

**International Answers to Slovenia's Critical Questions (page 5) regarding Leadership and Management (Slovenia's COER)**

- **Have you experienced any situations that are similar to those encountered by the professionals involved in the NasVIZ or CONA FUŽINE projects?**

There are many aspects in these cases, but I would highlight that of structure, in particular. NGO-based organisations often have to set up the project organisation quickly when funding is granted and the duration of such an organisational structure is usually limited due to limited funding. From the group viewpoint, this is challenging since it takes time for the well-functioning working culture to develop and for the individual roles to settle. Therefore, this is challenging in terms of the continuity of the team.

- **How would you tackle the problem of managing multi-professional teams, in which different experts and professionals see their discipline or line of work as more/less important than others?**

In my view, dialogue is the number one tool to tackle potential problems in multi-professional teams. All members should firstly commit to respect one another's views and curiously try to see matters from perspectives of others. Mutual trust is important. We have a tendency to lock our opinions very quickly and defend our views. Listening to others carefully and critically reflecting our own attitudes usually helps when all team members are committed to it.

- **In your opinion, which skills are important to manage and lead community projects?**

Dialogue skills, as mentioned above. It is also useful to understand the basics of group dynamics in order to recognise the mechanisms that usually lead to the emergence of challenges in groups. Processes evolving in communities and groups are interesting to observe and help us to recognise and consider such challenges objectively.

- **How would you prevent the motivation of your team from diminishing?**

I believe it is very important to set clear goals. Our motivation often decreases when we experience the feeling of disappointment. If the goals are not clear, and, most of all, the strive for their achievement dwindles, we might direct our efforts to something that others are not even trying to achieve nor consider important. If we don't consider our goals important, it is very challenging to stay motivated.

- **While managing and leading such teams might be demanding, which benefits and challenges would this create for you as a practitioner?**

Even the most qualified experts can only master a limited amount of skills and knowledge. The clearest benefit stems from the shared knowledge and experience: the views of others complement our own views. Synergy creates benefits for all. Challenges often arise from different ways of thinking, different cultures and world views, and different values.

- **Which activities would you encourage or suggest for your teams' teambuilding?**

I favour the so-called action methods, where any activity is combined with dialogue thus moving the process forward. Most importantly, I would encourage team members to listen, respect one another and speak out their own mind honestly and straightforwardly.