



2014-1-HU01-KA203-002367

INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL INNOVATION COMPETITION

**Project title or
name of the social enterprise:** **CERVUS** - Low-tech functional design as opportunity for socially disadvantaged people

Keywords (max. 5) describing
your social business idea:

design

innovation

socially disadvantaged people

**Name of the
team representative:**

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Team members:

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Represented country:

Slovakia



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PROJECT

CERVUS - LOW-TECH DESIGN AS OPPORTUNITY FOR SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE

As a freshly graduated product designer I see big opportunity with production of original interior products as a way to business. On the other hand, there's substantial problem for young designers in Slovakia to find companies to produce their products. And also there is a lot of unemployed people who can participate on production of such products.

I found out that there's problem to find some work for many unemployed people. Data from Statistical office says that there is unemployment rate around 15% at the East part of Slovakia, between young people(25-34yo) is even higher, it reaches 21%. Many of them are very handy and skilful, doesn't matter if they are physically handicapped, low educated or they are socially disadvantaged in other way. Therefore, I think there is good opportunity to connect this two problem to solve both.

The main idea of the project is to produce small batch low-cost products by involving handicapped, long-term unemployed or other socially disadvantaged people during production process. The project would also could help to young designers to materialized their ideas. What is also quite big problem in Slovakia.

I received some small financial support from partner of Slovak I-SICS competition, but for starting of production I will need additional financial support for tools, material, rent of premises etc. I have found one craftsman who is very helpful for at that beginning of this social project. He will help me with more complicated production processes, for example for welding. I want to start production with small series of 10-15 of pieces of mentioned products. For this small series I will need about 400€.

Next important issue are production premises, where these products can be made. I have found such place already and now we are discussing about details of starting with our stakeholder, small village in north-east of Slovakia.

I can take into account possibility to join any social enterprises already existing, due to human resources. It means if there are some human resource structures in existing social enterprises which have any free working time we can help them to be more effective in their activities. I am also planning to contact Labour Office and organizations associating handicapped to find suitable handy people for



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making easy manual works on products, for example assembly, painting etc.

I am in communication with several suppliers of material. At the beginning it would be functional emotive design lamp and coat hanger, which are designed for inexpensive and easy production. There are possibilities to design another similar or new products, which would be easy and inexpensive to produce, but the resulting product can be well financially assessed.

The important part will be to find effective channel to promote these products and ideas and to find way how to sell. There are possibilities to sell it on e-shop, but in design shops, too. I am also in cooperation with several interior architects, who can be used as distribution channel also. I expect that my customers will be young people or young families with children with low-medium incomes.

I expect that project will earn money itself, even I think there can be profit for scale up production and invest to advertisement and to increase public awareness about the problem of engaging skilled but socially disadvantaged people in society. But it expects effectiveness at the all levels of business processes, also important thing will be gaining of social enterprise status through which I would receive some other financial sources as part of wages for disadvantage people.

CERVUS project will bring benefits for socially disadvantage people. They will get a sense of involvement to society and earn some money. I am pretty sure that it will increase their standard of living. For customers it brings new innovative product with unique design and added value and by buying these products they will support socially disadvantaged people and less developed regions.

The innovation of the project comes with making original design products, made by socially disadvantage people, which could be sold in design stores or through e-shop. There are many similar projects with handmade stuffs made by handicapped people, but this project has unique added value – simple and functional design. If I succeed at the market, I want to ask for social enterprise status. Its would bring another value for engaged people and competitive advantage for our social business.

In annex please find pictures of products, which could be produced at first. There were made prototypes of them (not only visualisations) to test functionality.