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Nina V. ARAYA BERRIOS,

Ph.D. in Arts,

Kyiv Municipal Academy of Circus and Performing Arts,

e-mail: n.araya@kmaecm.edu.ua,

ORCID: 0000-0002-9878-8208

**BETWEEN VISION AND ACTION.
TEACHING “SOCIAL AND CULTURAL PROJECT
MANAGEMENT” IN THE ARTS**

Abstract. The article explores the teaching of the course “Social and Cultural Project Management” in the Arts for master's students. The author shares her experience as a lecturer and cultural practitioner, focusing on practical tools that help young performers develop an entrepreneurial mindset. The article addresses the evolving role of educators in the age of AI, where information delivery is no longer central. Using the real case of a student-founded project (VoiceLAB), it demonstrates how education can serve as a launchpad for creative entrepreneurship. The structure of the course, key topics, teaching methods, and exercises are detailed, emphasizing a balance between creative freedom and strategic thinking. The article advocates for an educational approach that nurtures not only artistic talent but also leadership and project implementation skills.

The experience of teaching “*Social and Cultural Project Management*” in the Arts confirms the growing necessity of integrating entrepreneurial competencies into higher arts education. In the context of rapid technological change and increased cultural precarity, artists must be equipped not only with creative skills but with the capacity to independently

manage, promote, and sustain their own initiatives. This study demonstrates that a well-structured, practice-oriented course can help students bridge the gap between artistic vision and real-world implementation. Through modeling exercises, reflective tasks, and collaborative prototyping, students are empowered to develop projects that are both conceptually strong and practically viable. The success of student-led initiatives, such as *VoiceLAB*, affirms the importance of shifting the educator's role – from that of an instructor to a mentor, guide, and facilitator of transformation. By creating an educational environment that supports experimentation, values articulation, and self-organization, arts educators can foster not only talented creators but also resilient and proactive cultural entrepreneurs. In the era of artificial intelligence and information abundance, the unique value educators bring lies not in the transmission of knowledge, but in the cultivation of vision, responsibility, and action. Between vision and action – that is where meaningful learning happens, and where cultural innovation begins.

Key words: cultural management, creative industries, arts education, entrepreneurship, teaching, grant, VoiceLAB

Introduction. In today's rapidly changing world, where artificial intelligence can generate text, create business models, and automate routine decision-making, the traditional role of educators as transmitters of information is being fundamentally redefined. This is particularly relevant in the field of arts education, where applied disciplines – such as social and cultural project management – require urgent methodological adaptation.

Problem Statement. Emerging artists – vocalists, circus performers, dancers – often graduate with strong creative skills, yet lack the managerial and entrepreneurial competencies needed to independently realize their ideas, engage with donors and institutions, or develop sustainable cultural initiatives. This skills gap presents a challenge to contemporary art education,

which must now integrate project-based thinking and strategic communication into its core mission.

The course “Social and Cultural Project Management” thus becomes a vital link between education and real-world creative practice. However, its effectiveness depends not only on content, but on how that content is delivered – whether through active modeling, practical exercises, or reflective analysis. The role of the teacher shifts from that of an information provider to a mentor and co-creator: one who helps students envision, articulate, and begin to build their own path in the creative sector.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Over the past two decades, the role of cultural and creative industries in shaping economic and social development has been the subject of extensive academic inquiry. Scholars such as Charles Leadbeater and Kate Oakley (1999) [8] have emphasized the emergence of “cultural entrepreneurs” – individuals who operate at the intersection of creativity and business. Richard Florida (2002) [3] further expanded this perspective by introducing the concept of the “creative class” as a key driver of innovation in post-industrial economies. In the context of project management and cultural policy, the works of Oakley and O’Brien (2015) [7; 8] and Jeffcutt and Pratt (2002) [2] highlight the increasing need for artists and cultural workers to possess not only artistic expertise, but also strategic, organizational, and communication skills. Their research underscores a shift from traditional arts management to more flexible and cross-disciplinary practices. Practical frameworks for integrating entrepreneurial thinking into the cultural sector have been developed by Osterwalder and Pigneur (2010) [9], whose “Business Model Canvas” is widely applied in creative business education. Their model has been adapted to suit the non-linear, iterative nature of creative project development.

In recent years, this theoretical foundation has been extended into practice through initiatives such as the “Business in the Creative Industries” toolkit, developed by the British Council and Nesta (2015). This resource bridges the gap between artistic expression and sustainable entrepreneurship by offering artists practical tools to articulate their values, model impact, and engage with markets.

Despite the growing body of literature, there remains a need to examine how these theoretical models are implemented within arts education settings – especially through real-life teaching experiences and student-driven projects.

This article aims to contribute to that area by presenting a case-based perspective from within the Ukrainian higher education context.

The **purpose** of this article is to explore the pedagogical approach and practical outcomes of teaching the course “Social and Cultural Project Management” in the Arts to master’s students specializing in performance disciplines.

Drawing on personal teaching experience and student case studies, the article aims to illustrate how a practice-oriented curriculum can empower young artists to transition from conceptual thinking to real-world cultural entrepreneurship. The study focuses on how the integration of creative modeling tools, reflective exercises, and business planning frameworks contributes to the development of entrepreneurial competence in students of the performing arts. By examining the structure and methodology of the course – as well as a real-life example of a student-founded initiative (VoiceLAB) – the article seeks to demonstrate how arts education can serve as a platform for launching sustainable, value-driven cultural projects.

Presentation of the main research material. Teaching the course “Social and Cultural Project Management” to master’s students is both a responsibility and a privilege. As a cultural manager with over 15 years of hands –

on experience – particularly through my work at the National Art and Culture Museum Complex “Mystetskyi Arsenal” – I bring to the classroom not just theory, but real-world insights shaped by years of practice [3]. However, time moves fast. The kinds of cultural projects my team and I developed ten years ago differ drastically from the ones we see today. And that makes perfect sense – we used different tools, communication was more personal and less digital, and promotion or documentation followed slower, more linear processes.

But now, in the era of artificial intelligence, the landscape has transformed entirely. In today’s world, simply possessing knowledge is no longer enough. With the help of AI, writing a text, structuring a business plan, or even generating an idea takes just a few clicks. So, what remains for us, the educators? One of the most important and honest questions we raise at the beginning of the course is this: What’s next for you, as an artist, after graduation? Will you work for someone else—or will you be brave enough to build something of your own within the creative sector? Many of my students are future circus artists, singers, dancers, and other performers. They are full of vision, passion, and unique artistic voices—but often they lack the tools and language to express their ideas in a way that funders, collaborators, or institutions can understand.

In our “Social and Cultural Project Management” course, we bridge that gap. We help students translate their artistic ambitions into structured, feasible, and sustainable projects.

We use as our foundation the guidebook “Business in the Creative Industries” [1], which balances creativity with the logic of entrepreneurship and social innovation.

We cover topics such as:

- shaping and clearly formulating a creative idea;
- defining the mission and values behind their artistic practice [7];

- creating a business model that reflects their ambitions and ethics [9];
- working with audiences, partners, and stakeholders;
- designing marketing and communication strategies; [1, p. 9];
- exploring financial planning and fundraising opportunities.

But what makes this course especially meaningful is the way we learn by doing. Our classes are full of interactive, modeling-based exercises, designed to bring clarity, strategy, and depth to each student's idea.

For example:

- in "Your Values", students reflect on what principles drive their work – what matters most, and how those values can shape a long-term vision [1];
- in "Modeling Business Processes", we analyze what happens *on stage and behind the curtain* – helping students grasp the full workflow of their projects, from creation to implementation [1];
- in "Modeling Potential Impact" we explore the consequences of a cultural project: *What will it replace? What might it restore? What positive and negative outcomes could it bring to a community or context?* [8]

We also go deeper into relationship modeling—examining the four key roles in a project: the initiator, the implementer, the distributor, and the client. [6], This exercise helps students identify not only who they are within the ecosystem but also what kinds of partnerships they need to build. When we work on marketing strategy, students are introduced to the Marketing Mix – the seven key elements that define how a product or service reaches its audience: product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical environment. Based on this, they then build a marketing plan, tailored to the cultural context of their project and its goals [7].

These exercises are not about turning creative work into something corporate or rigid. Instead, they help students connect their creativity with strategy, turning inspiration into action. Through peer reviews, visual modeling, and step-by-step development, students begin to see themselves not just as artists, but as cultural innovators with the ability to design, lead, and sustain meaningful projects [5].

As Peter Drucker famously wrote: *“The best way to predict the future is to create it”* [2].

One of the most inspiring outcomes of this course has been witnessing how collaboration, courage, and structure can give birth to something tangible and lasting. A perfect example of this is VoiceLAB, a vocal studio launched by two students who met during the course and were inspired by one another’s vision and energy. What began as an idea during a classroom exercise – “What kind of space would I build if I had no limits?” – soon turned into a joint exploration. Through discussions, feedback, modeling sessions, and our practical toolkit, these two students found the confidence to develop a grant proposal, submit it – and win. The result? The opening of their own vocal studio in Kyiv.

VoiceLAB is much more than a music school. Built on the core belief that *“Your voice is you,”* its mission is to reconnect the voice with the whole self – mind, body, and soul. This isn’t just about learning to sing. It’s about creating a safe space where individuals can express themselves freely, heal, grow, and develop their creative identities.

The project is rooted in values of:

- Trust and freedom
- Individuality and authenticity
- Professionalism and collaboration.

Students in the studio aren’t treated as passive learners but as co-creators in a dynamic process. The curriculum blends vocal technique with creative thinking, improvisation,

emotional intelligence, and even physical fitness. Yes, you read that right – VoiceLAB uniquely integrates sport equipment into vocal training, emphasizing that the voice isn't just about sound; it's the body's full instrument. This hybrid method is both innovative and therapeutic, making it highly appealing for a wide range of clients – from children to adult professionals seeking wellness through creativity.

What's even more exciting is how much of this grew directly out of the classroom environment. The founders of VoiceLAB applied everything they learned in the course:

- they mapped out their target audience and business model;
- they used marketing mix tools to design their communications and branding;
- they built a clear financial plan, taking into account everything from rent and salaries to equipment and advertising;
- they worked through exercises like Modeling Impact and Modeling Business Relationships to prepare for real-world challenges.

Today, VoiceLAB is not only open and active – it's thriving. With a strong visual identity, a clear educational philosophy, and a roadmap for future expansion, it stands as a real-life example of what this course is meant to do: transform vision into action.

Witnessing the birth and growth of *VoiceLAB* was not just a professional joy – It was a deeply personal reminder of why I teach. In moments like these, I see the true role of an educator in the creative and cultural field. I am not here simply to deliver content, explain terms, or evaluate assignments. My real job is to create conditions for courage – to offer a space where students can take risks, explore wild ideas, and begin to believe that those ideas are worth building.

When I saw two of my students meet, dream, and eventually launch a studio that reflects their values, personality, and creative mission – It affirmed something essential:

education is not about filling minds. It's about unlocking potential.

Projects like *VoiceLAB* are proof that when students are trusted, challenged, and supported, they begin to step into their roles as cultural changemakers. They stop waiting for permission. They stop asking, “*Can I?*” and start saying, “*Why not me?*” And it reminds me that every task we do in class – from sketching business models to filling out value charts or simulating partnership dynamics – may seem small on the surface, but they are all building blocks of transformation. The outcome of this course is not just a grade. Sometimes, it's a studio. Sometimes, it's a grant. Sometimes, it's the quiet but revolutionary moment when a student starts introducing themselves not just as an artist – but as a founder, a leader, a creator of something entirely their own.

That is what this discipline is for. And that is what keeps me inspired, class after class. So, What Remains for Us, the Educators? We began with this question, and now – after the story of *VoiceLAB*, and many others like it – I believe the answer is clearer than ever. In a world where AI can write text, organize data, and even stimulate creativity, our value as educators doesn't lie in what we *deliver*. It lies in what we *spark*.

We are the ones who can see potential before it's visible. We hold the space where raw, vulnerable ideas are spoken aloud for the first time. We challenge students not to settle for what's easy or conventional. We accompany them through confusion, revision, failure, and the quiet triumph of trying again [4]. We teach not just with knowledge, but with presence – with real stories, real feedback, and real faith in people's ability to shape the future. As Mark Zuckerberg once said: “*The biggest risk is not taking any risk*” [10].

And that, to me, is the heart of teaching cultural and social project management. It's not about building perfect plans.

It's about helping students find the courage to act, to build, to experiment – and sometimes, to create something extraordinary. Between Vision and Action – that's where our work happens. And that's where, I believe, the most meaningful learning still lives.

Conclusions. The experience of teaching “*Social and Cultural Project Management*” in the Arts confirms the growing necessity of integrating entrepreneurial competencies into higher arts education. In the context of rapid technological change and increased cultural precarity, artists must be equipped not only with creative skills but with the capacity to independently manage, promote, and sustain their own initiatives. This study demonstrates that a well-structured, practice-oriented course can help students bridge the gap between artistic vision and real-world implementation. Through modeling exercises, reflective tasks, and collaborative prototyping, students are empowered to develop projects that are both conceptually strong and practically viable. The success of student-led initiatives, such as *VoiceLAB*, affirms the importance of shifting the educator's role – from that of an instructor to a mentor, guide, and facilitator of transformation. By creating an educational environment that supports experimentation, values articulation, and self-organization, arts educators can foster not only talented creators but also resilient and proactive cultural entrepreneurs. In the era of artificial intelligence and information abundance, the unique value educators bring lies not in the transmission of knowledge, but in the cultivation of vision, responsibility, and action. Between vision and action – that is where meaningful learning happens, and where cultural innovation begins.

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Ніна В'ячеславівна АРАЯ БЕРРІОС,

кандидат мистецтвознавства,
Київська муніципальна академія
естрадного та циркового мистецтв,
Київ, Україна,
e-mail: n.araya@kmaesm.edu.ua,
ORCID: 0000-0002-9878-8208

**МІЖ БАЧЕННЯМ ТА ДІЄЮ.
ВИКЛАДАННЯ ДИСЦИПЛІНИ «СОЦІОКУЛЬТУРНЕ
ПРОЄКТУВАННЯ» В МИСТЕЦТВІ**

Анотація. У статті досліджується викладання курсу «Управління соціальними та культурними проектами» в галузі мистецтва для студентів магістратури. Авторка ділиться своїм досвідом викладання та культурного практиком, зосереджуючись на практичних інструментах, які допомагають молодим виконавцям розвивати підприємницьке мислення. У статті розглядається зміна ролі освітян в епоху штучного інтелекту, де надання інформації більше не є центральним. Використовуючи реальний випадок студентського проекту (VoiceLAB), вона демонструє, як освіта може слугувати стартовим майданчиком для творчого підприємництва. Детально описано структуру курсу, ключові теми, методи навчання та вправи, підкреслюючи баланс між творчою свободою та стратегічним мисленням. У статті виступається за освітній підхід, який розвиває не лише художній талант, але й лідерські навички та навички реалізації проектів. Досвід викладання «Управління соціальними та культурними проектами» в галузі мистецтва підтверджує зростаючу необхідність інтеграції підприємницьких компетенцій у вищу мистецьку освіту. В умовах швидких технологічних змін та зростання культурної нестабільності, митці повинні

бути оснащені не лише творчими навичками, але й здатністю самостійно керувати, просувати та підтримувати власні ініціативи. Це дослідження демонструє, що добре структурований, практично орієнтований курс може допомогти студентам подолати розрив між художнім баченням та його впровадженням у реальний світ. Завдяки моделюванню, рефлексивним завданням та спільному прототипуванню студенти отримують можливість розробляти проекти, які є як концептуально сильними, так і практично життєздатними. Успіх студентських ініціатив, таких як VoiceLAB, підтверджує важливість зміни ролі викладача – від інструктора до наставника, керівника та посередника трансформації. Створюючи освітнє середовище, яке підтримує експерименти, формулювання цінностей та самоорганізацію, викладачі мистецтв можуть виховувати не лише талановитих творців, але й стійких та проактивних культурних підприємців. В епоху штучного інтелекту та інформаційного достатку унікальна цінність, яку привносять викладачі, полягає не в передачі знань, а в культивуванні бачення, відповідальності та дії. Між баченням та дією – саме там відбувається змістовне навчання і починаються культурні інновації.

Ключові слова: культурний менеджмент, креативні індустрії, мистецька освіта, підприємництво, викладання, грант, «VoiceLAB».

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