

ACT!

Arts, Critical Thinking & Active Citizenship in Kosovo

(AHRC GCRF 2017 – 2021)



Nita Luci & Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers

University of Prishtina, Kosovo

&

Bournemouth University, UK



Bournemouth University

University Program for Gender Studies and Research & Seldom Heard Voices - Research Centre/ Conflict Transformation Studies

AHRC Project

Nita and Stephanie jointly lead the 'Kosovo Strand' of a four-year (2017-2021) international, multi-disciplinary Arts & Humanities Research Council – Global Challenges Research Fund (AHRC – GCRF) project, called 'Changing the Story', led by the University of Leeds. The overall project supports the building of inclusive civil societies with, and for, young people in five post-conflict countries. It is a collaborative project between universities, INGOs, artists, grassroots civil society organisations (CSOs) and young people across the world. It asks how the arts, heritage, and human rights education can support youth-centred approaches to civil society building in Cambodia, Colombia, Kosovo, Rwanda and South Africa.



Left: 'Haveit', an Prishtina-base artist collective, challenge the perpetuation of classic patriarchal, heteronormative regimes of citizenship and reclaim public urban space. Can their political art inspire and reach young people in the conservative peripheries?

Right: The internationally imposed, exclusive visa regime has disadvantaged young Kosovars at large – in such geopolitically imbalanced context, how can a transnationally collaborative, educational, collaborative project be fair and inclusive?

Methods

Qualitative: Arts-based participatory action research and ethnographic, including participatory observation; focus groups; interviews; desk research (literature and source review). Case studies in selected municipalities.

Quantitative: survey of existing arts-based/educational CSO activities.

Contested Concepts

(Example) **Nationalism** – a hegemonic regime of citizenship, based on patriarchy, heteronormativity and ethnic exclusion.



Picture on classroom wall: standard education, a site of tension between ethno-nationalist and civic-based representations and knowledge politics

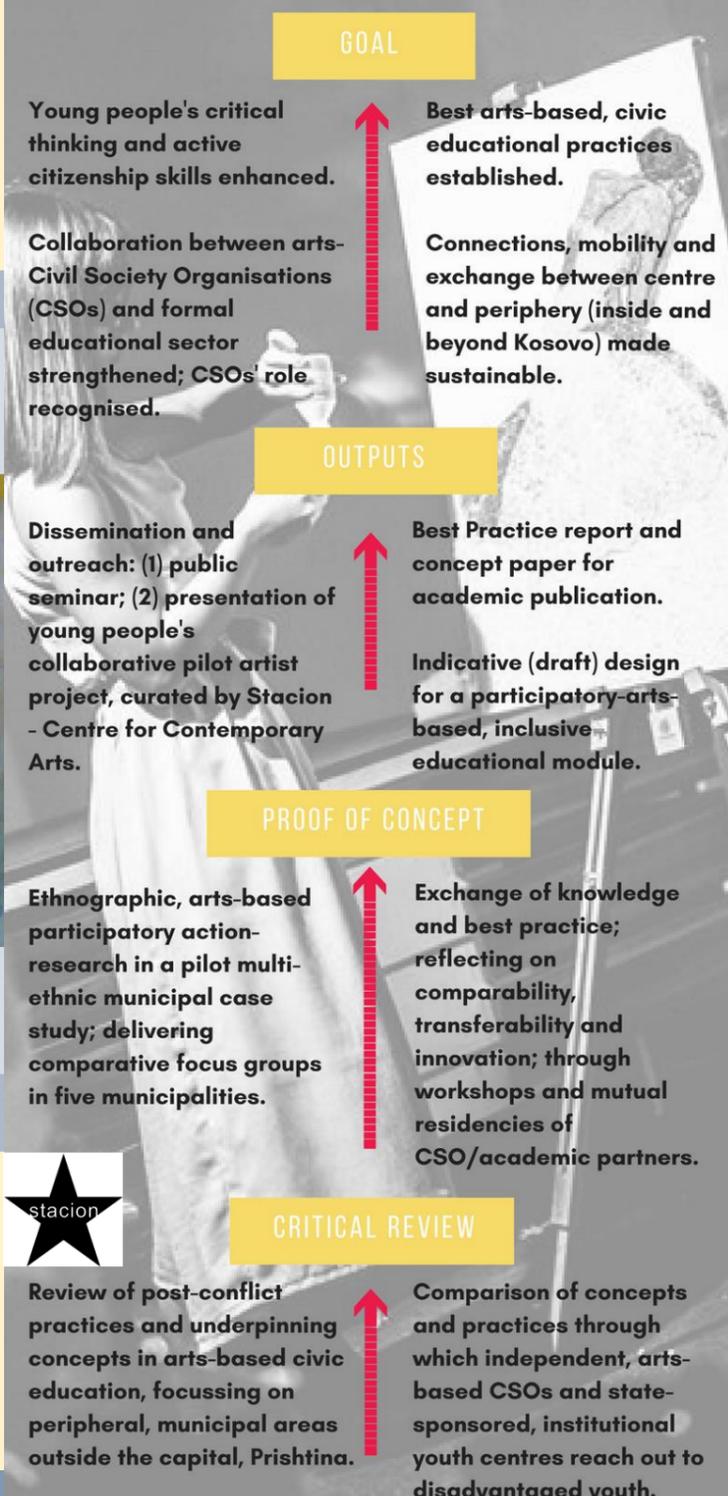
Kosovo Partners

Stacion: Centre for Contemporary Arts, Prishtina (lead facilitator), and:

- Anibar, Peja -- ARDA, Mitrovica --
- NGO Aktiv, Northern Mitrovica --
- 7Arte, Mitrovica -- Varg e Vi, Centre for Contemporary Art, Gjilan -- PAX for Peace, Kosovo -- and more.

CHANGING THE STORY

THEORY OF CHANGE:
KOSOVO



'Kosovo Strand' 'Phase I'

As with all of the Phase 1 sub-projects of 'Changing the Story', the 'Kosovo Strand' team, including a post-doctoral research associate, is conducting a **Critical Review** and a **Proof of Concept** project, before disseminating the findings with local, national and inter-national networks.

The team will conduct a comparative analysis between the content, forms and practices of **official, municipal versus independent, arts-based forms of civic education**, foregrounding a focus on the issues facing arts-based CSOs targeting young people in marginalised areas outside the capital, Prishtina.

Sample Research Questions

How do political interests and diverse funding streams influence the methods and outcomes of civic education? How is civic education and citizenship conceptualized differently at official/independent sites? Who uses the services provided? What official or independent arts-based educational practices succeed or fail in promoting social justice, civic integration and critical thinking for local youth?

Contacts & Information

nita.luci@uni-pr.edu; info.stacion@org;
sssievers@bournemouth.ac.uk
<https://changingthestory.leeds.ac.uk/>
BU-Research Centre 'Seldom Heard Voices'