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## Living Library

The Living Library aims to promote respect for human rights and human dignity, to draw attention to diversity in all its forms and foster dialogue between people. Living Library works as a normal library. It is allowed to step into this area of learning, where you will find books to read, librarians that will recommend books that can change your life, a place where you can be just you and your chosen book pages.

But what makes a Living Library a great experience is the fact that on the shelves books are **people** who enter into a personal dialogue with you, the reader.

Stepping into the Living Library will facilitate learning from people that you may not even think they might say something interesting - you could see the world with new eyes, at least for a while. In addition, you can discover things about yourself that you would have never known before, even tell your own story, and especially - you will find out that life is composed of all our stories and it is up to us whether we write them or not.

Living Library works like a normal library - readers come and borrow books for a limited time. After "reading" the books, readers return them to the library. There is an important aspect to consider. Books from the Living Library are people representing groups faced or that may face prejudice and stereotypes (gender, age, ethnicity, race, religion and so on).

## To whom it is addressed?

Before the start of a living library project, any organization, together with the team, must be aware of the reasons that generated the process of making a living library and its objectives during the process. We recommend the establishment of a living library to those organizations that think their mission and status is to promote human rights, non-discrimination, equal opportunities and diversity.

Living Library aim is predefined, to promote respect for human rights and human dignity by challenging dialogue on the topics such as prejudice and stereotypes. It should be noted that each team member should fully understand the purpose of the method and its benefits for the community.

In addition to understanding and awareness of the purpose of the method, it is necessary to identify together with your team what would be the other perks of the method, such as:

- Awareness of prejudices, stereotypes and negative effects that can have an impact on individuals and on society in general



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- Increasing the visibility that this method could provide to human rights in society
- Creating an immediate reaction on a case of human rights violation, that have occurred recently in a community
- Fostering partnerships between organizations working in the field of diversity within a community
- Fostering dialogue between different civil society stakeholders at the local level

Living Library encourages the audience to reflect on their own prejudices and stereotypes. We believe that each of us has prejudices or stereotypes that we are aware of and that we acknowledge in certain contexts, but in others it may not be recognizable. It is very easy to have prejudices and stereotypes against a group of people at a great distance from us, but it is even harder to keep these prejudices when we get in contact with them and we notice a different perspective.

## Steps to organize a Living Library

- Identifying the objectives and establishing the benefits of the method
- The responsibilities of the project team
- Choosing a location for organizing the event
- Selection of books and preparing catalogs
- Selection and training of librarians
- Meeting of preparation the books
- Promoting the library
- Effective conduct of the library
- Evaluation of library
- Monitoring of Living Library in Romania / visual identity elements

Living Library's **basic principles** are clear and simple: books may not be paid within the Living Library, admission for a living library is free of charge, the library is not used for commercial purposes or to promote the interests of the organizations implementing the method, Living Library is not intended to promote certain occupations or expose the public to certain occupations in order to guide the youth and students in career, Living Library is NOT an exhibition space for famous people and famous crafts.

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