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YOUTH WITH A GLOBAL VISION

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The image features a solid yellow background. A horizontal white bar is positioned in the upper-middle section. Within this bar, the word "Introduction" is written in a blue, sans-serif font. To the right of the white bar, there is a solid orange square.

# Introduction

“A stranger is a friend you haven’t met yet”. This antiracist slogan is very simple, yet very complex. It is a slogan which points to dialogue with those we might consider “strangers”.<sup>1</sup>

This slogan is a good introduction to the idea of a Human Library. The Human Library offers people the opportunity of discussing personally with someone they might consider a “stranger” in a structured, protected way, within a time limit, but without any following commitments. This framework is probably one of the reasons why the Human Library was so popular everywhere it was organized, throughout the world and particularly in UK and Romania. The Human Library is a creative and innovative method presented in this guide aims at provoking interpersonal dialogue between people who wouldn’t normally get a chance to talk in an organized setting.

The Romanian and British organizations that work in the field of intercultural dialogue, diversity, or simply, in the area of youth and adult education, are often faced with the challenge of finding new and innovative methods of attracting people’s attention towards issues of diversity in a simple and effective way. Human Library represents an opportunity for intercultural dialogue and personal growth directed towards people who usually have very little contact with non-formal education programs.

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<sup>1</sup> Ronni Abergel, Antje Rothemund, Gavan Titley, Péter Wootsch, DON’T JUDGE A BOOK BY IT’S COVER, Directorate of Youth and Sport, Programme “Youth promoting human rights and social cohesion”, Ungaria, Council of Europe Publishing, 2005

This publication, made possible with the support of the European Commission through the Youth in Action Programme, was created as a means of promoting the methodology of the Human Library in UK and Romania. This guide, which will be made available to all the organizers of Human Libraries around Romania and UK, sums up the cumulated experience of several organizers, librarians, books and readers, all of which were involved in similar events conducted in 2009-2011 and organised by A.R.T. Fusion and its partners.

The purpose of this publication is to encourage and offer support to those who undertake the coordination of a Human Library. Through this guide we do not intend to offer the perfect recipe for the organization of a Human library because every library has its own basic ingredients and everything else is adapted by each and every organizer according to local circumstances. However, there's a clear limit in what regards the adaptation of the method. It is desired by the creators that this limit be respected. "Good tools" are required for building an authentic Human Library, but if these tools are used to less-than-honourable ends, then they could lead to an incorrect use of the methodology and of the purpose to which it was initiated. It is the wish of the creators of this method that it be promoted and applied responsibly and correctly.

"Human Library is not a PR exercise in search of flashy titles, it is not an exhibition of rare objects and most particularly, it is not an recruiting agency for famous people. The Human Library is a dialogue instrument which brings people closer together in order to promote respect for human dignity and individual identity".<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Ronni Abergel, Antje Rothemund, Gavan Titley, Péter Wootsch, DON'T JUDGE A BOOK BY IT'S COVER, Directorate of Youth and Sport, Programme "Youth promoting human rights and social cohesion", Ungaria, Council of Europe Publishing, 2005



Thus, Human Library has every intention of drawing attention towards the acceptance of diversity because, often times, differences between people are not valued as resources. Most times, these differences lead to labelling, prejudice and ultimately to discrimination, suspicion and exclusion.

The books found within the Human Library are **people** representing different groups that encounter or are likely to be met with **prejudice and stereotypes** (regarding their gender, age, education, job, ethnicity, race, religion, etc.) and who might fall **victims to discrimination** and social exclusion, or eventually they can just be people with stories that could give the reader a unique learning experience in the field of **diversity**.

Within the Human Library, **the reader** can be anyone who's willing to face their own prejudice and stereotypes. He or she is a person who wishes to spend 50 minutes of his or her time in order to obtain a learning experience full of significance. Within the library, the books not only talk, but also answer questions, they themselves being able to ask questions so as the learning experience would go both ways.

# PART I. Diversity

# What is Diversity?

...and how does it work?

There are many things to say about DIVERSITY. There are so many papers, articles, researches, doctoral thesis, etc. So we will not try to use a definition with complicated words, instead we will create our own definitions and keep it simple.

Diversity is **NOT**:

- ▶ About reducing standards
- ▶ About removing our prejudices – it is about recognising they exist and then questioning them before we act
- ▶ A distraction from more important business issues. Like quality, it is a standard by which our business performance is measured
- ▶ About positive discrimination. It is about positive action
- ▶ Just about the way we use language and so-called political correctness. It is about discussing openly and honestly our differences in order to gain a better understanding of each other.<sup>1</sup>

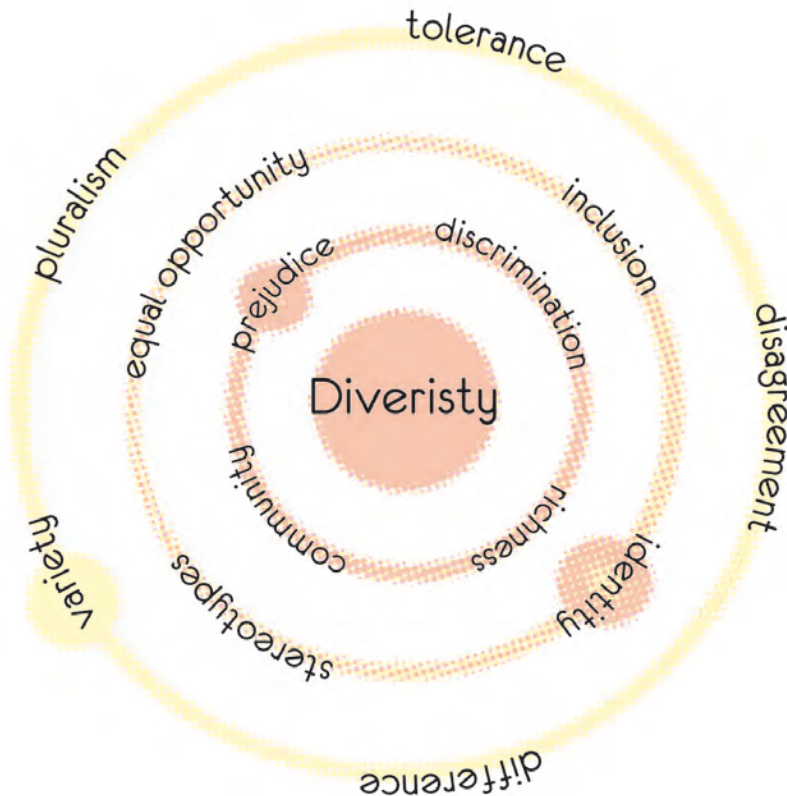
Everyone is different; everyone has different abilities, skills and resources. From our point of view, DIVERSITY is not only about celebrating the fact that people are different in many visible and invisible ways, but also about valuing and using these differences as learning resources. Being different should not be considered a bad thing, instead we could use difference as a way to get ourselves out from our comfort zone and learn more about ourselves and our society.

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<sup>1</sup> RESPECTING DIVERSITY – TOOLKIT FOR YOUTH PRACTITIONERS IN THE FIELD OF DIVERSITY, British Council Romania, 2010, pg 7.

Diversity is the opposite to uniformity and it suggests variety, richness, colour, salt and pepper in our lives. Celebrating diversity implies celebrating differences. Difference is a given, is not an option, and Diversity is a given also. We could celebrate diversity and regard everyone as unique and precious because these differences give us a unique view of the world and a distinctive range of attributes and skills. Our differences include age, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, educational background, physical abilities, nationality, marital status, work experience and all other experiences we have lived and that influenced thinking.

**Diversity builds on concepts such as:**



These notions are no longer unknown to us; they have become part of our reality. People have become increasingly aware of their existence and effect. The attempt to understand in depth why we assign attributes based on pre-conceptions, without knowing the details of individuality, has become increasingly important in today's society.

What is the first thought that comes to your mind when you say French, Italian, British, Spanish or Romanian? Champagne and arrogance, they speak a lot and with many gestures, cold people that invented tea drinking and biscuits, party people and flamenco, Gypsy and watch the wallet! Have you ever asked yourself: why do we make assessments about people who in reality we have never met? Working with diversity involves an understanding of these concepts.<sup>1</sup>



So, now you know what you have to do, right? Open yourself up to the wonderful world of Diversity, explore it and take all the knowledge you need from it! Celebrate individuality and richness of experience and thank goodness we are not all the same!

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<sup>1</sup> RESPECTING DIVERSITY – TOOLKIT FOR YOUTH PRACTITIONERS IN THE FIELD OF DIVERSITY, British Council Romania, 2010, pg 10.

## Diversity legislation in the United Kingdom

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### Ethnicity / Race / Belief

Race Relations Act 1976

Employment Equality Regulations Act

Race Relations Amendment Act 2000

e.g. it is against the law for public authorities to discriminate against anyone on grounds of race colour or nationality

### Age

Children Acts 1989 & 2004

Age Discrimination Act 2006

e.g. date of birth need not be declared for many jobs

### Disability

Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 & 2005

e.g. all applicants for jobs with a disability must be shortlisted for interview

### Gender

Sexual Discrimination Act 1975 Civil Partnership Act 2004

e.g. equality of pay for men and women e.g. same gender civil marriages

### Equal Opportunities

Equality Act 2006 set up Equalities & Human Rights Commission, this is the umbrella body with authority over all these diversity areas

### Sexuality

Sex discrimination Act 1976 SD (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999

e.g. it is against the law to discriminate against LGBT people (lesbian - gay - bisexual - transgender)

## Diversity legislation in Romania

Ordinance no. 137 from 31 August 2000 on preventing and sanctioning all forms of discrimination

Government Decision no. 1194/2001 regarding the organisation and functioning of the National Council for Combating Discrimination

Law no. 202 from 19 April 2002 regarding equal opportunities and equal treatment between women and men

Decision no. 484 from May 2007 regarding the approval of the National Agency for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men statute

Law no. 448/2006 from 06/12/2006 regarding the protection and the promotion of the rights of the disabled persons

Ordinance no.14 from 30 January 2003 regarding the setting up, organisation and functioning of the National Authority for Disabled Persons

Government Emergency Ordinance no. 78 from 7 October regarding the setting up of the National Agency for Roma

Emergency ordinance no.89 from 21 June 2001 regarding the changing of some clauses of the Penal Code on offences on sexual life

National Agency for Disabled Persons

[www.anph.ro](http://www.anph.ro)

National Agency for Roma

[www.anr.gov.ro](http://www.anr.gov.ro)

Department for Interethnic Relations

<http://www.dri.gov.ro/>

## Romanian public institutions which promote diversity

National Council for Combating Discrimination

[www.cncd.org.ro](http://www.cncd.org.ro)

National Agency for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men

[www.anes.ro](http://www.anes.ro)

## Part II. How to ... Human Library



The Human Library encourages the audience to ponder over their own prejudices and stereotypes. We believe that each of us has prejudices or stereotypes that we are unaware of and that we only recognize under certain circumstances, but within a different setting we might not identify. It's very easy to have prejudices and stereotypes towards a group of people at a remote distance from us, but it is more difficult to maintain such prejudice when we're interacting with someone whom we're prejudiced against and we get to see them from a different angle. Many times over, I've heard things like *"I don't like gypsies, but I like Cristi, even thou he is a gypsy because I know him and he is very nice"*.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the basic idea of a Human library is that of creating a physical space decorated as a library filled with books, within which people come to discuss and observe diversity from a different angle.

However, when we wish to organize this space of the Human Library, we must take into consideration a lot of aspects like: the library's objectives, the space within which the library would be organized, ways of recruiting books, ways of promoting the library, ways of evaluating the impact of the library upon the readers and books etc.

In the following chapters we will discuss each of these aspects, so as to offer the basic information for each step of the organization of the Human Library.

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<sup>1</sup> Ronni Abergel, Antje Rothemund, Gavan Titley, Péter Wootsch, *DON'T JUDGE A BOOK BY IT'S COVER*, Directorate of Youth and Sport, Programme "Youth promoting human rights and social cohesion", Ungaria, Council of Europe Publishing, 2005



## A. Identifying the Objectives of the Living Library and Establishing the Advantages of the Method

The process of organizing a Human Library event starts with establishing the aim and the objectives that should be reached through it. The Human Library method aims to promote respect for human rights and human dignity through dialogue about the topic of prejudice and stereotypes. Consequently, we recommend this method to be approached by organisations which tackle these themes through their status and mission. As a Human Library organizer, it is important to have in mind that each member of the team must fully comprehend the purpose of this method and its advantages for the community they belong to.

Apart from understanding the purpose of this method, it is necessary to identify with your team the collateral advantages of this method, such as the following:

- ▲ Raising awareness of the prejudices, stereotypes and their negative effects upon individuals, but also, upon society at large
- ▲ Increasing the visibility of human right in society
- ▲ Creating an immediate response to a recent instance of human rights violation within the community
- ▲ Stimulating partnerships between organisations that operate in the sphere of diversity and human rights within a community
- ▲ Stimulating dialogue between various partners in the sphere of civil society at a local level

Once the whole team responsible for the implementation of this method in the community is aware of the aim and advantages of the method, one can confidently proceed towards the administrative part of organizing the human library.

## B. The Responsibilities of the Project Team

In order to organize a successful Human Library event it is advised to carefully observe every detail and have a clear distribution of the tasks within the project team.

The number of members and their responsibilities within a Human Library project team depend on:

- **the size of the library:** the number of living books expected to attend the event
- **the duration of the library** in terms of days, but also, in terms of the number of hours it would be kept open each day
- **the context** in which it is to be organized: whether as part of an event where we are re invited, or within a larger event of the organisation, the latter implying a larger mobilization of human resources
- **the budget** we have for the organisation of the human library
- **human resources** available for the organisation

We recommend designating three coordinators to the following types of activities:

**The administrator** who will deal with the following types of activities<sup>1</sup>:

- recruiting the volunteers for arranging the library
- preparing the equipments and necessary materials that need to be transported and installed at the venue
- arranging the library with the use of the available materials: tents, chairs, tables, etc.
- the organisation of all the facilities for the staff and books (in case the books need accommodation)
- monitoring the location while the library is closed (in the evening and in the morning)
- gathering and packing materials when the library closes

<sup>1</sup> Ronni Abergel, Antje Rothemund, Gavan Titley, Péter Wootsch, DON'T JUDGE A BOOK BY IT'S COVER, Directorate of Youth and Sport, Programme "Youth promoting human rights and social cohesion", Ungaria, Council of Europe Publishing, 2005

### **The responsible in charge of the daily implementation of the library and the library content preparation:**

- proposes the initial reading list - the books
- recruits librarians and books
- coordinates the planning and implementation of the daily schedule of the event
- manages all the logistics materials: schedules, book lists, forms, evaluation questionnaires, any special requirements on the part of the books, etc.

### **The responsible with promoting, fundraising and evaluation of the event:**

- proposes and creates the promotion strategy and the visibility of the event
- coordinates the production of promotional materials: posters, flyers, t-shirts, books and librarians, catalogues, etc.
- implements fundraising activities for the event
- ensures the evaluation of the books, readers and librarians
- ensures the monitoring of the financial resources of the event

If we were to list the logical steps of the event in order of implementation, this would be the way in which the tasks could be distributed over a 10 week period of time if the team was made of at least three people who worked steadily- see the Gantt table below.

The duration of the implementation below is for an event with 25 - 30 books expected and more than 300 readers, stretching over the period of 3-4 days, with a library program from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. The implementation team is experienced in organizing a Human Library. Thus, we recommend a longer period for a team formed of beginners in implementing the method.

## Activity

1. Defining the purpose and the number of beneficiaries
2. Preparing the documentation for the project: the description of the organisation, the description of the method, the description of the proposed event
3. Choosing the location
4. Identifying the potential local partners
5. Contacting the partners and developing the fundraising strategy
6. Creating the initial list of literature
7. Creating the paperwork for the selection of the books: describing the method, describing the roles of the books, making registration forms for the books, making assessment questionnaires of the books, establishing the dates of meeting with the books (before and after the event), etc.
8. Promoting the book search/searching for the books
9. Compiling the final list of the books
10. Designing the appearance of the venue
11. Making the list of mass media to contact
12. Preparing the design of the promotional materials: posters, flyers, T-shirts, catalogues etc
13. Organizing regular meetings with the project team in order to monitor their activities
14. Organizing a pre-meeting with the books, dictionaries, librarians 2-3 days before
15. Promoting the event: putting up posters, distributing flyers, sending announcements for recruitment of living books on forums and discussion groups, sending press releases
16. Printing all the necessary materials
17. Transferring the necessary equipment to the venue
18. Preparing the venue
19. The event itself
20. Daily assessment events
21. Ensuring the constant promotion of the event
22. Closing the event
23. Gathering the materials
24. Archiving the materials: catalogues, evaluating questionnaires
25. Evaluating the event and its impact
26. Sending thank you cards to the books
27. Informing the beneficiaries about the effects and impacts of the library
28. Constantly communicating with the books and readers



## C. Choosing the Venue for the Library

An important step in organizing a Human Library event is choosing an appropriate venue for the library. The experiences of the Human Library illustrate some approaches when choosing the venue of a Human Library.

### Organizing the library as part of a festival

The first option would be to organize the library as part of a bigger event (a festival, fair, exhibition, etc.) which would ensure a large number of participants, interested in the actual event. The advantages of this kind of a venue are that: you can have a relatively large number of participants, the actual space dedicated to the reading of the books could be significantly larger, and the atmosphere is relaxed and tolerant. The drawback is that it would be difficult to monitor the number of readers or to evaluate the impact of the project. It is possible that too large a number of visitors could show up, thus being difficult to control, but also, there's the risk that they might only come during the time they get some rest in between concerts. Also, except for the case when access is free, the festival is only available to those who can afford to buy tickets.

In order to organize the library within a festival it is important to contact the organisers long ahead of the actual event and to let them know what the library entails, to meet them, if possible, and to ensure that they are motivated to host such an event. Another aspect to be discussed is the possibility of the festival organisers to provide some space for the library, and maybe transportation and accommodation for the books - but this depends upon the festival and its respective allotted budget.



Other facilities you might want to ask the organisers about in order to better coordinate the Living Library:

- Free tickets for the organisers and books
- Support for disabled people
- A central venue, large enough to properly accommodate the library
- Tents, chairs, tables, electricity
- Access to the restrooms, showers, food
- Promotion on the festival's website as well as the promotional materials for the festival

It is advisable that you sign a partnership agreement in case you manage to obtain all these advantages, so as to ensure that everything will be ready once the library program starts, but also that all goes well throughout the event.

## Organizing the library as a stand-alone event

Another variant could be to organize a stand-alone event within a community, where the participants come to explore only this method. The advantages of this approach consist of the fact that the target group would be easier to control and the impact of the method on the participants and books would be easily quantifiable.

There have been libraries organized for one day only, or even half a day. These events are considered very small and for these, they have a certain target, like the students of a certain school. The advantages are that this approach ensures the participation of a certain target group, but it is mostly prone to disadvantages because of its limited access and the propensity for uncontrolled events, especially when it comes to promotion. If the event is not properly promoted, it may happen that very few readers would show up if any, and the books might be disappointed because they did not get to be read and there is no later date at which they could be read. When the event extends over the period of a few days, it becomes highly probable for the number of readers to increase each day.

## Organizing the library as part of another event of the organisation

The third approach would be to organize two or more parallel events one of which is the Human Library. It is better that the two events have the same topic and purpose in order to attract a target group which would be easy to anticipate. There are quite a few advantages that this approach presents: such an event would draw a larger crowd that would still be small enough to control; the readers would be able to attend other events while waiting for a certain book to become available; the effort would be more clearly focused towards achieving the objectives and chances are that the impact would be greater. Past experiences illustrate that this type of event should last at least 3 days, thus increasing the odds of having success and thus avoiding any feelings of frustration on the part of the books.

Regardless of the chosen variant, it is clear that the same steps should be followed during the stages of preparing and planning the event. What differs from one another is the budget allotted to the promotion of the event, the number of project team members and the characteristics of the community within which it is to be implemented.

Other aspects that must be taken into consideration when choosing the venue of such an event are:

- **The number of participants:** there is the possibility that during a festival with 5000 participants, only 500 would visit the library and only 50 would become readers. During a singular event, there is a great probability that all those who visit the library would also read at least one book. Therefore, you need to make sure that the venue is big enough for the estimated number of readers.
- **The duration of the library and the opening hours:** it is recommended that during a festival, the opening hours should start after people have had the chance to rest after concerts and the library should close before other concerts begin. In the case of singular events taking place in schools, it could be fitted during the break between the morning classes and the afternoon classes.

The public libraries which are expected to be visited by working people or students should preferably modify their opening hours accordingly.

- **The setting and design of the venue:** a roomy location is necessary for the books to feel relaxed. There must be a clearly delimited space where books can be borrowed, a space where they can be returned, a space where the books sit (usually, behind the place where they can be borrowed), there need to be library sets, as well as plenty of chairs and tables, there should be an area where readers can browse catalogues. The venue should be well stocked on sodas/juices, water, crackers, leaflets and other reading materials; thus keeping the librarians in constant contact with the books and readers. Therefore, we recommend an open space which would allow for all the participants to be seen. The rules of the library must be highly visible, there must be a clearly delimited space where the readers can flip through the catalogues, but also, a space where the books and readers can sit and talk.



*Live what you read, otherwise there is no point*

Thus, we keep in mind the fact that the venue is one of the main elements which ensures the success of a library. If you organize a Living Library in a big city, it is recommended that you do so in an easily accessible area, possibly in the centre of the city, so that the readers could easily get there.

## D. Selecting the Books and Preparing the Catalogues

In a library, the book selection is not only the most important aspect, but also its main attraction. If the book selection is well done, then the readers will be attracted to explore the library. But up until this moment, the book selection could be the most delicate task, as it presupposes a good organisation, a lot of tact and attention to detail. The books will be selected and presented in a catalogue, and its size will depend upon the number of books and the size of the library.



When we decide to select the books, we must take into account a few aspects like: the titles must represent a category of people frequently exposed to prejudice, stereotypes and even discrimination. It is up to the organisers to interpret this according to their context.

The catalogue should have a number of books which would give readers the opportunity to choose. To this end, we recommend that the number be no less than 15 and no greater than 50.

The number of books we choose is also in correlation with the venue we manage to secure.

Each book must have a short description of the prejudices and stereotypes it faces along with a short description of the book in general.

Thus, the steps we recommend you take during the final selection of the books are:

- Making proposals for book titles based on the local context. We recommend that you consider a total of 20 book titles in order to have a varied offer.
- Making or receiving the documentation for the book selection: the enrolment form for each book, which includes information about: the name of the book, contact information, the titles it can choose from, book description, a description of the prejudices it faces, the times and days in which it can participate as book to the event, other details or special needs that the organisers should know about; the description of the library's methodology, the description of the role of the book, the library's schedule, etc.
- Making a list of book titles and the places where the books could be found. Books could be found: through close acquaintances, through friends who could forward the information, through organisations or institutions that deal with prejudiced or stereotyped social groups
- Sending the invitations to potential books as well as forums, discussion groups or organisations who might "offer" books
- Meeting with organisations or people who might know books who would be willing to participate

- Receiving the registration forms from the books who can and want to register
- Selecting the books on the basis of the registration forms
- Making a final list of the books
- Creating the catalogues
- Informing the books with regard to the meeting with the books which would take place a few days ahead of the opening of the library

In this section we'll take each and every aspect and we'll do our best to make it clearer. We'll begin with *the selection of the book titles*.

In the list below we will present some of the titles: *gypsy, blonde, priest, civil servant, person with disabilities, environmentalist, former drug addict, athlete, inmate, feminist, homosexual, lesbian, bisexual, Muslim, senior citizen, policeman, social worker, philosopher, artist, Hungarian, Moldavian, British, French, Dutch, hitch-hiker, woman working in a technical field, director, taxi driver, actor, vegetarian, journalist, skater, former alcoholic, etc.*



**Book Title:** Pensioner

**Author:** Elisabeth Freeman

**Friday:** 17.00 - 20.00

#### **They say that...**

As an old person young people may think that we have passed our sell by date, that the brain's gone and we know nothing.

#### **About our book:**

Old people, however, have a wealth of expertise, knowledge and ability, - not that the younger generation often want to know about it, and the old need to remember that advice should only be offered to the young if they ask for it because learning by ones own experience seems to be an important thing.

With retirement often comes time. Time to help others and time to listen to them. Time also to take on new interests and to become a learner in different fields. So the old become like the young and are finding their way in new things. So instead of being written off and waiting to die in reality we are "Not Dead Yet".



**Autori:** Vlad Dumitrescu / Andrei Popescu

**Titlul cartii:** FUNCTIONAR PUBLIC

**Se spune despre acest tip de carte ca:** sunt ineficienti, hartogari, aroganti sau folosesc un limbaj de lemn, nu cred in ceea ce fac.

**Despre cartea noastra:** Se spune ca o buna comunicare constituie rareori o preocupare majora pentru conducatorii si functionarii institutiilor publice. Din acesta cauza are de suferit si imaginea institutiei publice si increderea oamenilor int-un serviciu de calitate pe care aceasta il poate oferi. De aici si bine cunoscutul stereotip - functionarul este doar un "hartogar", o masina care nu face nimic altceva in afara de a invarti hartii si de a asculta si executa dispozitiile conducatorului direct.

In mentalul colectiv, un functionar public nu este afectat de problemele oamenilor. Desigur este foarte greu de eliminat un asemenea stereotip, dar o carte interesanta ca mine v-ar putea schimba perspectiva din care vedeti lucrurile, iar functionarul va fi vazut intr-o alta lumina, sper, mai favorabila.



LUNI	17:00-21:00
MARTI	17:00-21:00
MIERCURI	17:00-21:00
JOI	17:00-21:00

**Author - Asli Ozbek**

**Book Title - Muslim Women**

*The Living Library*

About Muslims: All Muslim women are covered with clothes and don't have the power to change things, they don't study enough and only cook and take care of Family. Muslim men don't respect women and they only want to cheat people. They also like negotiating. The Turkish culture is a culture of Kitsch. Muslims are terrorists.

About our book: I am From Turkey. I was born in Denizli and I study in Istanbul. I am doing an EVS in Romania. I enjoy shaping different objects from plasticine. I was born as a Muslim. I know the rules of Coran although I do not Follow all of them ad literam. I want to change the stereotypes about the Muslims which are considered to be terrorist, Fanatics. I want to show that Muslim women can be modern women that study and are independent.



**Joi: 19.30-21.30**

**Vineri: 19.30-21.30**

Thus, in reference to the catalogues and the book titles we must keep in mind the following:

- The book titles must be short, concise and easy to understand
- The catalogue must be comprised of the registration form (the registration form was first introduced in Romania by A.R.T. Fusion) which, in the first stage is filled in by the books and then it is finalized by the team that deals with making the final catalogue
- The catalogue should comprise a large variety of books. This means that you need to select books from all walks of life and all fields
- It's not recommended that you organize a library where you only bring a certain category of books (say, LGBT who are discriminated against) because you would restrict the target group too much
- The catalogue can be comprised of various types of occupations (social worker, teacher, actor), subcultures (rocker, rapper, skater) as long as those occupations or subcultures are considered prejudiced, consumption habits, religion, sexual minorities, ethnic minorities, etc.
- It is not recommended that you bring titles that could potentially promote deviant or even dangerous behaviours like: drug user, hooligan, neo-Nazi, members of various religious groups or any other category or groups that might promote their own interests, which are conflicting with the interests and the mission of the Human Library. In this sense, it is advisable that you introduce books that have overcome a vice or have changed their destructive behaviours like: former drug user. Furthermore, we recommend that you choose books you can rely on and can be reasonably sure will not have a negative influence upon the readers



- We don't advise that you have as books people from the political sphere in order to avoid any political affiliation or any commentary that the Human Library is a tool for political propaganda
- The books must be authentic and have relevant experience for the title they represent. We've been often faced with situations where organisations wanted to put up a Human Library, but they wished to bring people who would interpret the role of a book. This in itself is not a Human Library- maybe a form of theatre
- The books must be emotionally stable and capable of communicating with a diversity of readers of varying personalities and interests. The books must be individuals of integrity, capable of avoiding any missionary approach - like promoting a concept, religion or personal cause.
- The books must be reliable people, that you can trust and most importantly, who can respect their commitment to participate in the library during the hours they said they would. The books schedule is selected by the books and mentioned in the registration form. When you create the final catalogue, it is recommended that you call the books once again and then you have them confirm the hours when they are able to come. At the end of each day, we re-announced the books what the following day's schedule was in order to ensure that they didn't forget and that they'd be there.
- It is recommended that each title have two representatives whenever this is possible, so as there would be two versions of the same book which could thus, be read at the same time.

- In an international environment it is recommended to write down in the catalogues the languages in which the books can communicate
- It is also recommended that you provide dictionaries. Dictionaries are people who can translate for the readers or for the books, especially in case they communicate in multiple languages.

#### Things to take into consideration when preparing the catalogues:

- It is recommended that the titles should be short and easily comprehensible. Thus, titles such as: A person in search of reality/ Lost among strangers/Lacking all chances. Such titles are difficult to understand and particularly subjected to interpretations
- In the book registration form there are lists of titles, so that each participant could choose from the list of titles the one that fits best. In this regard, you should avoid creating any inadequate titles.
- In the registration form there's also a section in which each book can describe the prejudices they face. Thus, each book thinks of their own prejudices and they can filter them through their own experience. If, however, some of the books can't describe the prejudices they face, you can comply a list of prejudices that they can confirm or deny at the book meeting.
- The language used to describe the books in the catalogue shouldn't be too complicated, so that it may be easily understood by a variety of readers.
- When describing the books and the prejudices they face, use simple adjectives like: "dirty, aggressive, problem maker etc"
- Try to avoid using jargon and make sure that the description of the prejudices is no more than 3-4 lines



Other aspects to be taken into consideration when you prepare the catalogue for the books in your library:

➤ During a Human Library event you should expect a few hundred people to browse through your catalogues. Try to use a sturdy cardboard paper which should also be rain resistant. Often times, we laminated each page of the catalogue.

➤ Each person should have their own page, and on that page the following should appear: book title, book description, the prejudices the book faces, the days when the book is available, the times when it can be found in the library, the language that book can speak.

➤ The catalogue should be colourful so as to attract the reader

➤ It is recommended that you use the same design and visual identity elements throughout the whole Human Library event

- Make more than one copy of the catalogue. A reader could spend up to 10 minutes browsing a catalogue, and this could inconvenience other people who wish to borrow a book
- If you're organizing a Human Library within an international event or in a multi-ethnic community, it is recommended that you make catalogues in more than one language. Our partners in Romania had catalogues in many languages. Thus, on a single sheet of paper of the catalogue they had the description in Romanian and English, for example.
- It is important that you place the catalogues in sight so that the readers can take them, but so that they'll also know where to return them. You can have one or two librarians in charge with presenting the catalogues, thus ensuring that they also return to the catalogue designated area.

We are now in the stage of knowing the essential element of the book selection and catalogue making. It is just as important that books know what to expect once the human library will begin. In this manner we can ensure that we come as close as possible to reaching the library's objectives. Below you can find some of the recommendations that you can offer the books. It is advisable, when you send the books the registration forms below together with the description of the library's purpose and its schedule, that you also send them the recommendations below:



### What must a book know?

- Prepare for your role as a book. Be authentic! This is an important role for the reader's learning process: you must be absolutely sure about the book you represent;
- Don't act, don't invent a different role or different characteristics, your reader will be able to tell and you will lose your credibility; Be yourself, be honest, opened to speak and listen;
- In order to choose the most appropriate title for your book, you can choose between the potential book titles on the registration form;
- When you are borrowed as a book, decide together with your reader upon the place you'd both feel most comfortable in, anywhere within the library's premises. Make sure the librarians know where you are;



cărțile zboară de pe rafturi



- Check the time- you have a limited amount of time (40 or 50 minutes) with your reader. If the reader wishes to spend more time with you, and if you are also willing to spend more time with them, you need to get back to the librarians and extend the loan;
- Be ready to share your personal experience. If the questions get too intimate, feel free to refuse to answer;
- Think about the fact that the reader borrowed the book thinking about the title and he or she is interested in that specific dimension of your book; this might give you the impression that you are limited to certain kinds of answers, but that is only normal within the context of the library and our project;
- Remember that you might only meet your reader once in your lifetime and that you probably won't have the chance of ever meeting him/her again;

- Be ready to keep repeating the same information over and over again, as it is very likely that different readers will have the same questions; try not to give off the feeling that you've already answered that question 3 times;
- Each reader who borrows you has their own reason and the reasons why they chose you may vary a lot. A good ice-breaker question would be "Why did you choose me?" This will give you a first impression of the learning wishes of the reader;
- Try to find out some basic questions about the reader; have they ever met anyone like you before? Was it a good or bad experience?



- The readers who decide to attend the Human Library are generally ready to talk, to hear and to learn; their questions are not always clear and in this sense it is a good idea for you to help them formulate their questions.
- Feel good as a book! If you approach your role with the best motivation, you will create an interesting experience for you and your reader!
- Although the librarians will encourage the readers to choose a book which would make them face their own stereotypes and prejudices against others, the reader's motivation may lay elsewhere; they might just be curious or they might look for personal advice;
- The readers must make their own decisions; you can share your own opinion on how to solve problems or get out of a difficult situation, but be cautious when it comes to giving advice;
- In principle, the contents of your discussions with the reader are confidential;
- When working with a living dictionary, make sure you pause so as to allow the dictionary to translate; if you are unsure as to the meaning of the questions, ask the dictionary to help you;
- Ask for a break if you feel you need one, especially after a particularly difficult discussion with a reader; it is important that you are rested when talking to your next reader;
- Use the break to exchange experience with other books;
- If you feel that a reader is attacking your dignity, remember that you can access the rules and you can stop the conversation whenever you feel insulted or depending on the context, try to lead the discussion towards a topic you feel comfortable with;



- In case your book is a bestseller, arrange with the librarian that you have short breaks in between readers and inform the librarian regarding the number of readers you are prepared to take on; we recommend that you not have more than 3 readers simultaneously. The rule is one at the time;
- In case your book is not very popular, try to use your time wisely, talking to other books; it might prove a great experience; Our experience showed us that in the first day of the library there are fewer people in the library and this offers a great opportunity for the books to read each other;

## E. The Selection and Preparation of the Libraries

Just as the books represent the essential element of the library, the librarians also represent the interface between the book and the reader. The librarians are the first people to interact with the books as well as select and prepare them; the success of the library, depends upon this things. If we were to list the most important characteristics of the librarians, these would be: having communication abilities and the capacity to work patiently with the books and readers, especially when they need to have a high response rate and the ability to make quick decisions.

In this regard, when you are looking for librarians, you will make sure they have or they could easily develop the following competences:

- 💡 To be able to gain the necessary knowledge regarding the way the Human Library is conducted
- 💡 To have the ability to use the specific documentation of a librarian like: filling in library permits, registering and monitoring the book lending, monitoring the lending time, communicating with books and readers or other visitor of the library
- 💡 To have an open attitude, to be flexible, respectful, enthusiastic when presenting the library, cooperating,

diplomatic, tolerant, curious, charismatic, friendly and especially, attentive to other people's needs (books and readers)

- To know the contents of the catalogue, each book and a few representative aspects pertaining to each book
- To be strict when applying the library rules and ask for the same kind of attitude from the books and readers
- To organize in a very nice way the information at the lending and return are to avoid misunderstandings
- To work well with the other librarians. If there are any misunderstandings or conflicts, these should not be worked out in front of the books or readers
- To ask for feedback from the books and readers whenever you're taking a break
- To be capable to identify potentially difficult readers and be capable of finding solutions to difficult situations which might arise
- To know the library's premises well so as to be able to recommend areas where the books and readers might go to discuss
- To help the readers understand the concept of a Living Library and the rules of the library
- To have the ability of talking with the press whenever that is necessary, to know the most relevant information about the organisers.

### **The librarians' recommendation for other librarians:**

The selection of the librarians should take place at least two weeks ahead of the opening of the library. You should have a sufficient number of librarians so that the library could take place without any problems. From our own experience, for the duration of 3 days, during which we expect 300 readers, we'd need approximately 5 librarians each day. Two librarians should be near the lending and returning table and at least two others should greet

the readers. They should explain what the library entails, direct them towards the catalogues and explain to them the most relevant aspects regarding each book. The communication between librarians should be very good. At any time, the librarians must be aware of what books are available, when they'd become available, what titles are available, etc.



The instruments the librarians must know to operate are:

- book catalogues
- the final lists with the books contact information
- the lending permits
- the lending lists of the books
- the return lists of the books
- the registration list of the readers, which contains the readers' contact information
- the return list of the books
- the library description files for new readers
- the participation diplomas for the books (which are given to the books when they finish their library programs)
- the questionnaire for the books
- the questionnaires for the readers

Some of these instruments can be found in this guide's annex. Some of these instruments were developed by Human Library and some of them by the A.R.T Fusion Association Romania and the can be used in organizing of a Human Library on request.

## F. The Book Prepping Meeting

One of the most important activities that each library organizer must take into consideration is the organisation of a meeting with the books a few days prior to the beginning of the Living Library.

The purpose of this meeting is:

- to ensure that each book understands the objectives of the library, the way it operates, the rules of the library, the roles of the librarians, the steps it would follow
- to ensure that the books know each other and especially, that the librarians know each other
- to clarify any question from the part of the books
- to create a safe and comfortable environment in which the books to get to know each other

It is probable that the meeting will not take place in the library's venue. It is most likely that it would take place at the organisation's headquarters if the space allows or even in a rented place if the budget allows. What needs to be taken into consideration is that the space where this meeting is to take place has to be a quiet one, thus facilitating communication. If you had previously organized Human Library events, it is recommended that you invite one of the former books, a former librarian and maybe even a former reader to share their previous experience. The meeting should take place in the evening, after the books finish their daily job schedule. It is very difficult to have the books meet during the day. The meeting shouldn't exceed **two hours**. The participants should be seated in a circle so as to be able to see and get to know each other.

## Suggested material for the meeting:

- **a meeting agenda** that the books should receive before the meeting if possible
- **a list of all the books** which will take part in the event; it should contain: the title of the book, the name of the "author", the contact information (e-mail), the times when they are available to participate in the event
- **the draft of the catalogue** – thus, the books could make corrections or improve the text
- **the results of the evaluations** from previous libraries (if you have organized one before)
- **a list with the members of the team in charge with the coordination of the library** as well as their contact information - to be given to the books
- **volunteer agreements** for the books
- **refreshments**: soda/juice, tea, crackers, etc.

Below you have a possible agenda for the book meeting:

- **Welcome / Thank you in advance**
- **A presentation of the organisers and the roles of the team in the organisation of the event**
- **A presentation of the Living Library methodology:**
  - How the library looks in practice?
  - Why do we organize it?
  - What do we expect to achieve with the Human Library?
  - The results of other Living Libraries (if you had organized any other such events). If you hadn't organized any other libraries, then we recommend that you present the results of this project like: opinions shared by books and readers with the help of the questionnaires, the number of participants from other libraries, other book titles.

- **The role of the books within the Living Library**
  - Presenting the books together with the titles they will bear within the library
  - describing the role of the books
  - the message the books should focus on
  - presenting the catalogue and of the way in which it should be used
  - the hours when the library is opened and the hours during which each book is present
  - questions regarding the role of the books (what a book should know)
  - challenges the books might encounter
- **Presenting the librarians**
  - Presenting the librarians and their experience (if they have any relevant experience)
  - the librarians' schedule
  - the positioning of the librarians and of the areas within the library
  - explaining the librarians' duties
  - the librarians' expectations from the books
- **Presenting former books or former librarians**
- **Time dedicated to administrative aspects**
  - the organisers' expectations
  - announcing the date of the book assessment at the end of the library
  - catalogue corrections
  - final questions on the part of the books
  - the signing of volunteer agreements by the books
  - offering printed materials containing the organisers' information, the arrival hours and other administrative details to the books
- **Informal time when the books, the organisers and the librarians get to know each other**
- **Offering thanks for the participation**

## Challenges that may arise when organizing the meeting:

There may be situations when very few books can participate in the book meeting. This may happen because of a poor promotion of the importance of the meeting or perhaps because of an inadequate timeframe, when books can't participate. What can be done to avoid such situations?

- Pick a date that does not coincide with any holiday or event that the books might be involved in
- Pick a proper hour for the meeting (6 p.m. can be considered a good hour)
- Specify in the registration form that there will be a book meeting, the time and date and the fact that it is an essential condition for participating in the library as a book
- Send all the information relevant to the books ahead of time. Information such as: the description of the library, the book recommendations, a draft of the catalogue in order for the books to be able to make corrections, etc.
- Call the books a week before the meeting in order to restate the importance of this meeting and in order to send them the agenda of the meeting
- To the books who couldn't make it: send an official report of the meeting and maybe, even set an hour long personal meeting with them the following day
- If this meeting is not possible, then ask the books to arrive at least half an hour in advance of the opening of the library, so as to give you the time to present the essential element of the library, as well as the rest of the books
- To stay in permanent contact with the books. To let them know about every aspect that might occur during the library: like a new article in the press, a returning book, etc.

## G. Promoting the Human Library

Promoting the Human library is one of the essential aspects of the Human Library. It is essential that you establish a promotion strategy of the Human Library using various channels. From our experience, promoting libraries can be done through various methods like:

- ✓ posters, flyers, pins
- ✓ sending press releases
- ✓ creating media partnerships
- ✓ street campaign with a team of volunteers
- ✓ sending announcements on forums and discussion groups
- ✓ talking about it during a TV broadcast, etc.

But before all these, it is very important to give the event a visual identity. Each country used different logos and slogans such as: “Don’t judge a book by its cover” or “Don’t judge me, read me”.

### The relationship with the press

Our experience showed us that working with the press for the Human Library was easier than for other projects. The subject was considered interesting for the press with a bigger impact in Romania than in UK because in Romania the subject is new. Many of our press releases were picked up. To this end it is very important that you have a press release in which you very clearly present what the Human Library is, so as the message won’t be misunderstood. It is important to be understood that the access to the library is free and more particularly, that the press is invited to participate. In the annex of the guide you can see a press release model used for the Human Library in Romania.

### The making of the promotional materials

We noticed that promotional materials proved to be very important in bringing the public to the library and especially in creating a professional atmosphere within the library. We recommend using traditional means of promotion, but also some non-traditional ones. Don’t over react with promotional materials, don’t create unnecessary rubbish!





**Did you imagine people being books?!  
Don't judge a book by its covers!  
Come and read a Human Book and  
break your stereotypes!**

**The Human library is open  
On: **the 7th of October****

**At: **South Park Chapel (51 Ripley Road, Ilford)****

**Between: **5 p.m. to 8 p.m.****

For more information go to [www.artfusion.ro](http://www.artfusion.ro) or  
<http://donotjudgeabookbyitscovers.blogspot.com/>



The project "Don't judge a book by its covers" is implemented by Youth with a Global Vision and A.R.T. Fusion Association, financed by European Commission through Youth in Action Programme and British Council.

Project initiated by:

Financially supported by:

A.R.T. Fusion is contact organization for:



**HUMAN LIBRARY.ORG**

The means of promotion that we used were: posters, flyers, pins with the Human Library, T-shirts for books, sending messages on discussion groups and to old visitors of the library or participants in other projects of the organisation.

The most efficient means of promotion were the messages posted on discussion groups or sent via e-mail, as well as the announcements posted on the association's website together with the book descriptions.

Below you can see an announcement about the library, which contains the most relevant information that you need to stress upon in the text of the flyer: what the library is, how it works, the rules of the library, the schedule and attention grabbing elements.

Have you ever considered your own prejudices and stereotypes against other people? Have you ever considered that others may be prejudiced against you? If you have prejudices against Muslims or Jews, ticket controllers, priests or psychologists, feminists or homosexuals, ex-convicts, gypsies or disabled people, but you never had the chance of talking with them, to find out what their life is really like, then you're ready to come face to face with your own prejudices and stereotypes. Come be a reader in the **Human Library**, where books can talk!

### How does Human Library work?

- The Human Library takes place in Bucharest in Octopus Lounge and it's organized during "Don't judge a book by its covers" project.
- When you will visit for the first time, a librarian will meet you with a book catalogue and a library permit; by becoming a reader you are accepting the policy and rules of the Human Library;
- You can choose a book you want to read from the book catalogue. Many books are available in various languages;
- In case the book you want to read is in a language you don't understand we can offer you a Human dictionary;
- In case the book you want to read is already borrowed by a different reader, you can choose a different book or come back 50 minutes later;
- You can spend 50 minutes with your book, and then you need to bring it back to the library;
- The library's services are free;

## What are the rules for the Human Library readers?

- Only registered readers who have read and accepted the rules may borrow books
- You can only borrow one book at a time
- You cannot reserve a book in advance- this can only be done on the spot
- A book may be borrowed for 50 minutes and it must be returned in time to the library, in the lending area
- Readers may extend their time with a maximum of 10 minutes, by announcing a librarian at the lending area and with the book's consent;
- Readers must return the books in the same physical and mental state in which they were when they were borrowed. It is forbidden to damage the book, to bend or tear its pages, or in any way damage its dignity. The reader is responsible for keeping the book the way they received it.
- The reader also accepts the possibility of the book leaving the conversation if it feels that the reader is treating it in an inappropriate way or it is harming its dignity.

## Human Library Schedule

The Human Library is opened during 13-15 October 2012 from 5pm to 9pm, the last call for borrowing a book is at 8.30pm.

**The Human Library** is organized by A.R.T. Fusion Association within the *DON'T JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER* project. **DON'T JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER** project is an initiative of *Youth with a Global Vision Association* and *A.R.T. Fusion Association* with the financial support of the European Commission through the Youth in Action Program.

The **HUMAN LIBRARY** is a project which has the purpose of attracting people's attention towards accepting diversity because, many times over, the differences between people are not valued as resources, as often times, these differences lead to labelling and prejudices, which ultimately lead to discrimination, suspicion and exclusion.

Within the venue of the library, a major role was played by the T-shirts worn by the books and librarians. These drew the readers' attention and had a great impact. To this end we recommend, budget allowing, that you have different T-shirts for every event, even if this means that you have to make them by hand. It is important that the T-shirts stay with the books after the event, as a motivational means for them, but also as a way of disseminating the method.



## Street campaigns

You can also organize street campaigns meant to promote the event. You can get a group of 10 volunteers dressed in “Human books” T-shirts to distribute flyers while walking around town. You can organize flash-mobs with larger groups of volunteers who will distribute flyers with information about the library.



### Other aspects to be kept in mind about promotion:

- ✓ The most efficient way of promoting is through **friends**. Once someone participated as a reader and he or she enjoyed the experience, then, it is a very likely that they will show up with again and probably bring friends for the next events. This is why it is important that the library takes place over a 3-4 day period so you can feel the effects of the person-to-person promotion. We don't recommend libraries that only last a few hours and include fewer than 12-15 book titles.
- ✓ During the lending and returning process it is important that you have a list of contact information of the readers, thus you can create a database of constant readers, whom you can inform of future libraries. We noticed that those who participated once will often return,, sometimes even bringing more friends.
- ✓ It is essential that you use the creative means of promotion and especially person-to-person communication. From the evaluation questionnaires we understood that a great number of participants came because they were told about it by friends.
- ✓ Constantly keep in touch with the press.
- ✓ Try joining the library event and other events so as you might reach a greater number of readers. A.R.T. Fusion organized libraries as part of other projects of the organisation - Have a Lemon! Taste Diversity, and within the NGO Fest, as well as other fairs and events, etc.

## H. Carrying Out the Actual Event

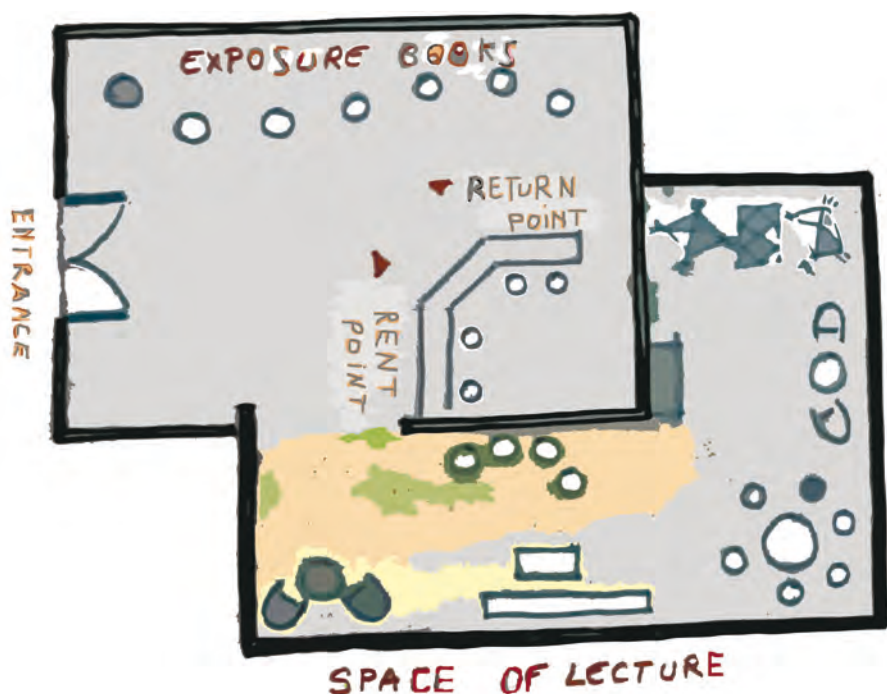
**A**fter all the preparations, there comes the day when the Human Library actually opens. In this subchapter we will describe step by step what will happen during the actual days of implementing the library.

Let's say that the library opens at 4 p.m., you have the venue at your disposal since 10 a.m., so until 4, we recommend:

- ▶ At 10 o'clock you will have the last meeting with the project team and you will present, one last time, the roles and tasks of every person involved, from the first to the last day of the library
- ▶ You should make sure that all the documents are ready and placed in the right boxes, in sufficient numbers: permits, catalogues, lending lists, return lists, reader lists (contact information), copies of the library's rules for the readers, diplomas for the books, the lists with the books' daily schedule and their contact information.
- ▶ You should make sure you have enough supplies like: pens, markers, coloured paper, plastic cups, plates, tape, trash bags, staplers, etc.
- ▶ You should make sure all the technical equipment is in place; things like: laptop and speakers for background music, extension cords, tents, chairs, tables, etc.
- ▶ You should make sure you've bought and brought over all the refreshments supplies like: water, tea, cookies, crackers, etc.
- ▶ You should make sure you packed all the visual aids for the venue: some posters, banners (you can also make them yourself by painting on white linen), flyers, pins, T-shirts of varying sizes for the books, etc.
- ▶ You should make sure that you have other reading materials that can be browsed by the readers while they wait for the catalogues, like: leaflets, posters, flyers, books on the topic of diversity used during various other projects, etc.
- ▶ You should make sure you have a means of transportation which would get you to the venue on time



If the library opens at 4 p.m., we recommend that you are at the venue around noon at the latest and that together with the volunteers you begin setting up the venue. When setting up the venue it is very important that you clearly delimit the roles of the volunteers, who does what: who takes care of the tables, the chairs, who puts up the visibility materials, who ensures that the venue is clean, who takes care of the refreshments, who sets up the technical equipment, and more importantly, where. It is important that you have a pre-established sketch of the setting.



Our recommendation for the venue's setting is that it should be clearly delimited into more areas by banners:

► **Reception area:**

This is where the refreshments could be placed and it is the place from which people are directed towards the lending area. You need 1 or 2 volunteers to cover this area by distributing handouts with a short

description of the library and the lending rules, in order to reduce the time spent in the lending area. The volunteers will walk around the books every now and then, serving water, sodas/juices or anything else they need. In this area, you can place the speakers so that the music would create a relaxed atmosphere. The volunteers will also maintain the constant cleanliness of the library.

### ► **The reading area/“lounge”**

This is a large area where 2 to 4 chairs are positioned in groups. You will estimate the number of chairs by estimating how many books and readers you will have. Usually, this area is close by the lending area. The chairs should be positioned so that there would be enough reading space between the reading groups.

### ► **The documentation/ catalogues area:**

This area can be arranged a few meters away before the lending area. It is the place where readers interact with the librarians who are ready to inform them about the existence of the catalogues, of the rules of the library and about the books available at that moment. There will be chairs that readers can sit on, but also a small table where the catalogues will be placed. This is where the librarians must not forget to inform the readers that once they are done browsing the catalogues they must put them back where they found them. Also, they must be very attentive to the needs and curiosities of the readers. There may be instances where you have readers who do not know which book to choose, and that's when the librarians can direct them towards the books available at that moment – but without forcing them. The librarians must be very kind and communicative in this area. As they give information to the readers it is recommended that they position themselves in such way that the lending area would not be overcrowded.

### ► **The lending area**

It is advisable that to have 2 librarians in the lending area and the materials needed in the process of lending should be carefully arranged on a larger table. You could type the book titles on coloured paper and you could glue them above the lending area or in the documentation area. If you have library sets, this is where they can be displayed (shelves, books, T-shirts,



etc.). In this area, the role of the librarians is to lend certain books that have already been chosen by a reader in the documentation/catalogue area. This is where the readers come and the librarians should welcome them, enquire about the book they chose, check once more whether or not the book's available, and if not available, they need to let the reader know when it would become available. If the book is available, they will fill out a nominal permit which contains the name of the reader, the title of the borrowed book, the time they borrowed it, the time they need to return it and the library permit number.

The same permit may be used to borrow up to 4 books a day. The permit information will appear on the lending form.

The lending permit will be handed over to the reader while another librarian "brings" over the book. The book should be introduced to the reader (but not in front of the lending area, in order to avoid crowding it) and they will be directed towards available seats. The book should be informed as to the amount of time it is lent for, and the reader should be reminded to follow the rules. The reader should be reminded that the book is to be returned in person to the return area (not the lending area). Finally, you should wish them good luck. It is very important for the documentation area librarian to communicate efficiently with the ones in the lending area, so as to always know what books are available or when they would become available. These aspects are of utmost importance!

### ► **The return area:**

This is the area where a table should be set within 2-3 metres from the lending area. This is where a librarian will keep the following in order: the return forms, a contact list for the readers, assessment questionnaires for books and readers, pens. The reader should return the book as well as his/her permit in case they don't intend to use it again. If they intend to use it again, then the permit will stay with him. When the reader returns the book, the librarian will thank both the reader and book. The reader will be asked to fill in an assessment form and to sign the attendance list.

They will be informed that the e-mail address will be used in order to send them information regarding future libraries. The librarian will check whether the book is well and whether or not they need a 10 minute break. If they do

need a break, then, a lending area librarian will be notified that the book is available and ready to be borrowed in a few minutes. The lending librarians will make a note of it and will in turn notify the documentation area. Every now and then, the librarian from the return area will go and communicate with the books to ensure that they are feeling alright. If lending is slow, they may go and try to ease the communication between books. At the end of each day, the readers' questionnaires will be gathered together and the answers will be introduced into a database along with their e-mail addresses. At the end of the first day, or second day it is recommended that librarians send the readers (in a confidential manner) the most relevant results from the questionnaires, along with the organisers' gratitude for their participation. During our project this was something we did in Romania, and it was well received because more and more people came, curious to see what Human Library was about.

### ► The book area

This is where the books will stay. This area can be set up behind the lending area or somewhere near it in order to facilitate the communication. The books will receive book T-shirts when they arrive, and they will be asked to use these T-shirts every day. The books will be seated on chairs or couches so as to be easily seen by the librarians. They will be told that with the exception of the time when they are being read, they are asked to only stay in the book area, or if they need to go out for a few minutes, they should let the librarians know. It is important that this area should be arranged in a friendly way, with refreshments available, as well as reading materials, etc., so that the books would feel comfortable.

Arranging the venue and prepping the materials should be completely finished before the books arrive. If the library opens at 4p.m. it is recommended that the books arrive at least 15 minutes before so that there would still be time for you to review the most important elements of the library. If there are any books who didn't manage to get to the book meeting, then, they will try to be there 30 minutes before the opening, so that they can be informed as to the rules and basic aspects a book must know.

Other aspects to be taken into consideration during the actual library:

- ▶ It is possible that not many readers arrive during the first hour of the Human library – it is good to encourage book interaction during this time. Often times, we've had situations where the books read each other during this time.
- ▶ Often times, there's the potential of a sudden overcrowding around 6 – 7 pm. To this end, you should be prepared to smooth the traffic.
- ▶ There can be situations where larger groups of 6-7 people might want to read the same book at the same time. We don't recommend this, for a few reasons: an intimate reader-book relationship cannot be formed, each reader might have his/her own reason to read the book and they may not get the chance to express them, the book might feel overwhelmed, etc. There is however, the case where some bestsellers can accept more people. We recommend the librarians to be very strict in this regard, and only if there's a good reason for it and with the book's agreement, can such instances be permitted. We had this situation whenever there were huge fluxes, however, it ultimately resulted that the books were tired and the readers did not get the same personal learning experience
- ▶ If you feel that some books are tired, offer them more time to rest.
- ▶ You might encounter difficult readers (it rarely happens, but nonetheless, it does). There may be readers who harass the books through the way they communicate. As a librarian it is a good idea to be aware of it and easily notice such aspects.
- ▶ There may be readers who come to borrow books with other reasons in mind. In our case, this only happened once, when a reader only borrowed women-books and ended up asking them out. The books told us and then, we forbade the person access to our library. Either way, the reader had already gone over the four book limit.

- ▶ If the library is opened until 9pm and the lending time is 50 minutes, we recommend that the final lending hour be 8:10-8:20.
- ▶ Before the books leave, you could gather them all for 10 minutes in order to get a direct feedback for that day, and also, to ask them to fill in a daily assessment questionnaire.
- ▶ After the books leave, the project team should stay and tidy up the venue and arrange the materials for the next day, as well as check if there's enough printed material. One or two people will insert the readers' e-mail addresses into a database along with the most relevant answers from the assessment questionnaires.
- ▶ The following morning, a sum up of the first day (number of readers, opinions) will be sent via e-mail to the readers and books.
- ▶ The books' feedback will be read, and during the second day, with the help of the librarians you will try to improve the organisation accordingly.

Naturally, there would be many more administrative details in case the library is part of festival and the books need accommodation and meals. In this case, a specially assembled team, meant to deal with such administrative issues is to be ready for anything, day and night.





**The lending rules for books** are very important and they need to be observed with tenacity by the librarians.

- ▶ Only registered readers who have read and accepted the rules can borrow books
- ▶ Only one book may be read at a time
- ▶ Books can be borrowed from the lending area and they are to be returned to the return area
- ▶ You can't make a reservation for a book in advance- this can only be done on the spot
- ▶ A book may be borrowed for **50 minutes** and it must be returned in time at the return area of the library
- ▶ Readers may extend this period with a maximum of 10 minutes, making sure to have the book's agreement and to announce a librarian in the lending area
- ▶ Readers must return the books in the same physical and mental state they borrowed them. It is forbidden to harm a book in any way, shape or form, to bend or tear pages, to damage or to undermine its dignity. The reader is responsible for the book's preservation.
- ▶ The reader accepts the possibility of the book leaving the conversation if the book feels that the reader is mistreating it in anyway or undermining its dignity.

## I. The Human Library's Evaluation

The evaluation in the context of a Human Library has two objectives:

- On the one hand, we want to evaluate the event from the point of view of the library's objectives for books and readers
- On the other hand, we want to assess the experience of organizing a library in order to improve the quality of the following one.

**Through the evaluation methods we proposed, we expect to gather quantitative information, like:**

- ▲ The number of people who visited the library
- ▲ The number of readers
- ▲ The number of readings
- ▲ The number of books who participated in the library
- ▲ The number of books who participated each day
- ▲ The « bestsellers »
- ▲ The least read books
- ▲ The number of articles about the event

All these quantitative indicators can be easily found out with the help of the specific documentation of the library: the permits, the reader attendance lists, the lending list and the media report. It is necessary that we gather, apart from the quantitative data, the qualitative data. The most used instrument in qualitative data gathering was proved to be, throughout all our libraries, the assessment questionnaire for the books and the assessment questionnaire for the readers.

In the toolkit's annex you can find a questionnaire<sup>2</sup> used during many libraries and adapted for the Romanian libraries by A.R.T. Fusion, which was also used in this project by both partners. The questions need to be short and precise.

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<sup>2</sup> Ronni Abergel, Antje Rothmund, Gavan Titley, Péter Woosch, *Don't judge a book by its cover*, Directorate of Youth and Sport, Programme "Youth promoting human rights and social cohesion", Ungaria, Council of Europe Publishing, 2005

It is a good idea to inform the readers while in the return area that the purpose of the questions is to improve the methodology of the library and to produce statistics. The readers don't have to reveal their identity unless they want to.

Every night, a questionnaire will be given to the books. This experience is just as important for the books. They too will feel the need to share their opinions at the end of each day. The organisers must read the books' answers and react to their feedback with ideas of improvement starting the next day.

In the part IV to the toolkit you can identify the opinions and impressions of the books and readers as they were extracted from some of the assessment questionnaires used in previous libraries organized in UK and Romania.

In Romania in the past Human Library editions, we tested another form of "visible" assessment. We placed big sheets of paper on a larger wall inside the venue, so as the books could write their opinions with regard to certain topics: I found out, I understood, I feel. These sheets of paper were displayed next to the reception area and before the exit area, where readers were asked to succinctly write their opinion on the wall. So this could be another way to receive feedback from visitors, readers and books.



In some locations, this method worked, in others, it did not. We think this is dependent upon the perseverance of the reception area team in motivating their readers to write something on the wall. We noticed that this is motivating for books, who can share opinions, but also, particularly so for the organisers and librarians, because they can get feedback or take the pulse of the library as it is happening before their eyes. It is good to keep in mind a daily assessment of the team. We recommend that the information you gathered through the questionnaires and the project documentation be centralized at the end of each day and transmitted directly to those involved.

Another aspect regarding the assessment of the degree to which the library's objectives were reached, as well as the assessment of the library's implementation, is the organisation of a final meeting with the books, followed by a final meeting organized by the project team. The final meeting with the books can be organized during the last day of the library, during the following day or a few days later. In our experience, we noticed that it is difficult to organize this meeting, especially because not many of the books got to take part in it. However, there were a few occasions when we managed to gather at least half of the books. The purpose of these meetings is to offer the space and opportunity in which the books can share their feelings and lessons during the event. Organizing this meeting presupposes good planning and a good coordinator who knows how to be an active listener and a good question facilitator.

In our project we didn't manage to do this meeting after any of the events (referring to two Human Library events each organised by the partners involved in DON'T JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER project - one in London, UK and another in Bucharest, Romania) because we couldn't managed to get at least half of the books for this meeting.

Thought, for the organisation of this meeting we recommend the following structure of the meeting agenda, taking into consideration general debriefing rules:



- ▲ Welcome/ thank you for participating
- ▲ What is the purpose of the meeting
- ▲ Once again, the authors and their respective book titles introduce themselves
- ▲ Open discussion / questions meant to evaluate the books' learning experience.

Try to ask as many questions as possible as well as offer the books the necessary time to think and answer.

### Questions to think about:

- ▲ What was your first opinion about the library when you first heard about it?
- ▲ How did you feel the first time you were borrowed?
- ▲ What was your greatest fear?
- ▲ What was your best moment as a book?
- ▲ What was your worst moment as a book?
- ▲ What were you thinking about as you were about to be borrowed?
- ▲ How did you manage to find the best way to talk to the readers?
- ▲ What were your most difficult questions?
- ▲ Who was the reader you had the most meaningful experience with?
- ▲ Did you manage to read other books?
- ▲ What impressed you the most?

### General questions:

- ▲ What did you discover about yourselves during this experience?
- ▲ What did you discover about the readers?
- ▲ How did this experience affect you?
- ▲ What did you learn during this experience?
- ▲ Did you ever feel this way before?

### Transfer questions:

- ▲ How will you use this experience from now on, in your day to day life?
- ▲ If you were to repeat this experience as a book, what would you change?

### ▲ Open discussion regarding the administrative side of the library

What were the strengths of the library in terms of: recruiting books, organizing meetings with books, the actual deployment of the library, the communication during the library and the organisation skills of the librarians?

We need to keep in mind that the assessment which relies upon the two dimensions is one of the elements that lead to the increase of the quality of a Human Library. Not completing this step would lead to a decrease of the quality of such an event.



## Part III. Human Library in practice

- A. The project
- B. Human Library in...
- C. The impact on books and readers

## A. The project

### Introduction

**D**on't judge a Book by its Covers is a project initiated and jointly implemented by A.R.T. Fusion Association and Youth with a Global Vision Organisation in 2011, funded with the support of European Commission through Youth In Action Programme. The project is a transnational initiative, the first Transnational Youth Initiative developed by both partners. The idea of the project came in 2010 when A.R.T. Fusion initiated and implemented a national project in Romania called "Living Library", using the Human Library method. The project gathered together other 9 Romanian NGOs, 266 living books, 1533 readers and more than 5000 people informed about the method. The success of this project inspired the group of young people from A.R.T. Fusion to come up with the idea of replicating this project at European level.

### Why this project?

In this project we identified two major needs. The first need is developing creative and innovative non-formal education methods for organisations which work with young people in order to stimulate them to be more involved in the life of the community. The second need refers to promoting tolerance, social acceptance and a non-discriminatory behaviour among young people, which are more and more blind to the benefits of diversity. Taking into consideration two societies, from UK and Romania, we observed that there are numerous NGOs and institutions from these two countries which work with young people, using topics such as cultural diversity, discrimination, prejudice, human rights, etc. In the same time we also observe that these organisations and institutions need to develop more the non-formal education methods they use in order to stimulate their target group to be more involved and to be more receptive to the topics used. The benefits of working with new, creative and innovative methods are: the young people will be more interested in being involved in community's life and in projects for the community, they will be stimulated to develop their own artistic and creative projects, they will gain artistic and communication skills.

Because both UK and Romania are two societies with a rich ethnic, cultural, social diversity and many times the differences between people are not valued as rich resources of learning about diversity and social tolerance, but



many times these differences lead to stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, thoughts of suspicion and rejection. With this project we address this big issue towards our target group (main target: young people aged 13-30, but also wider society), which has difficulties of accepting the diversity around them, with representatives like: people with disabilities, people with other faiths, people with different ethnicity, LGBT minority, people facing poverty and illiteracy, people with a bad social background (convicts or ex convicts), people facing AIDS/HIV or other diseases, people with other political views, rural-urban clash, blue collar vs white collar, etc.

If we don't try to improve this situation then the long-term effects on the young people and for the wider society will be: they will not be receptive towards diversity in the European context, they will not be motivated to be involved in projects dealing with diversity and tolerance issues, the organisations working with young people will use the same methods they use, without improving, innovation and creativity in dealing with diversity issues will not be reached.

## Don't judge a Book by its Covers project

### Aim

The aim of the project is to bring young people closer of accepting diversity using a unique and interactive non-formal method, HUMAN LIBRARY.

### Objectives

1. Empowering one organisation from UK to use the HUMAN LIBRARY method in working with young people topics related to diversity, in 7 months;
2. Develop a toolkit for dissemination and multiplication the HUMAN LIBRARY method at international European level, to use it directly in activities with young people on issues of prejudice.

### Activities

The project developed the following main activities:

1. A.R.T. Fusion delivered a training in Human Library method for Youth with a Global Vision Organisation;
2. Preparing the Living Library documentation;
3. Preparing activities of the Human Library event and organizing 2 Human Library events in London and Bucharest;
4. Creating a Human Library toolkit;
5. A.R.T. Fusion offered consultancy, monitoring and evaluation.

## B. Human Library in...

### In numbers...



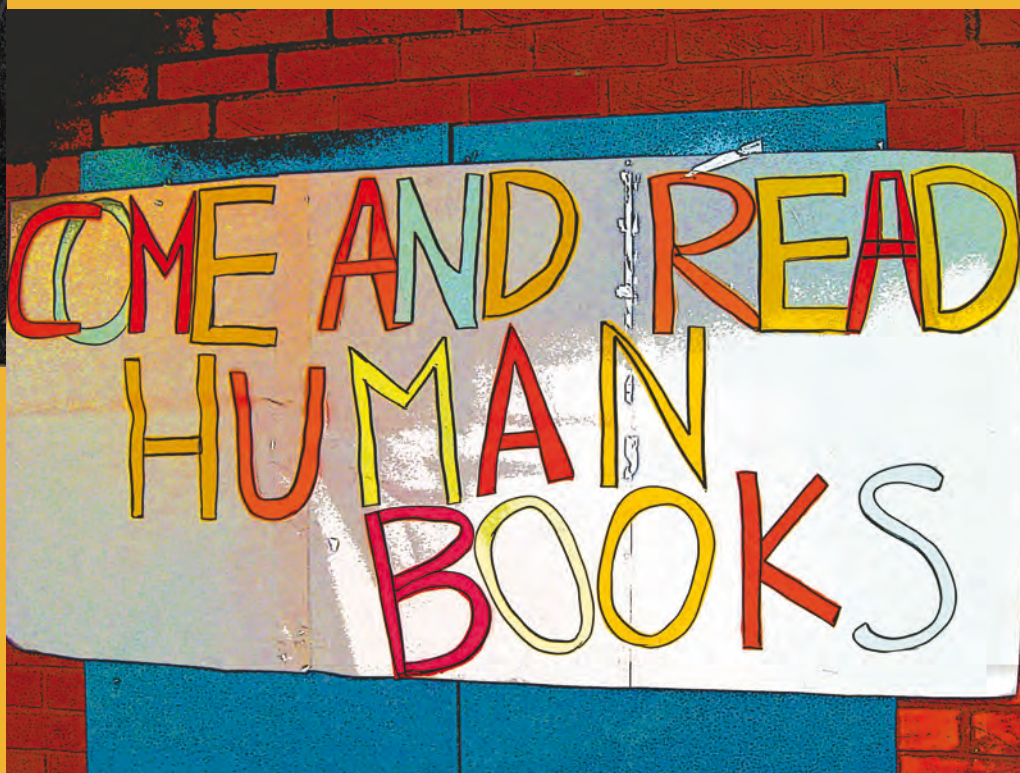
### Human Library in Romania

- Location: Bucharest, Octopus Lounge
- Date: 14 - 15 October 2011
- Number of books: 21
- Number of readers: 60
- The most read living books: "Public speaking fear", "Ballerina", "CouchSurfer", "Jugglerr"
- Number of people informed about the project: 3000



## Human Library in UK

- Location: London, South Park Chapel
- Date: 7 October 2011
- Number of books: 9
- Number of readers: 21
- The most read living books: "Pensioner/ retired person", "East European musician", "Midwife"
- Number of people informed about the project: 2000



These are the human book titles from our 2 Human Library events:

PERSON-WORKING-IN-THE-THIRD-SECTOR  
ROMANIAN-HUNGARIAN  
CHRISTIAN CORPORATIST SCOUT TAXI-DRIVER  
ROMANIAN-TRAVELER-IN-EUROPE  
IT-EXPERT COUCHSERFER  
INMATE PUBLIC-SERVANT JUGGLER  
DANCER ARTIST-DESIGNER  
MIDWIFE URBANIST NURSE  
EAST-EUROPEAN-MUSICIAN  
PENSIONER  
INTERNATIONAL-STUDENT  
PUBLIC-SPEAKING-FEAR  
OPTIMIST  
BALLERINA  
NEO-PROTESTANT  
PERSON-FROM-BUCHAREST  
BLONDE

## Stories from the organisers...

### A.R.T. Fusion Association, Bucharest, Romania

Organising a Human Library during this project wasn't a new experience for us in terms of event management, but it was a new exciting experience because this was our first transnational partnership and we were doing what we love on a bigger scale. Organising a Human Library provokes many emotions and stresses, but also offers many beautiful unforgettable moments for all the people involved. This initiative meant a rigorous planning to ensure a constant communication with all partners, a strong preparation of all activities and offering support during the project. We offered constant support to our partner in the UK, but equally in the UK there was a strong, motivated team of staff and volunteers which implemented the method as they should and got very good results from their first Human Library.

### Youth with a Global Vision, London, UK

We believe that the experience of Human Library was a new one for all of us, unique and full of emotions. We started this project with a lot of enthusiasm and step by step things started to take shape. A team of volunteers shined from the beginning and on the way other people joined the process. We've already heard about Human Library from our partners from Romania, but our experience was totally new for all of us as organisers. We started following the initial plan, but we also had moments when we deviated from it. We were brave to propose a list of possible human books, which easily could become a best-seller at local level, but the hardest thing was to speak with these people and convince them to participate as human books. We were surprised that the idea of Human Library wasn't that interesting for other people as it was for us and most of people considered uncomfortable speaking with strangers and open up their experiences to other people. We wanted an adventure in a new experience and we are proud of what we accomplished.

## Interviews with books

**Author:** Mihaela Mihaescu

**Book title:** Person with disabilities

**Human Library edition:** Bucharest, Romania, April 20 – 23rd (and other editions in 2009)

### **What did it mean for you to be a book at Human Library?**

Human Library gave me the opportunity to change the reader's perceptions, showing them that people with disabilities like me (physical disabilities) are useful resource for people in society.

### **What were the most appreciated subjects by your readers?**

The readers which borrowed me as a book were more interested about issues linked to my social life: how do I manage to integrate, what are my successes, what have I managed to achieve so far and how I managed to achieve it, what is my motivation for the things I do.

### **What were the challenges of being a Human Book (did you have any difficult moments while being a book)?**

Taking into consideration the profession and the interest of my readers I tried to underline the bad part (discrimination) but also the good part (success stories).

### **What would you do different next time when you will be a Human Book?**

I would speak about new chapters of my book – new experiences of my life.



andreea Lipan

**Author:** George Popa

**Book title:** Policeman

**Human Library edition:** Bucharest, Romania, April 20 – 23rd 2010 (and other editions in 2009)

**What did it mean for you to be a book at Human Library?**

For Human Library was a unique experience which brought me closer to the readers problems, but also brought me new friends.

**What were the most appreciated subjects by your readers?**

The most questions were related to what community police is doing, why they don't fix certain problems. Also I spoke about corruption in the police.

**What were the challenges of being a Human Book (did you have any difficult moments while being a book)?**

The most challenging moment was when a group of readers wanted to read in the same time 3 books: psychologist, lawyer and policeman.

**What would you do different next time when you will be a Human Book?**

I would not change anything, it was great!

**Author:** Anonymous

**Book title:** Football supporter

**Human Library edition:** Tulcea, Romania, April 13 – 16th 2010

**What did it mean for you to be a book at Human Library?**

I explained to my readers the difference between a football supporter and a hooligan. In the last year we are blamed because some of the supporters destroy football arenas, use offensive words in their songs and fight with guards. Some of them even meet up outside football arenas to fight. It is not fair to be compared to them and to be brutalised by police and guards. We are part of the official supporters' gallery of our favourite football team, we go to all football matches of our favourite team and we are behaving in a civilised manner. Many times we paid money from our own pocket just to support our team. I believe that with my participation as Human Book I managed to make people understand that in our city we do sport and participation in a civilised way at these kind of sport events is a good way of spending time for young people.





### **What were the most appreciated subjects by your readers?**

If I fought with the opposite supporter's gallery? What is the team's mascot? Do we have cheerleaders? How you can become a football player? Was I ever in a police car?

### **What were the challenges of being a Human Book (did you have any difficult moments while being a book)?**

I had to describe a lot of times how you can recognise a football supporter and a hooligan.

### **What would you do different next time when you will be a Human Book?**

The time frame for each reading is too long – at least for me.

**Author:** Anonymous

**Book title:** Poet

**Human Library edition:** Craiova, Romania, May 6 – 8th 2010

### **What did it mean for you to be a book at Human Library?**

It was a necessary communication exercise for a Poet because I got the chance to have a real dialogue with my readers, who are curious to know if the Poet is naive, if he lives fro poetry, if poetry still has a purpose in today's society and if so, what is that role.

### **What were the most appreciated subjects by your readers?**

My readers were interested in the way a person perceives poetry, in the evolution in poetic plan, in the ways you can participate at national poetry contests, the role of poetry on internet, my debut poetry book, how can I convince an reader that poetry is the answer for some psychological needs which are just as important as chatting on Facebook or playing games on computer.

### **What were the challenges of being a Human Book (did you have any difficult moments while being a book)?**

This experience in itself was a challenge because you don't know what's in the reader's mind until he asks you. Some questions might seem very simple (Why do you write? Do you earn enough money from this? Your friends are ok with this? What did you won from poetry? It is not an old fashion thing to write poetry? Have you ever hooked up a girl because you are a poet?) are not that simple anymore when YOU have to honestly answer them. Also the age of the readers is a challenge when answering, finding the right words.

### **What would you do differently next time when you will be a Human Book?**

Yes I would like to be Literary Critic or Astrologer at a future edition.

## Interviews with librarians

**Librarian:** Jennifer Keh

**Human Library edition:** October 7th 2011, London, UK

### **What meant for you to be a librarian at Human Library?**

A unique way to show my friends a great non-formal education method, very accessible and with a big impact.

### **Which were the most popular books?**

Retired person, midwife.

### **What were the logistic / administrative issues you had to be aware of?**

Creating the space for readers and books for reading, because at some point we had all the books borrowed and we organised the event in a church.

### What were the challenges?

To deal with many children who wanted to borrow human books and at some point they became very noisy.

### What would you do differently?

I would try to bring more living books.

### What did you learn as a librarian?

To communicate better, to centralise dates, to make a catalogue.



**Librarian:** Marina Draghici

**Human Library edition:** October 7th 2011, London, UK (and other Human Libraries in 2011 in Romania)

### What did it mean for you to be a librarian at Human Library?

For me Human Library was the chance to learn a new method, interactive and to change peoples' attitude towards wrong labels we use against other people.



### **Which were the most popular books?**

Ballerina, couch surfer...

### **What were the logistic / administrative issues you had to be aware of?**

As a librarian you have to pay attention: lending time for books, completing the lending pass correctly, presenting the librarians' office very attractive for visitors, presenting the method and the project as attractively as possible, knowing the books and the catalogue very well and being able to recommend books for possible readers, presenting interesting stuff about the books and advertise the less borrowed books.

### **What were the challenges?**

To manage to advertise the less borrowed book and bring readers for them.

### **What would you do differently?**

I would try to better advertise the catalogue in front of the visitors and attract more people as readers.

### **What did you learn as a librarian?**

To be more open, to leave my prejudices at the door, to be more patient, to be more careful with people and that I can convince people if I am excited about the idea.

**Librarian:** Gabi Fazakas

**Human Library edition:** May 2010, Miercurea Ciuc, Romania

### **What did it mean for you to be a librarian at Human Library?**

Being a librarian at Human Library was an incredible experience. Recruiting books for the Human Library I had the chance to tell to a lot of people about this method, different people. It was a unique experience to observe different reactions from different people. It was a positive experience the fact that most of the books invited were open to participate and contributed with their own experience.

### **Which were the most popular books?**

The most read books were: inmate, international volunteer, psychologist, reporter, the American.

### **What were the logistic / administrative issues you had to be aware of?**

As a librarian I had to make sure that everybody, the books and readers, are informed about the method and understand the essence of it. Another

important fact was the books' comfort during the event, they need to feel safe and to have they space well delimited during the library. A librarian also needs to register on a list the books which are being borrowed and also to make sure that the readers complete the feedback forms, the books their feedback form at the end of each day of library.

### **What were the challenges?**

To bring readers in the library, keep them motivated and keep the less borrowed books motivated after the first day. I had to encourage readers to read also the less read books.

### **What would you do different?**

I would speak more with the books which are not being borrowed and I would look for other types of books which are more atypical.

### **What did you learn as a librarian?**

I learned that everybody is part of a certain group and by accepting other groups, through dialogue and communication you can find out many interesting things about their diversity. During Human Library I made new friends and I meet new people.

## **C. The impact on books and readers**

In this section we will describe the impact of Human Library over the books and readers. We noticed that the easiest and realistic way to describe the impact is to present some opinions, feelings, impressions from books and readers about Human Library.

We extracted from feedback forms completed by books and readers from the most recent Human Libraries in UK and Romania organised by A.R.T. Fusion or YWAGV.

## Impressions from books

"The readers have more initiative and desire to do something nice"

"I used some interactive methods of telling about myself through my past experiences, but without being me at the centre of attention"

"The future readers should ask everything that they are interested in"

"I met interesting persons and I felt that I helped somehow; besides this, I lived again the happiness of my experiences"

"Many good ideas and creativity and good willing"

"The biggest challenge as a book was to find the adequate words to express myself, according with my book title"

"I also learned some information about new projects"

"I also socialized with the other books"

"A challenge was to clarify some notions/differences about ballet-dance-creation."

"I felt myself understood better by the public"

"They seemed to learn quite a lot"

"Learning new experience by asking many questions"

"Who am I?"

"They learned more about dances and with others we shared a passion"

"It was difficult to answer a question I was not sure about"

"Even an 8yrs old child asked profound questions and benefited"

"They put some deep and very clear questions"

"They received a different perspective over the arts"

"New experience, also shared experience, common point of view"

"I think I was helpful for some readers"

"Some of the readers were amassed on how many definitions of hope exist"

"They saw that even public servants are people and they are active and casual and they don't walk in suits all day. I hope I managed to break some of these prejudices"

"They knew very few things about the Armenians in our region"

"They got to practice their English and speak with someone different"

"Yes we always learn something with the others"

"I had the chance to speak freely without fear"

"I read myself with this occasion"

"I knew new people and I contributed to create a more positive image for Roma people"  
 "It was hard to find the right words to explain that the general perception about reporters and press is wrong"  
 "It was interesting to speak about insurances with young people"  
 "It was interesting to go from speaking with young people to speaking with mature people"  
 "The language differences were a challenge"  
 "It is good to organise future editions because it's interesting"  
 "I recommend more publicity next time"  
 "I recommend a better time management of the reading period"

## Impressions from readers

"A Human Book is more fascinating than any other source of information"  
 "I learned that for every person there may be something interesting in what she does"  
 "Practice is very important"  
 "The stereotypes are induced by us"  
 "I learned diverse perceptions regarding the society we live in"

"I found out a lot of things that interested me and, to my surprise, I met a "book" that I didn't expect to meet here"  
 "I would prefer that we bring "books" from the science or medicine fields. I will also like to read a book about mountains, climbing etc"  
 "I propose to organise more often a Human Library."  
 "I learned about new methods to play"  
 "I received good advices"  
 "I learned interesting stuff from history"  
 "I liked the blonde"  
 "The book I read was complete and very well presented"  
 "I meet a lot of people in a very short time"  
 "I found out how other people think"  
 "I enjoyed the experience I received from the book"  
 "It cheered up my day and I learned new things"  
 "It was weird to go from priest book to sex therapist book, because both were very open and I felt I was discussing with friends"  
 "The experiences of a volunteer are very emotional"  
 "The book also read me"  
 "Human contact, understand that his

world can be different than mine”

“We don’t have to be afraid to say anything and to fulfil our dreams... we need each other”

“I read a book that travelled a lot and I had the impression that people are afraid to fulfil their dreams and you have to be very brave to have the life you want”

“I learned to listen better”

“I liked the link I had with the books, I saw their point of view and I learned that things are not what they seem to”

“I can say now that you cannot judge a person by a label”

“Appearances are misleading”

“Sometimes in life people are cruel with each other”

“I would recommend the extension of the program”

“Please organise more events like this with more advertising”

EXTRA: The History of Human Library

The idea of the Human Library is not new in UK or Romania. It has been practiced in the form of simulations, singular events lasting a few hours, by other British and Romanian organisations.

The idea of the Human Library was initially developed by the Danish organisation “Stop the Violence”, as part of an activity that the organisation was offering visitors in 2000 during the Roskilde Festival. Based in Copenhagen, the Stop the Violence organisation worked with young people and aimed at educating the youth, with the ultimate goal of making them more active regarding actions to prevent violence. The first event of that year was organized in partnership with the Roskilde Foundation and it became clear, both to the Danish organisation and the organisers of the festival, that Human Library had a potential far beyond their initial expectations.

This positive experience during the festival attracted the attention of the director of the European Youth Centre of the European Council in Budapest (EYCB). With his mediation, the Danish organisers were introduced to the organisers of the Hungarian Festival Sziget. In 2001 they decided to organize Human Library for the first time during the festival.<sup>1</sup>

Since 2003, at the Sziget Festival, Human Library has been organized at the stand of the European Council over a period of 7 days. So far, the festival has organized more than five libraries that have become the highest attraction of the section offered to civil society during the festival. This is how the European Council organisers realized that the method could go beyond the Hungarian borders and be adopted by other countries. Thus, during the time that the library was organized in Hungary, the method was improved by adding dictionaries and books that would function as translators. In the years that followed other organisers began to discover

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<sup>1</sup> Ronni Abergel, Antje Rothmund, Gavan Titley, Péter Wootsch, DON'T JUDGE A BOOK BY IT'S COVER, Directorate of Youth and Sport, Programme “Youth promoting human rights and social cohesion”, Ungaria, Council of Europe Publishing, 2005

the concept of Human Library and the extraordinary possibilities it offered. Thus, Human Libraries were organized as part of Nordic youth committees in Norway. These even took place in a library, where approximately 450 young people participated. In Portugal, the APAVE organisation which works with victims of violence, organized the library during the Rock in Rio festival in Lisbon. The event was organized with a very low budget; it had limited rental hours for books, but it showed that not only can the Human Library be adapted to the local context, but also to limited budgets. For example, in Roskilde, where it was first organized, there were 75 books, in Sziget there were 50, in Lisbon 20.<sup>2</sup> In Romania, the largest number of books in one library was 45, but the event was not part of a festival.

The Hungarian experience proved how elaborate Human Libraries can be; the Nordic countries introduced new dimensions of a library and the Portuguese version is an example in terms of adaptability. Thus, throughout the years, libraries were organized in Sweden, Iceland, Hungary, Australia, Austria, Brazil, China, Cyprus, South Africa, Belgium, The Czech Republic, etc. In August 2010 the longest-lasting library in the world was organized and implemented in The Netherlands during the Noorderzon Festival and it spanned over the duration of 9 days.<sup>3</sup>

In every country, every organizer had a unique experience in coordinating the Human Library. Thus, there is no perfect recipe in using this method and each event is different from community to community.

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<sup>2</sup> Ronni Abergel, Antje Rothmund, Gavan Titley, Péter Wootsch, DON'T JUDGE A BOOK BY IT'S COVER, Directorate of Youth and Sport, Programme "Youth promoting human rights and social cohesion", Ungaria, Council of Europe Publishing, 2005

<sup>3</sup> *Idem.*





# Administrative annexes

In this chapter you can find some models of documents used by Human Library methodology. We remind you that the main document used to implement the Human Library method are: announcement for books' recruitment, books' registration forms, catalogue, rental pass, lending and returning lists, books' contact details list, readers' contact details lists, visitors' contact details lists, lending rules, evaluation questionnaires for books and readers, press releases, posters, flyers and other promotional materials.

Some of these documents have been already presented in this toolkit, so in this chapter we will only present the ones which haven't been presented, such as: book's registration forms, press release and evaluation questionnaires for books and readers.

## Model - Book's registration form

### ENROLLMENT FORM / ATTENDANCE CONFIRMATION HUMAN LIBRARY

Thank you for being part of the **Don't judge a book by its covers** project and please fill in the information required below and send it to **cristinmiss@yahoo.com**, by **23<sup>rd</sup> of September**.

The Human Library is aimed to reduce stereotypes and prejudice on those who are different than us, by promoting the respect for human rights and human dignity, attracting attention on diversity in all its forms, stimulating dialogue between people.

#### 1. Personal information

Name/surname	
Telephone no.	
E-mail	

#### 2. Book title<sup>1</sup>

1. Immigrant	11. Artist
2. I am a blonde!	12. Jew
3. I have used drugs	13. Muslim
4. Homosexual/ lesbian	14. Priest
5. Vegetarian	15. Traveller
6. Athlete	16. EMO
7. Feminist	17. Journalist
8. Policeman	18. Social Assistant
9. Pensioner	20. Corporate person
10. Magyar	21. Convict
22. Other possible book titles ...	

<sup>1</sup> The book title must be chosen from the table below so that it is as closely as possible related to a discriminated "category" or a set of people that have acquired a learning experience that is worth sharing, in the field of diversity. If the title is not to be found in the table below, please name your book under a different category.

**3. Stereotypical descriptions of “the book”<sup>2</sup> (at least four attributes):**

If you are a book that has only worked with discriminated against groups (ex. Social assistant), then please write down those groups characteristics.

**4. Days you are able to take part at the Human Library;** we would appreciate if you could attend the whole programme of our Human Library, but we understand if this is not possible. Please mark with an X in the valid boxes.

**The Human Library is held at *South Park Chapel, Seven Kings*.**

	Day 1 7th of October
Hours	17:00 – 19:00
	18:00 – 20:00

**5. Short description of the book (in the 1<sup>st</sup> person)- maximum 3-4 phrases:<sup>3</sup>**

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<sup>2</sup> By “stereotypical descriptions of the <book>” we mean characteristics/ attributes that people usually associate with a certain category of discriminated against people. For example: the feminist: -hates men, is lesbian, aggressive, doesn't depilate, etc. If your book has no stereotypical characteristics than name other characteristics that would invite the reader to borrow the book.

<sup>3</sup> A short description of the book: please write in the 1st person, 3-4 phrases about yourself as a book – a brief of what you would like to let your readers know about the subject of the book. Please send your photograph in the attachment together with the enrollment form.

6. A photo of you, at your choice (portrait or similarly); the photo must be sent in the attachment together with the form. It will be used in the presentation material and on the festival's website. Sending a photo is not mandatory- the decision is up to you but we would highly appreciate it if you would.
7. Are you able to attend a meeting with the organisers, the books and the librarians a few days before the actual Human Library event (further details included below)? YES/ NO
8. Other information or observations you consider important in the organisation of the event regarding your book; Recommendations or important things you think we should take into account.

Other information that every book should be aware of:

1. Please send the enrolment form to [cristinmiss@yahoo.com](mailto:cristinmiss@yahoo.com), by 23rd of September. The information included in the forms together with the photos will be used in presentation materials for the books and in library permits.
2. The information included in the catalogue will be relevant for the reader so that based on the description and the title of the book, the readers will choose the books they are interested to read.
3. Also, all the information you provide will be posted on the events website meant to promote the library among young people ( the target group of our project);
4. All books must arrive at the library 10 minutes before the opening of the library/ the time set in the form.
5. A book cannot be borrowed with 50 minutes before the closing of the Human Library.

6. It is important that the time frame of the availability of each book is filled in correctly in the form and that it doesn't suffer major changes, as the book catalogues will be printed according to the agreed schedule;
7. On set of the library there will be at least one librarian to help with the logistics;
8. On set of the library there will also be a human dictionary in the event that some readers speak a different language;
9. Each book will be given new wraps for their covers in the form of t-shirt – in order to be acknowledged as books by the readers;
10. There will be water, coffee and crackers offered on location;
11. A few days before the event, a meeting will take place, attended by the following: organisers, books and librarians, to set out the last details of the library together. The location of the meeting and the hour will be announced by the organisers. We rely on the attendance of a greater number of books.
12. After each reader finishes a book, they will receive a short questionnaire to see what he/ she has learned from the experience but also to evaluate the organisation of the library from an administrative point of view;
13. At the end of the project there will be a meeting held with the books to share the experience lived together within the library and the results we have achieved together;
14. With the permission of the books and readers only, there will be short interviews made about this learning experience and posted on the projects' website so that many other people who are prejudiced will be able to see them.
15. You can find more practical information about what being a book actually means in the attachment.

## Model – evaluation questionnaires for readers

Dear Reader,

Thanks for taking some time to fill in this short questionnaire, to share your experience in reading one or more of the Human Books. Your comments will contribute to further developing the methodology of the Human Library. All answers will be treated confidentially and anonymously.

Your age:      ☐ ☐

Your gender:              ☐ male              ☐ female

Your nationality:

.....

Where did you hear about the Human Library?

☐ [friends]      ☐ [internet groups]      ☐ [written media]  
☐ [web site]      ☐ [others]

Have you been a reader in a Human Library before?

☐ No, first time    ☐ Yes, please specify: .....

Which Book did you borrow? .....

How much did you like the idea of the Human Library?

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5              (1 – not at all, 5 - impressed)

How did you like the selection of the Books and stereotypes presented in the catalogue?

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5              (1 – not at all, 5 - impressed)

Comments:

How would you evaluate the service of the librarians?

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5  
(1 – not helpful at all, 5 – very helpful)

If you used a Dictionary, how satisfied were you with it?

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5              (1 – not at all, 5 – very satisfied)



What was the most important experience for you while you were reading the Book/s?

.....

Have you learned anything new in reading a Book or several Books from the Human Library?

.....

Would you recommend others to be a reader at the Human Library?

.....

Other comments:

Thanks for your comments and your time!

## Model – evaluation questionnaires for books

Date:.....

Name: .....

Your title as a Book: .....

Age:    ☐ ☐

Gender:        ☐ male        ☐ female

Nationality/ies: .....

Are you a member of an NGO? If yes, which one? .....

How many readers did you have during the Human Library?

☐ 1-3        ☐ 3-5        ☐ more than 5

How was your experience as a Book today?

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5    (1 - very bad, 5 - very good)

What was your impression about your readers today?

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

(1 - not motivated to learn, 5 - interested, very sincere attitude)

How useful was the description of your role as a Book, which you provided before the event?

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

(1 - inappropriate, insufficient, 5 - very clear, well described)

How do you evaluate the support of the Library Staff (librarians and organisers)?

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

(1 - not helpful at all, 5 - very helpful)

If you used a dictionary, please assess your communication with it

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

(1 - not helpful, poor, 5 - very appropriate)

How would you rate the duration and appropriateness of your working hours?

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

(1 - inappropriate, too long, 5 - very appropriate)

How did you feel your readers benefited from reading you?

.....

How did you benefit from being read?

.....

What were the most frequently asked questions?

.....

What was the most challenging part of being a Book?

.....

For the next Human Library, what advice would you give?

.....

To future Books: .....

To organisers: .....

To librarians: .....

To future readers: .....

For the presentation of the catalogue: .....

Would you be ready to be a Book again? .....

Other comments? .....

Model – press release (before the Human Library event)

“Don’t judge a book by its covers”

Press Release

Youth with a Global Vision (UK) together with A.R.T. Fusion Association (Romania) are jointly developing the project called **Don’t Judge a Book by its Covers**, using the HUMAN LIBRARY method. The project is implemented in London, UK and Bucharest, Romania. **The aim of the project** is to create a more cohesive local community, to bring people closer of accepting diversity using a unique and interactive non-formal method. During the project 2 Human Libraries event are being organised in London and in Romania.

More about the project, you can find at

<http://donotjudgeabookbyitscovers.blogspot.com/>

## When is HUMAN LIBRARY being organised?

The Human Library in London, UK will be open on **7<sup>th</sup> of October between 17:00 - 20:00 at South Park Chapel, Seven Kings.**

## READER in HUMAN LIBRARY?

If you would like to take part at our HUMAN LIBRARY you can do so as a **READER**. The readers in HUMAN LIBRARY enter in a 1:1 personal dialogue with the HUMAN BOOKS questioning their own prejudices and stereotypes. The participation as READER is done as a **voluntary** basis engagement.

## What is HUMAN LIBRARY?

HUMAN LIBRARY works like a usual library where the readers come and borrow books for a limited period of time. There are 2 major aspects though: the BOOKS are HUMANS and the readers have the possibility to start a personal dialogue with the HUMAN BOOKS, facilitating communication between two people which have never met. **The Purpose of HUMAN LIBRARY** is to promote respect for human rights and human dignity, to raise awareness on diversity under all its forms, to stimulate dialogue between people. More about HUMAN LIBRARY at [www.humanlibrary.org](http://www.humanlibrary.org).

For more details about administrative details of the event or for questions please contact:

Cristina Stan,  
email: [cristinmiss@yahoo.com](mailto:cristinmiss@yahoo.com),  
phone: 07530037383.

The project “*Don’t judge a book by its covers*” is implemented by Youth with a Global Vision and A.R.T. Fusion Association, funded with support from the **European Commission** and **British Council**. This publication [communication] reflects the views only of the author, and the European Commission and British Council cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Model – press release (after the Human Library event)

**Press release “Don’t judge a book by its covers”  
20 October 2011**

Youth with a Global Vision (UK) together with A.R.T. Fusion Association (Romania) are jointly developing the project called **Don’t Judge a Book by its Covers**, using the HUMAN LIBRARY method. The project is implemented in London, UK and Bucharest, Romania. **The aim of the project** is to create a more cohesive local community, to bring people closer of accepting diversity using a unique and interactive non-formal method.

During the project 2 Human Library events were being organised. The Human Books and readers participated as voluntary engagement for the local communities.

The first event was in London, UK on **7<sup>th</sup> of October** between 17:00 – 20:00 at South Park Chapel, Seven Kings. At this Human Library organised by YWAGV’s team of volunteers had **9 books** participating and **22 readers** on the lists during the opening hours. The most popular books were “Pensioner” and “Midwife”.

The second event was held in Bucharest, Romania on 14th and 15th of October between 16:00 – 21:00 at Octopus Lounge, City Centre. The Human Library was organised by A.R.T. Fusion’s Association team of volunteers and had 21 books and almost 60 readers. The most popular books were **“The fear of speaking in public”, “Prisoner” and “Ballerina”**.

For photos and more about the project please visit

<http://donotjudgeabookbyitscovers.blogspot.com/>

For more details about administrative details of the event or for questions please contact: Cristina Stan, email: [cristinmiss@yahoo.com](mailto:cristinmiss@yahoo.com).

The project **“Don’t judge a book by its covers”** is implemented by Youth with a Global Vision and A.R.T. Fusion Association, funded with support from the **European Commission** and **British Council**. This publication [communication] reflects the views only of the author, and the European Commission and British Council cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

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