

Social Entrepreneurship in Tourism

Roxana's story

Introduction

Social entrepreneurship is a newly introductory term in Cyprus. Creating a social enterprise in Tourism sector for people with disabilities, is a challenge. Lack of inclusion of people with disabilities in legislative procedures, preoccupations or lack of entrepreneurial opportunities, are rather challenging. While employed people with disabilities account to 40% of the total employment rate, entrepreneurship opportunities in the tourism industry for people with disabilities are very limited and governmental schemes financially support their employability.

However, people who have an interest, motivation, belief in their strengths, the right skills and receive support from others can make it happen. As in the case of Roxana...

Want to meet
Roxana

[Watch the video.](#)

Roxana is a young woman with moderate mental disability. Roxana is capable and driven, she is enthusiastic about life and dreams of her future. Her dream goal is to be independent, to be able to work like any other person. She is originally from Romania. She came to Cyprus with her mother, when she was a teenager. Since then she goes to the Day Care and Educational Center for people with disabilities "Kentro AMEA Agios Lazaros", where she learned to speak Greek, among other things, and made good friends. In her free time after school and on the weekends, she accompanies her mother to work and helps her at every situation. Her mother works in a restaurant, a traditional fish tavern in a tourist area of the city. Thus, Roxana gained interest in tourism. Together with her family and school support, she is finally preparing for her goal, to be able to work in the tourism sector and specifically to work in a restaurant, in order to become independent in the future.

Let's help her to make it true!

1. Search for ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITIES

1. Get familiar with the tourism industry: identify the products and services
2. Search for legislation and employment options in Tourism for people with disabilities
3. Look for business initiatives for people with disabilities within the Tourism sector

Business Travel Services is one of the world's largest and a fast growing industry. In Cyprus, the tourism industry makes the 13% of the Gross Domestic Product being one of the biggest industries in the country. The tourism industry includes travel-related services provided by hotels and restaurants, catering, travel agencies, tour operator services, tourist guide services and other related services.

Careers in the tourism industry include travel agents, hotel managers or staff, tour operators, event and conference organisers, tour guides, chefs, wine sommeliers, public relations officers, leisure activity staff working in resorts and hotels, shoppers, drivers and so on. No matter of the interest of the person, the tourism industry has a great scope of exploration.

Roxana is keen to work in an industry which involves her interest in traditional gastronomy-restaurants. She can start by looking the services within the Tourism sector in Cyprus that is thriving to get ideas about possible opportunities. She can also communicate with other businessmen restaurants or tourism agencies to improve her knowledge in the field of her interest and come into contact with national authorities to get ideas to financially support this employability.

The government provides financial support for the enterprises which employ people with disabilities. For example, funding schemes that are currently open are:

- The Funding scheme for the protection of disabled people by Department of Social Inclusion of People with Disabilities which provides financial support to the Committee to claim and monitor the implementation of rights with intellectual disabilities and early childhood intervention coordination service.
http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dsid/dsid.nsf/dsipd22_en/dsipd22_en?OpenDocument
- Secondly, the Job Seekers Services by Consultants in the Labour Department and helps people with disabilities to find a job.
http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/dl.nsf/page1k_en/page1k_en?OpenDocument
- Thirdly the quality regulation and inspection of social care services by the private sector including services for people with disabilities by the Social Welfare Services.
- The Equal Treatment in Employment and Occupation Law of 2004, the Combating of Racism and Other Discrimination (Commissioner) Law of 2004 and the Persons with Disabilities Law of 2000 are regulations which protect the human rights of people with disabilities.
https://www.prio.org/Global/upload/Cyprus/Publications/4_TRIMIKL_DEMETRIOU.pdf

Employers hire employees based on merit, suitability and capability of the candidate, regardless of the presence or degree of disability. **People with disabilities can fulfill any task in the tourism and hospitality industries as long as their professional knowledge and skills fit the related and required tasks for the each position.**

TIP: Look and examine your options by contacting governmental authorities and discuss your needs and interests in the field. Ask for guidance and support. You can start by getting voluntary experience in the tourism industry and in a place of your interest. This experience will provide you with the practical knowledge and skills before entering the labour market.

Roxana initially wants to be able to work in an existing restaurant, in the customer service. Ideally, she would like to have with her mother their own restaurant, with cuisine inspired by the Cypriot and Romanian gastronomic tradition and attracting both local and international tourists.

In order to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge that she will need as an employee in a restaurant, at school, she takes on the role of a dining assistant. There, under the guidance of the person in charge of the kitchen, Roxana undertakes various responsibilities such as: serving breakfast, tea and lunch to the students of the Centre, cleaning tables, general cleaning of the kitchen, organization of products in the freezers and shelves, etc.

Before the pandemic when given the opportunity she was assisting her mother at a real restaurant, every weekend, but not as an actual employee.

Until recently, no job had been found in her field of interest, through the vocational training program of the Social Inclusion Office of Cyprus, in which she participates through Kentro AMEA Agios Lazaros. Unfortunately, the tourism sector in Cyprus has been particularly affected by the pandemic. One of the inhibiting factors that affected her finding a job in a restaurant was the lack of good knowledge of Greek and English, but now she has improved a lot.

Let's help her to do the next step towards her dream ...

2. Improve soft and marketing skills needed in the field of tourism

In the field of tourism, constant communication between clients is required. Developing social skills help interested employees to find a job they want. By developing and improving their competences employees ensure that they are capable to be involved in such a demanding industry.

The most significant skills to be obtained are:

Skills needed to work in the tourism industry	Must have	Already has	Has to learn
Communication	✓	✓	
Teamwork	✓	✓	
Leadership	✓	✓	
Negotiation	✓	✓	✓
Organisational	✓	✓	✓
ICT skills	✓		✓
Traditional advertising	✓	✓	✓
Storytelling	✓		✓

Roxana is very social, communicative, and easy-going. She is fluent in her mother language, Romanian, and can read and write. She also speaks English and Cypriot dialect which are improving over time. She can also read words written in Latin alphabet characters. She has a very friendly personality, she easily makes friends both up close and on social media.

Understands commands, executes instructions, can explain and describe, develops dialogues. Although her multilingualism could be an obstacle, Roxana manages to use English words functionally to fill in the gaps in Greek and communication.

Roxana loves group activities. She can participate actively, effectively, with enthusiasm and no competition, in small and large groups. She can also take on responsibilities and understand the distinct roles of team members.

Roxana can understand the different views and disagreements that can arise in a group / situation and negotiate to find a solution. She generally likes the role of mediator and conciliator in conflict situations. She likes order and organization.

Roxana is very communicative, she can have complete dialogues, describe her ideas, write, approach, and influence other people. Recognizes the concept of advertising and knows media such as advertising on television, radio, and print ect. Roxana has very good ICT skills, but she doesn't know how to use them for marketing, advertising and influential purposes.

Tip:

Develop skills associated with storytelling and marketing of products and services in tourism. Storytelling for touristic products or services can stimulate a focus on the selling points of a destination and broadens the identity of a destination, either that is to aim at local or international tourists. Message strategies for touristic products can include simple phrases in English such as 'Explore', 'The place for families', 'Start your vacation here', 'Take a look', 'Experience our culture' and so many others you find interesting and be associated with your country and brand.

3. CREATION OF INDIVIDUAL BUSINESS PLAN

- Vision and objectives / detailing goals
- Preparation of a business plan for a social - entrepreneurial idea in the field of tourism (market analysis, competitive landscape analysis, implementation plan, financial plan, advertising, measuring performance, providing guidance, growth and pricing strategy, risk analysis...)

Business Model Canvas

Key Partners	Key activities	Value Propositions	Customer Relationships	Customer Segments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Hotels/ Tourism Properties/ Tourism Agencies Shools/ Adult Centres / NGOs for people with disabilities -Catering specialists - food traders 	<p>Networking, customer service - taking an order</p> <hr/> <p>Key Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indoor -Web-platform 	<p>Social Value through empowerment, diversity, ownership and community enhancement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Communicative, Helpful, immediate - Feedback <hr/> <p>Channels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -«In-house» restaurant support -Social Media -Phone/ Email 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - individual local and international Tourists - Passers-by -Residents of the area
<p>Cost Structure</p> <p>space- rent, restaurant equipment</p> <p>furniture & staff salaries,</p> <p>purchase of goods-products</p> <p>taxes, social Insurances, operating license</p>			<p>Revenue Streams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Direct sales -Revenues gained will be redirected to cover the social enterprise's costs 	