

Open Online Courses: Spreading the word on Sustainability



Description of the project including the project's goal

“Open Online Courses: Spreading the word on Sustainability” is a unique project in the Russian-speaking online community. The initial goal is to share knowledge on sustainable development with wide audience and make the knowledge on sustainability available for anyone who has Internet connection. The secondary goal is to create an open-minded and at the same time inner-directed network of people who can continue to work on a bigger scale projects whose main principles of education for sustainable development would be sharing and critical thinking.

Project's objectives, activities and achievements

The main objective of the project is to reach as many people as possible from all social layers, all age groups and different professions, by conducting open online courses providing opportunity to learn about history, principals, problems and existing techniques and approaches of sustainable development. In addition, webinars provide information on how to make everyday life of an ordinary person more sustainable in post-soviet reality.

The project was launched in May 2013 and the first course, “Introduction to Sustainable Development”, was held in June 2013. First webinar was organized on World Environmental Day. More than 150 people registered for the course and about 50 people finished it successfully. Open School as an online platform became known in an environmentally oriented circle in the CIS and a lot of people from different countries got new connections - this is how a new network of environmentally friendly people started to occur.

How young people were involved

Initially the project was created by two young women, who care about sustainability and got knowledge from various international educational events and programs. They organized all the work for the launching project: creating a web-site, pages for social networks, advisements, collecting and creating educational materials, conducting the webinars and more.

Project funding

So far the project was completely based on volunteer initiative. The only expenses made were connected to creating a new website (around 30EUR). In the future additional funds will be necessary if the project grows and requires more time from volunteers.

Project's connections to national or international environment processes

The project is directly dealing with education on sustainable development, which is sometimes missing in the national agenda of CIS or exists just on paper. Open School is an open source of information on sustainable development for anyone who speaks Russian and has Internet connection.

Project's connections to national or international health processes

Sustainable development is directly connected with health processes. By spreading the word about sustainable development the project also helps people to understand how global processes work and influence our everyday life, and consequently our health.

Follow up, outcomes and future plans

In September 2013 the "Introduction to Sustainable Development" course was held again due to many requests received from people who missed it in June 2013 (about 100 people registered). Moreover, starting from October Open School will start a round of several webinars on diverse topics related to sustainable development. These webinars will be led by different experts that were invited to spread the knowledge as volunteers.

Presently the online Russian-speaking community of people who are interested in making the life for the whole world better is growing every day. This project is trying to cover all possible social networks to attract more people and spread the word as wide and fast as possible.