

STIFTUNG MERCATOR

Pagina 1 di 2

Stiftung Mercator is a private foundation promoting science, education and international understanding. It initiates, develops and finances specific projects and partner organisations concerned with the themes to which it is committed: its objectives are to strengthen Europe, improve integration by means of equal education opportunities for everyone, advance the energy turnaround as the motor behind global climate protection and firmly anchor cultural education in schools. The Ruhr district, as the home of the founding family and the Foundation's headquarters, has a special commitment to these objectives.

www.stiftung-mercator.de

The cluster theme of cultural education

Aim

In order to actively participate in our diverse society, we must be in a position to deal with continually new challenges in a creative and self-confident way. As well as imparting language, mathematical and scientific skills, an education that is geared towards helping children and young people to become self-determined, open-minded and responsible individuals must also nurture their artistic and creative abilities. Here, the cultural education of children and young people is of vital importance. An artistic confrontation with questions concerning life and society – for example in the form of theatre, music, film, dancing, painting, sculpture, poetry or literature – provides children and young people with a better understanding of themselves and the world around them, and encourages them to play an active role in shaping it. At the same time, the teaching of all kinds of subjects using artistic methods promotes the development of a new creative learning culture, awakening resourcefulness and heightening the pleasure of learning in a sustainable way. Stiftung Mercator would like to contribute towards making quality cultural education equally accessible to all children and young people. Our main focus is on schools, as a place where all children and young people can be reached, including those who - for socio-economic reasons - do not necessarily have access to external cultural education. For this reason we are committed to ensuring that the importance of cultural education is recognised as an integral part of general education, and that its quality and effectiveness are safeguarded.

Challenge

The potential of cultural education is becoming increasingly recognised by headmasters, teachers, parents and pupils alike. Nevertheless, access to high-quality cultural education – as in the case of general education – is still unequally distributed amongst children and young people from different socio-economic milieus. Extensive changes must be made, through the increased structural integration of cultural education in teaching, school development and teacher training.

Particular consideration should be given to the historically evolved situation of cultural education in Germany. On the one hand, limited priority is given to cultural education; it is usually seen as a subsidiary subject or extracurricular activity. On the other hand, a large number of cultural educational needs are covered by institutions specialising in cultural youth education and, increasingly, by cultural institutions and independent artists. However, these activities are not a part of daily education in schools.

This situation gives rise to the following central challenges for the structural integration of cultural education in schools: firstly it must be recognised, both in schools and in public, that cultural education is not a secondary educational issue,

but a central educational task of the school system. On the other hand, new forms of cooperation must be found, so that protagonists inside and outside of schools can work together to provide high quality and effective cultural education for all children and young people.

Strategy

In cooperation with our partners, our objective is to support the responsible parties in schools, youth education and culture in establishing cultural education within the general education system. We aim to strengthen existing competence, encourage the utilisation of potential and support the development of innovations.

Our working method is systematic and oriented towards synergies based on the cooperation and coordination of the protagonists. We focus on the central guidelines for school development, issued by the Ministry of Education in each federal state. The criteria formulated here, in accordance with quality frameworks, form the basis of external evaluation and the development of internal school programmes for all schools in a federal state. Thus, a vital prerequisite for the integration of art in the syllabus is that criteria of cultural education are included in the quality framework. Our objective is for this to be implemented in at least four federal states by 2015, and in all 16 by the year 2025.

In this way, all schools will be officially authorised to give high priority to cultural education in their school curricula. In order to support this concern in schools, we are promoting the development of instruments and models that can be used by headmasters and teachers to introduce quality cultural education opportunities and methods in their schools. Within the established structures, we also support the development of counselling and qualification opportunities in the areas of school supervision, school development consultation and teacher training, on both a regional and a local level.

Implementation

We have developed a strategic project portfolio, divided into four fields of activity: *practice*, *advocacy*, *observations/recommendations* and *transfer*. Within this framework, we develop and sponsor projects that contribute towards strengthening cultural education in schools.

In the field of activity named *practice*, we foster the development of innovative instruments and models. Based on examples, they indicate how cultural education in schools can be successfully organised to become an integral part of general education. Our projects in the field of activity *advocacy* support the institutional protagonists responsible for cultural education in the political fields of school, culture and family. Here, it is our aim to build strategic partnerships on a political and administrative level, with a view to securing the structural and sustainable integration of cultural education in schools. The field of activity concerned with *observations/recommendations* places scientifically substantiated arguments and expertise at the disposal of political decision-makers, stakeholders in science and practice, and the professional and general public.

In the field of activity *transfer*, we present experiences from tested practice models and scientific knowledge in a user-oriented way, and place them at the disposal of relevant user groups.

If you have any further questions, please contact:

Julia Heer, Communications Manager

Stiftung Mercator

Tel: +49 201 245 22-849

Julia.Heer@stiftung-mercator.de