need it can have breaks and enough time to process new information without getting overwhelmed.

Implementation process

1. Training of staff to understand the needs of participants
2. Providing clear, easy to understand materials for the activity
3. Having visual and other materials to support learning
4. Having professions who understand the needs more
5. Scheduling the activities so everyone can work together

Key Outcomes

- Providing activities for everyone
- Meaningful learning skills of different topics
- Kids not feeling left out

Success Factors

- Enthusiasm and ambition towards the activity
- Professional Staff
- Youth wanting to participate

Materials and Resources

1. Easy to read material with simple visuals
2. Support and help from specialists

Inclusion of people with hearing disabilities



Type of tool: Project and Strategy



Target group: Rural Youth Workers



Context

In Irish rural and local clubs there is a high density of people with additional needs. There is a lack of training, finance and resources for people with communication difficulties.

Overview

Training provided in Lámh, a type of Irish sign language to members. Fun events connecting charity work/advocacy in engaging activities e.g. Lámh Karaoke, Lámh Bingo etc.

Implementation process

1. Training provided in sign language – tutor required
2. Resources saved
3. Co-design panel organised with advocates for additional needs, special schools to address their needs re fundraising etc.
4. Event planning

Key Outcomes

1. Money fundraiser for local special schools
2. More comfortable space for self-disclosure

Success Factors

- Co-design
- Saving resources
- Event Planning

Materials and Resources

- Lámh Training Materials

Inclusion of Sami people

Context

Sami people are an ethnic minority group in Nordic countries, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Russia and Iceland. They are a group that are often discriminated against, Sami people don't have any voting rights in Nordic County elections.



Overview

Physical booklets developed initially. Website developed – more accessible (has PDF versions for physical booklets into the Sami language). Lead person in charge of process co-design.

Implementation process

1. Initial Resources developed – physical booklet (team)
2. Co-design - lead person spoke Sami and Norwegian
3. Digital format – more accessible
4. Translation (lead person developed a panel of experts with bilingual backgrounds)

Key Outcomes

- Gained more members of Sami community in 4 H clubs
- Multi- Lingual resources – Encouraging pride in Sami
- Native language – encourages cultural and linguistic diversity

Success Factors

- Panel of multilingual Sami – Norwegian experts
- Openness and adaptability

ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNING

This category includes successful tools and techniques your organisation uses to increase young people's participation in rural areas. It covers various aspects such implementing creative activities and strategies to raise awareness, influence public opinion, and bring about positive change.

Protests



Type of tool: Event



Target group: Everyone



Context

This is an event that happened across Latvia, organized in collaboration with the biggest Farmer's organization in the country.

Overview

This event was a warning protest in every region of the country to promote better engagement between farmers and policy makers.

Implementation process

1. Meeting between members to hear their concerns
2. Meeting between organizations to decide on the strategy
3. Engaging with the PR agency (how to structure and voice the concerns of the members)
4. Make final preparations (electing local and regional leaders)
5. Practical completion of the event

Key Outcomes

1. Genuine engagement of the policy makers
2. Raised awareness in the general society
3. Starting a long-term strategy with the policy makers and strengthen the role of the organization in the international field

Success Factors

- The correction of the wrong perception of the issue by the farmers
- Strong support from the law reinforcement bodies
- Organizations have gotten more members as a result of the event

Materials and Resources

- Funding and communication

Pre Budget Submission



 **Type of tool: General Practise**

 **Target group: Politicians and Macra members between the age of 17-35**

Context

Macra na Feirme is a rural youth and young farmers organisation in Ireland for people aged 17-35 years. This document or tool allows these young people to lobby local and national public representatives for their needs in Rural Ireland.

Overview

Each year our national council representatives and some members are co-opted onto the Ag Affairs and Rural Youth Committee of Macra na Feirme. These committees survey the membership. These committees act as advocates for members as their primary function is to discuss issues and challenges that rural youth and young farmers encounter in their municipalities. Based on informed discussion from the membership and collaboration with committee members, issues are prioritised. The committees bring these issues to the attention of local government and national government. A solution focused approach is adapted whereby, solutions to challenges identified are proposed through documentation. The objective of this documentation is to influence policy making and implement solutions proposed to improve the daily lives of “grassroots” members. Solutions proposed also target requesting of increased allocation of resources, funding and supports for members in the organisation. This is achieved through pre-budget submission documents.

Implementation process

1. Survey the members as to needs and discuss these at national committee level
2. Gather possible solutions to issues faced by membership which could be supported through government spending.
3. Train members on how to lobby politicians.
4. Members lobby local politicians and committee chairs.
5. Macra President presents the pre-budget submission to the Taoiseach (Prime minister) Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Youth and Community or Rural Affairs
6. Some items are included in the following year’s submission. If items are not supported, increased efforts to improve lobbying and communications with local government are made.

Key Outcomes

1. Measures which assist young farmers are supported by government
2. Measures which assist rural youth are supported by government
3. Open communication channels initiated and maintained between rural youth and local/national government

Success Factors

- Input from grassroots members
- People willing to read and lobby on issues contained within the document
- The financial support from the government of ideas such as the land mobility project which works on generational renewal

Materials and Resources

- Resources to design the pre-budget submission
- Policy officer who helps to shape the content and provides lobby training to membership.
- [Read more!](#)

