**Centers of Excellence in Art and Design in the Social and Geographic Periphery**

**Name of the Amuta:**

Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Jerusalem

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**The name of the coordinator of the program:**

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**Program coordinators:**

Mrs. Shelly Hersko is the Dean of Student Affairs at Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem. Shelly holds a bachelor's degree in Art and Education from Bezalel Academy and a Master's degree in education from the University of Leeds, as well as a teaching certificate. Shelly has 25 years of experience in art education both  formal and informal. As part of her accomplishments, Shelly established a teaching certificate program at Bezalel in collaboration with the Hebrew University.

Mrs. Tamar Arman is the Coordinator of Social Involvement and Diversity at Bezalel. Tamar holds a Bachelors and Masters degree in sociology and education. She is responsible for over 15 projects dealing with social involvement, including "Perach". Among these projects include those which establish dialogue between artists from different cultures, activities and courses from East and West Jerusalem.

**Rational of the program:**

We intend to open centers of excellence in the social and geographic periphery to promote talented youth in art and design: a unique program for imparting skills and tools, building capability, and providing equal opportunities for higher education, success and fulfillment as future leaders in Israeli art, design and architecture.

The program is aimed at identifying and exposing talented youth to the fields of art, design and architecture, with an emphasis on providing tools, activities, and products to which students do not have access in their school or community center. The program creates a space for practical and intellectual enrichment, for building abilities and offering experiences that will foster the development of its participants as curious and creative young people and future artists, who are involved in the relevant contemporary art and design practice and discourse. The program will encourage the participants to shape an independent worldview and positions, as well as the skills to express these in writing, verbally, and through personal artistic creation.

**Objectives of the project:**

**A. Students population:**

1. Exposing talented teens to the fields of art and design.

2. Providing equal opportunity and encouraging higher education.

3. Expanding the range of students in institutions of higher learning, and in the field of art and design in particular.

4. Strengthening students' self-image and cultivating success and excellence.

5. Imparting tools for coping with multistage processes that involve both triumphs and setbacks.

6. Imparting knowledge, developing the language of art and design, encouraging critical thinking, and providing a technical and conceptual toolbox.

**B. Intra-academic population:**

1. Encouraging students and faculty to engage in education and teaching, and to influence and guide the younger generation.

2. Encouraging Bezalel community (faculty and students) to share knowledge and strengthen academic-community ties.

**Main guidelines in the running of the program (how the program will run):**

The proposed program will be led and taught by Bezalel’s faculty and students at centers of excellence that will operate in the social and geographic periphery. In the span of five years, we plan to establish three centers throughout Israel that will target as diverse populations as possible. Each center will follow a customized program that responds to the specific needs and characteristics of the population (accessibility, language, unique means, etc.).

The program will target youth with affinity to and talent in the field of art and design, motivated to gain tools for development and growth. Potential students will be selected in a process of tests and interviews, where we will look for unique talent, perseverance, readiness to enter complex processes and embark on inner journeys, willingness to experience new things and to go outside their comfort zone, desire and passion to create and a love for art and design.

1. Target population: 10th-12th grade students recommended by the schools’ faculty, with an emphasis on highly-motivated teens with an affinity to art and design. The students will undergo entrance exam and compatibility interview by Bezalel.
2. Secondary target population: the peer group, family, school, and surroundings. We believe that improving the students’ self-image and their achievements in the program will have an impact on their success in other aspects of their life.
3. Bezalel student and alumni population: the interaction with the teens has the power to overcome the distance that often exists between academia and the general public and allows students and alumni, young artists themselves, to confront social issues to which they are not necessarily exposed directly. The program adds a significant educational dimension to the entire student body and increases the chances that they will continue to be socially engaged artists and designers who contribute to the community after their graduation.

**Identifying potential students for the program:**

1. Identifying talented potential students through the schools and regional centers for gifted children.
2. Portfolio, personal interview, and home assignment.

**Space and equipment:**

The program will take place in a dedicated space at the chosen peripheral area. The space will include at least three spacious rooms that will be converted into workshops equipped for the various courses: industrial design equipment and tools, photography lab, computer room with graphic and editing software, basic equipment for jewelry and fashion design, art, and more. Students will also be provided with the supplies they need for the program.

**Program structure:**

The program will take place once a week for four weekly hours. In each session the students will experience one or two departments. In addition to the regular activity, the program will include field trips to Bezalel, offering an opportunity to experience the nature of academic education and to work in Bezalel's unique workshops and facilities, as well as visits to museums, galleries and exhibitions across Israel.

The first year of the program will focus on providing basic tools, learning various techniques, and exposure to the various fields studied in the departments. Students will acquire fundamental skills and knowledge through thematic classes and assignments accompanied by critiques that facilitate and encourage critical thinking.

In the second year, after the initial exposure and gaining technical and practical tools, classes will take the format of structured and guided thematic exploration. The subjects of the assignments will demarcate the scope within which the student can move freely and individually. The goal in this year is to move from the intuitive work stage to more aware work, asking questions and creating a dialogue that will enrich the student's observation. This year will be devoted to enhancing and expanding understanding and familiarity with art and design language.

The third year will be devoted to a final project centered around a personal theme chosen by the student. The project will reflect the student's process throughout the program, facilitating an ongoing dialogue between the experiential-emotional level, artistic language, and the technical skills the student gained in the program.

The workshops in the three years of the program will include practical experiences, lectures, talks, assignments, work analysis and expansion of critical language.

**Team:**

The program will be managed by Bezalel's professional team comprised of lecturers and alumni, coordinated by a Bezalel graduate. The content of the program will be developed with the heads of the departments and a professional pedagogic staff from Bezalel in collaboration with the academy's teaching center.

The program will be taught by lecturers, fresh graduates, or outstanding students from advanced years. Where possible, priority will be given to placing teachers who grew up around the Center of Excellence. We are also considering the possibility of including students from the teaching program as part of their practical experience for credit points.

**Success factors:**

1. Active and uninterrupted participation of teens in the program, with a high retention rate;

2. Gradual annual increase of the number of teens participating in the program to maximum capacity and expanding activity to additional centers;

3. Registration and acceptance of the program’s alumni to institutions of higher education in general and art, design, and architecture in particular;

4. High quality products (portfolio, final exhibition) as a reflection of the process and the tools the students acquired in their three years in the program;

5. Satisfaction of the students, their families, schools, and environment with the program.

**Steps in the follow up and evaluation of the program:**

We intend to evaluate program’s success in achieving its objectives using the following parameters:

1. Quantitative assessment: follow up on the academic and social achievements of the teens participating in the program throughout high school. We also propose to follow up on the number of program’s participants who continue to higher education in the field.
2. Evaluation of changes in attitudes: a questionnaire can help assess the program’s influence on students' attitudes vis-à-vis self-image, motivation for success, aspiration for academic studies, and attitudes towards the studied disciplines.
3. Evaluation of behavioral change can be carried out according to the environmental evidence (family and school) and the statements of the students themselves.
4. Knowledge evaluation: the knowledge acquired while learning in the academy can be quantifiably assessed. In addition, as is customary in the art and design professions, the assessment of the acquired knowledge is also based on an examination of the student’s final product.

**Tentative budget for the next three years including expenses and incomes**

The attached spreadsheet details an estimated 3-year budget.

The estimate is for a center with a maximum of 30-40 students in the first year, 60-80 in the second year, and 90-120 in the third year.

In terms of equipment, the spreadsheet details the cost of purchasing professional equipment (in addition to basic equipment) in the first two years of the program, which should be re-evaluated according to the center's location (with the help of the local authority we may be able to collaborate with local workshops and artisans). From the fourth year onwards, expenses will be significantly reduced as there will be no need to purchase non-expendable equipment.

Work spaces including operating expenses and maintenance will be provided by the partner authority.