



Municipality of Korca

Code for Albania – Korca ICT Academy

1. What is the proposal?

Organize the Code for Albania Korca ICT Academy– bringing together adolescents from all over Albania with focus in computer science and human centered design with the support of US instructors.

2. Where:

Korça Municipality

3. When?

Preliminary preparations and recruitment of participants: May – June 2022

Academy boot camp: July 2022

Follow up program: September 2022 – June 2023

4. Which is the product?

Municipality of Korca in cooperation with the support of the Albanian diaspora network in Silicon Valley, brings to Albania the ICT Academy for adolescents, a **3-year long program** consisting of 3 distinct levels of interaction between the instructors and the participating students:

- i. *2-week boot camp*: The participating adolescents will learn how to program in Python and Android, as well as how to efficiently apply design thinking. This program, which is led by Stanford University students, focuses on high-school students of the 9th, 10th and 11th grade, every summer, following the school-year.
- ii. *Year-long Instruction*: Instruction sessions every other week, such that the adolescents can sustain and further develop the programming and design thinking skills obtained the preceding summer. This part of the program, mentored by Code.X, will be led, on the field, by local Albanian instructors, with online sessions.
- iii. *Capstone Project*: A group project where the adolescents will be applying the instructed design thinking and critical thinking principles to identify a real need in the community, and to address it through an application of their acquired programming skills.

5. Who is implementing it?

Municipality of Korca, through its ambitious program of innovation aims to train young adolescents in the field of technology and ICT with main scope the employment of young people in the ICT sector.

6. Which is the target group?



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The target group is composed by adolescents from 14Y – 17/18Y. These are the direct beneficiaries of the program, which will spread the word to their class, school and to the community where they belong.

Other beneficiaries are the teaching assistants and other supporting local team members, whom have the chance to interact and network with their peers from US, educated in top-ranking universities, and/or working in big-techs.

GSI: We will encourage girls to apply and compete for the program, aiming to have a 50/50 ratio. Through this academy in Korca is giving the opportunity to 140 adolescents all over Albania, from rural and urban community, vulnerable children and communities, since every adolescent has the right to develop his full potential. During the call both adolescents and their parents will be targeted, in order to have as much applications and participation, even from families in need. Same is for disadvantaged groups, which sometimes hesitate to take part in competitions, or have barriers of access. In this case a positive discrimination could be made through the selection process.

7. Why this target group?

Focusing directly on shifting the thinking paradigm toward a growth mindset, through which everything is possible through conscientiousness and practice, ICT Academy sees the adolescents as catalysts of a fundamental mindset change in the Albanian society. Integrating computer science, critical thinking and a cultural exposure to the commonplace practices of Silicon Valley, the participants not only grow from a technology perspective but they also learn how to identify problems and how to address them proactively.

8. Selection process and other information on the attendance:

A National call will be issued on different media (traditional and social) trying to have the higher coverage possible. The applicants will be requested to fill forms requesting different essays which can help the selection team to assess their existing skills, attitude, and potential of growth. In May shortlisted candidates will be interviewed through videocalls, and in June will be informed about the final decision, giving them time to accept the invitation to join the academy.

There will be 15-20 teaching assistants and other supporting roles from Tirana and Korça as well. Together with the 10-12 US instructors (also young alumni of Stanford and other leading US universities) a total of 150 persons will be present in the boot camp.

9. Expected results:

Girls and boys are empowered with CS, and Human Centered Design skills. They will engage in community challenges, trying to resolve them with innovative solutions, and will be encouraged to bring change in their classes and communities through the year in between the boot camp. The long term focus is the employment of the youth in Korca in the ICT sector.

10. Why Korça Municipality? –

The concept of academy is inaccessible to most Albanian families, so there are social barriers that deprive middle-class or less privileged children from these growth



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opportunities. KorcaMunicipality is the first municipality in Albania with a dedicated program on innovation and ICT, that aim to create opportunities for adolescents.

Korca has the suitable conditions for the organization of this academy: Due to its historical, geographical and natural characteristics, costs of living, as well as the infrastructure and security offered during the summer months, Korça is an optimal destination for boot camps in the country. The Municipality of Korça has already undertaken a series of investments in creating the necessary infrastructure on technology, sports, art and culture. These constitute further competitive advantages.

Annex 1 – Detailed schedule of the 3-year program:

YEAR I	<p>Summer: CS fundamentals using Pythong</p>	Be comfortable with computer science and programming	<p>Summer: Build design muscles via improvisation techniques (e.g.) comfort with ambiguity, giving and receiving critique)</p>	Be comfortable with being uncomfortable; demonstrate empathy of an other (real and imagined)
	<p>Yearlong: Practice with Python, Intro to Java</p>		<p>Yearlong: Continue with design muscle workouts</p>	
YEAR II	<p>Summer: Expanding CS toolkit (Object Oriented Programming, Intro to Mobile Development)</p>	Have the ability to create software independently	<p>Summer: Design process-empathies, define, ideate, prototype, test and iterate</p>	Lead through the Design Thinking process given in a design challenge; apply learned techniques appropriately
	<p>Year Long: Mobile Development (Android)</p>		<p>Year Long: Design challenges, introduction to need finding identifying needs with teams</p>	
YEAR III	<p>Summer: Team Capstone Project (Android App) and learning standard SWE practices</p>	Develop good engineering practices and know-how of product testing and iteration	<p>Summer: Entrepreneurship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced thinking Rapid prototyping for project Real world software design 	Confidently view self as a capable and efficacious designer, creator and ultimately, entrepreneur