SIMBIOZA
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STORY OF SIMBIOZA

Simbioza Genesis, social enterprise, was founded in May 2014. It was a consequence of an organic growth from a project 'Simbioz@ e-literate Slovenia', which started in 2011. The project included weeklong computer workshops across whole Slovenia, where young volunteers teach the elderly the basics of computer and internet. It connected thousands of people nationwide, and after 5 years of presence, we had more than 50 thousand participants joining Simbioza. A Slovenian project on raising e-literacy level of elder population by young volunteers, this project embraced all individuals, regardless of any characteristic that can encourage discrimination. We promote the right to access the Internet technologies to all citizens, and with that, we strengthen tolerance, respect, trust, solidarity and encourage cultural and lingual diversity.

Our story of Simbioza started with an alarming fact: 2009, 94 % of people over the aged of 65 have never touched a computer. This was the initial problem Simbioza addressed, as population in the world is ageing rapidly, but people also live longer. We found locations with existing infrastructure, invited almost every stakeholder in Slovenia to participate and triggered a nationwide euphoria with participants. It was meant to be only a one-time initiative in 2011, but because of market demand grew into a social business in 2014. In early 2014 we got the confirmation of our efforts: the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia has published data showing that shares of daily computer and Internet users among older people are three and seven times higher than five years ago (in 2009).

We believe that digital society must be inclusive for all generations. That is why our principle activities are based on empowering people with digital literacy through intergenerational cooperation. We combine the energy of the youth with the experiences of the elder to prepare both target groups for a digital future.

After 6 years we are working on several projects:
- Simbioza School model (transferring the e-literacy model in local environments where schools organize Simbioza workshops twice per year with our modules): around 7000+ included (seniors + volunteers)
- Simbioza Moves (weeklong nationwide action in 2014 by doing sports in intergenerational focus): 22.000 volunteers + seniors (in 2016); we have a new action coming up from 14th to 21st of October 2017.
- Simbioza Masters (280-hour training for youth with less opportunity, combined out of 4 topics: ICT skills, Teaching the Elder, Project Management and Practical work with the elder): 45 young people included in 2014 and 2015, funded by National Employment Agency.
- Simbioza Digital Academy (advanced computer workshops for empowering youth and active workforce in the field of ICT skills for higher youth employability), operating since 2014, including around 900 individuals per year. Expanded activities include also workshops for organizations and their employees.
- Intergenerational Center (first of its kind in Ljubljana, offering daily activities for seniors and unemployed aged over 55, as well as for children aged between 5 and 12 – summer school of coding, etc.): 700 seniors + children per year.
- Simbioza International (connecting with partners abroad to transfer the Simbioza model abroad as it is applicable to every country with similar population challenges. Our international initiative coincides with the promotion of voluntarism, empowerment for higher employability

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and easier mobility for young people. Having in mind the coherent and indispensable know-how, the structure and a wide pallet of experiences, we want to connect with likeminded people abroad and address their similar social issues. So far, we had 2 pilot workshops: one in Shanghai, China and in Zagreb, Croatia.)
- Simbioza with Roma Youth (pilot workshops in Roma communities with Roma children between 6 and 12 years old and young Roma mothers, aged between 13 and 24 years): piloting with 30 participants in two major Slovenian Roma communities.

Our mission: Simbioza aims at improving the quality of life and well-being of our two target groups – the elder as well as the youth – by providing unique employment, networking and mutual learning opportunities.

Key aspects and values of Simbioza are:
- To promote active ageing and solidarity between generations
- To connect generations through learning in reverse roles: the young teach and the elder learn
- To show the elder that the youth cares
- To develop responsible proactive young individuals
- Special focus is on educating socially vulnerable groups on the meaning of ICT knowledge and career prospects in this area as well as for women
- We include all stakeholders: government, local communities, NGOs, civil society, private sector, sponsors and business partners
- The main goal is to show that Simbioza works in all environments with similar social issues
- We focus on quality rather than on quantity and through different approaches
- Use of the project for the target groups can be visible on a daily basis and serve as inspiration to be more active – people live better and happier
- We encourage activism and social responsibility that should be practiced on a daily basis.

Vision for the future: Simbioza wants to become a leading world forum on the topic of intergenerational cooperation and exchange of knowledge and experiences. The team of Simbioza consists of young Generation Y representatives or in our words, generation of innovations, which creates opportunities of future digital society. With the purpose to strengthen cooperation between different stakeholders on the topic of inclusive digital society and to promote Slovenia as a case of good practice on the topic of social innovations we wish to contribute to build up Slovenian reputation in international community. Our vision is to create and spread a universal model of intergenerational cooperation that can be applied to every environment with similar social challenges. Simbioza Genesis, social enterprise, is focused on becoming the ambassador of social economy, which is becoming the foundation of sustainable development of society and environment that we live in.

www.simbioza.eu (main Simbioza page)
www.e-simbioza.com (Simbioza Digital Academy)
www.simbiozasola.eu (in construction for updates)
www.simbiozamgc.com (Intergenerational Center in Ljubljana)

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AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS:

- ❑ European Citizen Award, conferred by the European Parliament in 2012 for Simbioza 2011;
- ❑ Award for the title "Volunteer of the Year" in 2012 for Simbioza 2011, conferred by the National Youth Council of Slovenia (under the patronage of Dr. Danilo Türk, former President of the Republic of Slovenia);
- ❑ Award for Innovations in 2011 in Central Slovenian region (silver award), conferred by the Slovenian Chamber of Commerce in 2012 for Simbioza 2011;
- ❑ State youth sector award in 2013;
- ❑ European award for socially responsible entrepreneurship practices for partnership, innovations, and change conferred by CSR Europe and Business in the Community (BITC) in 2013 for Simbioza 2012;
- ❑ Award for social inclusion, conferred by Erste Foundation in 2013
- ❑ Nomination by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Slovenia for United Nations Population Award 2014;
- ❑ The Republic of Slovenia State Award on Volunteering for 2014, conferred by the President of the Republic of Slovenia Mr. Borut Pahor.
- ❑ Best of Best Award 2014 by American Chamber of Commerce in Slovenia
- ❑ State Award of the Republic of Slovenia for Voluntarism 2014, conferred by the President of the Republic of Slovenia Mr. Borut Pahor
- ❑ Diploma for Social Innovation 2015 by Ministry of Economic Development and Technology.
- ❑ Finalist in the Best of the Best Practice, category Motivation, by AmCham Slovenia for Simbioza School Project in 2016.
- ❑ Nomination for UNESCO Al-Khalifa Award for using ICT in education by Ministry of Education, Science and Sport in 2016.
- ❑ Elected to the Board of Members for Slovenian Digital Coalition as representatives of NGOs in the field on information society (2017).

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SIMBIOZA AS A SOCIAL INNOVATION

Elements of social innovation	Simbioza between generations
Solving social challenges	Rapid ageing population, social inclusion of seniors, youth participation
Social inclusion	Including people aged over 55 and seniors over 65 years old
Empowerment of vulnerable social groups	e-literacy for higher independent living, the right to access information
Active citizen participation	Including 70 thousand people in 6 years nationwide
Bigger role of society	Active participation of various social groups, upgrading content regarding the feedback of our beneficiaries
Non-economic motivation	Volunteer-based initiatives
Social interaction	Intergenerational cooperation and connecting people of all age, gender or culture
Following social values	Intergenerational cooperation, lifelong learning, social inclusion, right to access information, voluntarism, intergenerational dialogue
Development of new practices	Computer workshops of senior citizens as a new model of active ageing and lifelong learning
Sustainable solution of social challenges	Improving national statistics on e-literacy of people aged over 65 in Slovenia (data from 2013 in comparison to 2009).

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STAKEHOLDERS

Simbioza cooperates with many stakeholders on an international, national, regional and local basis:

American Chamber of Commerce in Ljubljana (members)
All Digital pan-European association for enhancing digital skills in Europe
Microsoft Slovenia
Triglav Insurance company
Inovatio (digital solutions for schools)
Cisco
Google
Facebook
BTC
National Employment Agency
European Schoolnet Network
US Embassy in Ljubljana
Ministry of Education, Science and Sports
Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
Ministry of Public Administration
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Health
National Youth Council of Slovenia
CNVOS network for NGOs in Slovenia
MINVOS
Cene Štupar Center
Faculty of Economics at University of Ljubljana
Faculty of Business and Economics at University of Maribor
Jožef Stefan Institute (IJS)
e-Student Service Association
Olympic Committee Slovenia
National Association for seniors (ZDUS)
Nacional Institute for public health
Faculty of Sports at University of Ljubljana
Faculty of Social Work at University of Ljubljana
Faculty of Social Sciences at University of Ljubljana
Faculty of Electronics at University of Ljubljana
STA Travel Agency
Fairtrade shop 3Muhe
Samsung Slovenia
GEOSS Adventure Park
NLB d.d.
Vzajemna Insurance
Lidl
Student Organization in Ljubljana (ŠOU)
Student Organization in Maribor (ŠOUM)

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MaMa Network
University for third life cycle (Univerza za tretje življenjsko obdobje)
Slovenian Philanthropy
Institute Nefiks
Ypsilon Institute
Doba Faculty
Institute Voluntariat
MISSS
Association of social institutes of Slovenia (Skupnost socialnih zavodov Slovenije)
Institute Varni na internetu
And many others (NGOs), municipalities across Slovenia, etc.

Media:
National RTV channel (TV)
national radio Val202
Newspaper Delo (+online edition)
newspaper Dnevnik (+online edition)
magazine Viva
web-portal MojaObcina.si
eb-portal Filternet.si
web-portal Mladi podjetnik
web-portal Startaj.si
web-portal Seniorji.info
magazine and web-portal Zlata leta

Friends of Simbioza (Ambassadors, supporters, individuals):
- Cabinet of Prime Minister of Republic of Slovenia (Tadej Slapnik)
- Žiga Vavpotič, chairman of Outfit 7 and founder of Simbioza
- Borut Jeglič, CEO of e2grow / Ujemi Rast and former Project Manager of Simbioza
- Gregor Cuzak, expert on digital marketing and digital health solutions
- Prime Minister dr. Miro Cerar
- President of the Republic of Slovenia Borut Pahor
- President of the General Assembly of Republic of Slovenia dr. Milan Brglez
- Mrs Vlasta Nussdorfer, Ombudsman of the Republic of Slovenia
- Mrs Tanja Fajon, Member of the European Parliament
- dr. Danilo Türk, Former President of the Republic of Slovenia
- dr. Gregor Virant, Former President of National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia
- mag. Blaž Kavčič, Former President of National Council of the Republic of Slovenia
- Mrs. Neelie Kroes, Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for the Digital Agenda for Europe
- Ljubo Germič, Former President of National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia
- dr. Pavel Gantar, Former President of National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia

More on: http://www.simbioza.eu/sl/2017/podporniki

NEW STORIES AHEAD:

1. **INNOVATION HUB OF TECHNOLOGY @ BTC (November 2017)**

A new, 100m2 space to promote innovative solutions for beneficiaries to test and use, learn about its characteristics and in the end, also buy the product/application or service. This space will consist of classroom and a show room that will offer products from partners (smart phones, smart furniture, e-products, e-services, etc.) that will be tested by Simbioza team and labelled as user friendly. The target group are people aged over 55. Next to the demo show room, this Hub will offer various trainings and workshops on digital technology with the focus on social reactivation of people who are long-term unemployed (currently, 1/3 of all officially registered long-term unemployed are people aged over 55). We want to combine digital skills, entrepreneurship and reduction of unemployment through intergenerational training programs such as intergenerational business hackathons, senior interns, accelerator 55+, etc., empowering people through workshops and giving them the tools to actively participate in modern society as well as (re)enter the labor market.

We plan to reach 400 visits per week (workshops from Monday to Friday, Shopping Saturdays).

2. **MAGDA platform – Digital Assistance Platform:** a remote assisted living solution with the help of IoT- A ticket to the modern world for inclusive digital society (Beta version by December 2017)

Our service Magda offers seniors self-care for keeping their physical and mental abilities for a prolonged independent life at home in a safe and reliable environment with IoT and ICT tools. As world is ageing rapidly and there are not enough institutional solutions and applicable social systems available, elder become the burden of their families or friends and national systems. With extensive experiences in building intergenerational cooperation, Simbioza proposes a highly flexible app, developed by young Slovenes. It presents an upgrade content and user wise for Simbioza and offers extended social impact with international orientation and potential. In Slovenia, there are over 367 thousand retired people, where 60% use informal homecare, which is not properly serviced at the moment. Slovenia is ranked 8th in the world by the number of rapid ageing, which presents a potential for long-term burden on national social and healthcare system. Magda platform is a unique service in the context of ageing and digital inclusion as it connects seniors online in a friendly way, and it will serve as the best integrated product for homecare.

Magda's innovation is servicing needs of our target group in a way which is not existing by now; digitalization of the service (social and digital inclusion of seniors with visual, content and user adjusted experience); a service with one-stop-shop mentality (therefore three pillars: health, safety and social needs); comprehensive approach to rapid ageing; market novelty to cover 60% of daily needs; sustainable solution to release the financial burden on health system and pressures on informal caregivers (usually active working population that is financially responsible for their children and helping their parents as well); higher social role and participation of society; big database from Simbioza's fieldwork and trust based organization; established intersectoral eco-system of stakeholders' collaboration (business, public and NGO); pioneering work on the topic of intergenerational cooperation and e-literacy of seniors;

innovative interactive approach to users and Magda service also presents an upgrade of existing solutions as their focus is mostly on certain segment of products.

We plan to achieve 10% of market share within 5 years, in numbers this stands for over 30K of seniors living at home in need of informal homecare. We will raise number of active senior online users and within the social needs pillar develop new entrepreneurial activities, such as intergenerational business hackaton. In this regard, we increase the number of our beneficiaries and empower many people throughout the process (additional employments, social reactivation of unemployed). We create our impact through service value chain where we put customers and stakeholders (partners) in front of any economic aspects.

Simbioza team will achieve proposed impact in steps: in 2017, we will have the beta version of the Magda platform and test it through nationwide action in early 2018. There we will introduce seniors to the platform and show them first products (our own and of partners). This way, Magda platform will serve as Slovenian best practice for digitally inclusive society with global potential.

3. **SMART WITH SMART ONES:** nationwide action of teaching seniors how to use smart phones and tablet computers (9th to 13th April, 2018)

Nationwide action of empowering people through smart technology and intergenerational cooperation is Simbioza's biggest added value as its main purpose is awareness raising on the challenges of inclusive information society, as there are generations left out from digital world. Besides mentioned, our goal is to get into every village or town and offer workshops free of charge as the first contact with digital should be free for all.

The action lasts for 5 consecutive days (Monday to Friday), offers 5 different teaching modules (which our team of experts develops) and each workshop is implemented two times per day (morning and afternoon option). Locations are the ones with existing infrastructure: schools, libraries, homes for senior citizens, municipalities, NGOs, various companies offer their offices, etc. Workshops are implemented by young volunteers (aged from 10 to 30), beforehand volunteers get training. Simbioza has its own methodology for teaching which is also the main ingredient for its success.

The plan is to include **at least 3500 volunteers and at least 5500 people aged over 55 and seniors** to the workshops within one week across Slovenia, besides already existing projects and beneficiaries.

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