Digital Media Challenge

United States
Susan Burke

Organization type: nonprofit/ngo/citizen sector
Budget: $10,000 - $50,000
Website: http://www.faae.org

- Arts & culture
- Design
- Employment
- Education

Project Summary

Elevator Pitch

Concise Summary: Help us pitch this solution! Provide an explanation within 3-4 short sentences.

Every child should be prepared to engage successfully in the economy and culture of the 21st Century. Technology is a 21st Century Tool essential to preparing students to be productive, agile participants in the global economy. Arts education develops and nurtures 21st Century Skills such as creativity, problem-solving, adaptability, and resilience as well as fundamental learning skills which transfer to other curricular areas. FAAE seeks to integrate art and technology: giving students powerful and flexible tools with which to meet the challenges of the 21st Century.

Problem: What problem is this project trying to address?

Art educators and technology educators typically occupy separate spheres within a school. Technology is the domain of 'Career and Technology Education' focusing on learning to use computer programs with no training (for teachers or students) in the elements of art and principles of design, which significantly contribute to ideation and meaning. Meanwhile, in the art room, students have little opportunity to use technology as a tool for artistic expression. Neither group is well served by this one-dimensional approach. The DMC/DMF emphasizes the successful integration
of art and technology using models and standards from higher education and the creative industry. As technology makes information increasingly ubiquitous, meaningful, human communication is often the victim. The challenge is often characterized as combining "high tech" with "high touch." To achieve that goal the creative industry often relies on storytelling. Storytelling brings human perspective to technology using the elements and principals of art to communicate human dimensions that 1's and 0's alone do not convey. The social issue the project addresses is bringing humanity to technology in order to make it an effective tool.

Solution: What is the proposed solution? Please be specific!

Art educators and technology educators typically occupy separate spheres within a school. Technology is the domain of 'Career and Technology Education' focusing on learning to use computer programs with no training (for teachers or students) in the elements of art and principles of design, which significantly contribute to ideation and meaning. Meanwhile, in the art room, students have little opportunity to use technology as a tool for artistic expression. Neither group is well served by this one-dimensional approach. The DMC/DMF emphasizes the successful integration of art and technology using models and standards from higher education and the creative industry. As technology makes information increasingly ubiquitous, meaningful communication is often the victim. Bridging this gap is often characterized as combining "high tech" with "high touch." The creative industry often relies on storytelling to fill this need. Storytelling brings human perspective to technology using the elements and principals of art to communicate human dimensions that 1's and 0's alone do not convey. The social issue this project addresses is bringing together art and technology for the most effective communication.

Example: Walk us through a specific example(s) of how this solution makes a difference; include its primary activities.

The Digital Media Challenge (DMC) is an adjudicated art competition for K-12 student work created or significantly manipulated using digital tools. Entries will be judged by representatives of leading art and technology institutions of higher education (e.g., Ringling College of Art and Design, Full Sail University) and representatives of creative industries. The DMC culminates in a one-day Digital Media Festival (DMF) where students, teachers and parents learn side-by-side from experts and each other to combine art and technology to tell powerful stories. Hands-on offerings in technology and principles of art and design along with sessions on career opportunities, intellectual property rights, and safe internet use for children will be offered. DMC judges will critique DMC entries and review portfolios to help participants understand the successful integration of art and technology and the standards applied to work in higher education and industry. Resources will be published on the FAAE web site: the Compendium of Best Practices is a peer-to-peer sharing of curriculum units and integrated student projects and Online Professional Development modules developed by content area experts can be used by both educators and students to build technology skills with aesthetic considerations. The DMC raises awareness and interest in art and technology. Exhibiting winning entries models high standards for artistic and technological achievement and motivates teachers to expand their capacity. The DMF and on-line resources provide professional development for teachers and a basis for collaboration.

Impact: How does it Work

Example: Walk us through a specific example(s) of how this solution makes a difference; include its primary activities.

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About You

Organization:
Florida Alliance for Arts Education

About Your Organization

Organization Name
Florida Alliance for Arts Education

Organization Phone
407-488-8868

Organization Address
P.O. Box 782050, Orlando Florida 32878-2050

Organization Country
FL, Orange County

Country where this project is creating social impact
How long has your organization been operating?
More than 5 years

Is the project that you are entering related to this organization?
Yes

The information you provide here will be used to fill in any parts of your profile that have been left blank, such as interests, organization information, and website. No contact information will be made public. Please uncheck here if you do not want this to happen.

Innovation

What stage is your project in?
Share the story of the founder and what inspired the founder to start this project

A visual art supervisor who oversees art teachers in a populous, Florida county, reported a phenomenon that occurred when technology course offerings were expanded. Students flocked to technology courses with enthusiasm to learn web site development, illustration and graphic programs, and computer animation, but dropped these courses in frustration and disappointment. Although they became adept at using the computer programs - passing proficiency tests - they were dissatisfied with the work they produced. The websites, graphics, and animations were not visually pleasing and did not express their vision.

Many of the technology students chose technology courses over art courses, leaving the art room underutilized and seemingly irrelevant. FAAE was challenged to bridge the gap and bring art and technology together to provide students with a complete set of tools with which to express themselves.

Administrative hierarchy, funding incentives for technology courses, facilities, schedules and a (usually) unspoken competitiveness between art and technology faculty prevented collaboration from happening naturally. Students suffered by developing a limited set of skills.

Creating the Digital Media Challenge for students was an incentive for teachers to prepare their students for the competition. The Digital Media Festival is professional development and a chance for educators (from different disciplines) students and parents to learn side-by-side.

Please describe how your project has been successful and how that success is measured

The pilot of the DMC/DMF proved the need, receptivity of educators and the delivery model. Measures of success include:

- DMC participation: 278 entries from 43 different schools;
- Quality of entries: judges from higher education expressed favorable response to the quality of entries;
- DMC entry technology and administration: 90% of entries were accomplished online with no assistance;
- Judging rubric and support system: DMC judges were able to access entries, use the established rubric successfully and hold online panel meetings efficiently;
- DMC participation: Maximum capacity of 100 was exceeded with standing room only;
- Participant feedback: 95% of DMF attendees rated their selected sessions "Very useful" and 94% rated plenary sessions "Very high quality." Additional comments included "You have converted a Luddite to technology."
- Use of online resources: Traffic volume for the Compendium of Best Practices and Online Professional Development modules will be monitored.
- The project evaluator, with expertise in both art and technology, reviewed and approved the Online Professional Development modules.

Future success will be measured by higher participation from a broader geographic base and increased quality of submissions as determined by DMC judges and project evaluators.

How many people have been impacted by your project?

1,001-10,000

How many people could be impacted by your project in the next three years?

More than 10,000

How will your project evolve over the next three years?

The intended trajectory of the project can be summed up as "bigger and better." FAAE aims to attract more entries to the DMC and more participants to the DMF. Breaking the single DMF into regional workshops, will allow us to serve more people from a broader geographic area. A nascent partnership with the Morgridge International Reading Center (MIRC) at the University of Central Florida may be an opportunity to reach more educators through tele-connection. MIRC opens in September 2011 and FAAE has a trial scheduled in January 2012 to explore possible applications.

"Better" will be reflected in higher quality entries in the DMC with broader participation and improved teacher and student skills. The Online Professional Development modules will advance to higher levels as well.

What barriers might hinder the success of your project and how do you plan to overcome them?

The pilot year of the Digital Media Challenge confirmed the need, the interest, and a successful format. Success is now defined as the ability to scale up. The DMC attracted 278 entries from the whole state. Engaging more teachers (who are the gateway for most student participation) will be crucial. Only 30% of the DMC entries were from Career and Technical Education students. Successfully engaging more Technology teachers in important to soliciting student entries and for input in to the Compendium of Best Practices. Concerted outreach to technology curriculum directors and targeted technology teachers and schools will be employed to increase techie participation.

Another potential barrier is weak industry connections. Despite the proximity of such icons as Disney, Universal, and Legoland, FAAE has been unsuccessful in building partnerships with them. Big name participation in this project would raise the status and provide important industry perspective for students and educators. Our request with this proposal is for mentorship to help connect with industry leaders. Locally, efforts to connect through board members and community connections will be renewed. Using the success of the pilot and a specific non-monetary request may bring success.

Tell us about your partnerships

FAAE has built partnerships with teachers (primarily arts teachers) and arts supervisors across the state over the history of the organization through service to educators. The pilot year of the Digital Media Challenge has allowed us to add partnerships with Career and Technical Education teachers and curriculum supervisors.

Important new partnerships were established with Full Sail University, Ringling College of Art and Design, and University of Central Florida Center for Research in Education, Arts, Technology and Education (UCF CREATE) in the pilot year of the DMC. These partners provide judges for the DMC and presenters for the DMF. Bringing together K-12 educators with representatives of higher education is an important and exciting service. In order to prepare students for higher education, K-12 educators seek the advice and perspective of higher education.

FAAE hopes to leverage the initial success of the DMC to develop partnerships in the creative industry.
Explain your selections

The Digital Media Challenge is one of a number of programs that is partially funded by a grant from the Florida Department of Education and a grant from the Florida Department of State/Division of Cultural Affairs. Sponsorships are solicited from businesses to underwrite student prizes, and expenses associated with the Digital Media Festival. Participants in the Digital Media Contest pay a small entry fee and Digital Media Festival attendees pay a nominal registration fee.

How do you plan to strengthen your project in the next three years?

FAAE has had success offering regional workshops in order to provide services throughout the state. Expanding the Digital Media Festival to four or five regional workshops rather than a single workshop to serve the entire state would strengthen the program. Regional workshops can attract funding from school districts and communities where they are held. Regional workshops allows us to draw on a wider circle of industry and higher education resources as well.

Venues that will exhibit DMC winning entries will be sought to gain greater visibility of the Challenge. The Mennello Museum of American Art in Orlando is exhibiting the 2011 winners. Greater exposure outside the academic setting will raise awareness of the quality of student work and the role of technology in art.

Partnerships and Accountability

Please tell us more about how your partnership was formed and how it functions. What specific role does each partner play? What unique resources does each partner bring to the initiative?

FAAE has built partnerships with teachers (primarily arts teachers) and arts supervisors across the state over the history of the organization as we serve arts educators. The pilot year of the Digital Media Challenge has allowed us to build partnerships with Career and Technical Education teachers and curriculum supervisors as well. These partnerships were formed and strengthened when FAAE offered opportunities for students to share their work and compete for cash prizes. Important new partnerships were established with Full Sail University, Ringling College of Art and Design, and University of Central Florida Center for Research in Education, Arts, Technology and Education (UCF CREATE) in the pilot year of the DMC. Additional partners from the creative industries

Educators are essential to understanding the challenges in the classroom, studio, and computer lab: what resources teachers need, gaps in instruction for students, and the logistics of filling those gaps in a school setting. Partnership with representatives of higher education and creative industries guide the program outcomes to preparing students for higher education.

How are you building in accountability for students’ successful STEM learning outcomes? Please provide a summary and examples.

Student work, submitted to the Digital Media Challenge is evaluated against a rubric or artistic and technology standards matched to appropriate curriculum benchmarks. Examples of student entries are provided in the Media section of this application, including 2D and 4D works. Evidence of design solutions, innovation and creativity are evaluation criteria. Integration between art and technology is also considered. The work is not a technological tour de force with little artistic merit nor a digitized artistic creation. The art and technology must work in service to each other: the work would not be possible without both elements

Needs

Investment, Mentorship.

Please use this space to elaborate on your selection above and/or to add needs that may not be listed.

FAAE is seeking investment to support cash prizes for DMC winners, fund the development of online professional development units and the technical support for online publishing of the Compendium of Best Practices and the Online Professional Development units.

FAAE is seeking mentors within the creative industries in Florida such as Disney, Universal, and Lego where we have not yet been successful in establishing partnerships. Such ‘big name’ partners not only bring expertise as DMC adjudicators and presenters at the DMF, the name recognition raises awareness and interest in the program.

Offers

Research/Information, Innovation/Ideas, Mentorship.

Please use this space to elaborate on your selection above and/or to add offers that may not be listed.

FAAE would be happy to share research results from the pilot year of the Digital Media Challenge as well as our experience in working across disciplines in schools. The online Compendium of Best Practices and Professional Development Units are available for all to use on our website.

Source URL: https://www.changemakers.com/stemeducation/entries/digital-media-challenge#comment-0