

## CREACT4MED Mapping: Best Practices

Application Number: BP\_04

1. Basic info*	
Email Address	Askadar.ps@gmail.com
Title of the Best Practice	Askadar for Culture and Arts
Name of the Applicant	Hala Shakhshir
Is the BP a registered legal entity?	Yes, I will send the certificate of registration by email
Website	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/askadar.nablus">https://www.facebook.com/askadar.nablus</a>
Country	Palestine;
Subsector	Arts and culture (cultural heritage, gastronomy, visual arts, performing arts, leisure and recreation, crafts);
Category	a) Cultural and creative entrepreneurship;
Year of establishment and duration	3/21/2017
Target group of the BP	<p>Askadar is dedicated to enriching the lives of urban youth in Nablus and its neighboring villages and refugee camps. Our mission embraces:</p> <p><b>Empowering Youth:</b> We focus on kids and teenagers, offering them a safe haven to explore their potential. Through creative arts like music, dance, and visual arts, we nurture their talents and provide job opportunities to aspiring artists.</p> <p><b>Supporting Local Artists:</b> We welcome young male and female artists, offering them a platform to showcase their talents and earn a livelihood. We believe in the transformative power of the arts.</p> <p><b>Family-Oriented:</b> For parents seeking a secure and enriching environment for their children after school, Askadar is the answer. We provide a place where kids can learn new skills and grow in a nurturing community.</p>
2. Best Practice Characteristics	
Problem Statement	<p>Our main goal is to address the need for a nurturing environment for children and youth in Nablus, focusing on their artistic talents in music, dance, and the arts. We also aim to empower young artists, particularly women, by providing job opportunities as mentors and teachers in local schools.</p> <p>To ensure sustainability, we plan to introduce an annual summer school program that generates consistent income and enriches the lives of participants. Moreover, we are committed to promoting Palestinian cultural identity through creative approaches and storytelling.</p> <p>In addition to nurturing artistic talents, our after-school programs contribute to work-life balance for working mothers, offering a supportive environment for their children while they focus on their professional responsibilities. These programs also open doors for professional development, enabling working mothers to pursue higher education, attend training, and network, leading to career advancement and increased job opportunities.</p> <p>Our holistic approach aims to create a supportive and enriching space for children and youth, while also providing valuable support to working mothers and enhancing professional growth opportunities.</p>
Mission Statement & Value proposition	Askadar, situated in the heart of Nablus in the Northern West Bank, serves as a beacon of hope and creativity amidst the challenges posed by the occupation. Our journey, which began in March

	<p>2017, has been guided by a clear purpose: to provide the children of Nablus with access to the transformative power of the arts.</p> <p>In a city where access to arts like Music, Dance, and Drama was limited by fear and societal barriers, Askadar emerged as a haven. We've witnessed significant growth since 2017, with over 120 students now engaged in a diverse range of art activities, from Ballet and Dabka to Music and Drawing. Our commitment to accessibility is reflected in our scholarships, allowing students, most of whom are between 3 and 15 years old, to pay only 20% of course fees.</p> <p>Askadar was founded by visionary young artists and entrepreneurs who understand the profound impact of the arts, especially in a conservative city like Nablus. Beyond providing a safe and family-friendly space for creativity, we are on a mission to expand cultural horizons. Through inclusive social activities, we welcome individuals from various backgrounds, including public school students, UN school students, and housewives, to participate in workshops covering dance, yoga, music, cinema, and drama. These experiences serve as a bridge to arts education and foster stronger connections with learning.</p> <p>Our vision extends into the future. We see Askadar evolving into a center for social change in Nablus, hosting inspiring artists, teachers, lecturers, and musicians who will guide and nurture the children of our city towards a brighter tomorrow. This conference represents a significant step forward, not just for Askadar but for everyone who envisions a more vibrant and creative Nablus. Join us in shaping the future of our city through the magic of art and culture. Together, we can create a brighter, more inclusive, and culturally rich Nablus.</p>
Results and growth	<p>Our approach to addressing the initial issue of limited access to the arts in Nablus and creating a successful outcome that has established Askadar as a best practice involved a multi-faceted strategy encompassing accessibility, education, and community engagement. Here are the key elements of our approach:</p> <p><b>Scholarship Program for Accessibility:</b> To break down financial barriers, we introduced a scholarship program that enabled students, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to pay only 20% of course fees. This initiative significantly increased accessibility, making arts education more inclusive.</p> <p><b>Diverse Arts Offerings:</b> We diversified our arts offerings to cater to a wide range of interests and age groups, including Ballet, Dabka, Music, and Drawing. This approach allowed us to engage a broader cross-section of the community and cater to the varied artistic aspirations of our beneficiaries.</p> <p><b>Community Engagement and Workshops:</b> Beyond formal classes, we organized workshops in dance, yoga, music, cinema, and drama, welcoming participants from diverse backgrounds. These inclusive social activities served as a bridge to arts education and strengthened the connections between the community and the arts.</p> <p><b>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Results:</b></p> <p><b>Enrollment Growth:</b> One of our primary KPIs was the growth in student enrollment. In the past three years, we witnessed a 40% increase in the number of students participating in Askadar programs. This demonstrates the effectiveness of our scholarship program and the appeal of our diverse arts offerings.</p>

	<p>Community Engagement Metrics: We measured the impact of our community engagement efforts by tracking participation in workshops and events. Over the same period, workshop attendance increased by 50%, indicating a growing interest in the arts within the community.</p> <p>Scholarship Impact: We evaluated the success of our scholarship program by monitoring the socioeconomic background of scholarship recipients and their progression in arts education. Notably, 75% of scholarship recipients continued their arts education beyond the first year, indicating the program's effectiveness in providing access and sustaining interest.</p> <p>Our comprehensive approach, which combines accessibility, diverse arts offerings, and community engagement, has not only addressed the initial issue but also established Askadar as a best practice. The measured growth in enrollment, increased community engagement, and the positive impact of our scholarship program on students' educational journeys are clear indicators of our success in promoting arts education and cultural enrichment in Nablus.</p>
<p>Strategy to be financially sustainable</p>	<p>Askadar's business model revolves around a combination of revenue streams and sustainable practices to ensure financial viability over time.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fee-Based Arts Education: A significant portion of our revenue comes from offering fee-based arts education programs. We charge tuition fees for various courses, such as Ballet, Dabka, Music, and Drawing. These fees cover the cost of instructors, materials, and equipment.</li> <li>2. Scholarship Program: To foster inclusivity and access to arts education, we implemented a scholarship program. While this reduces our immediate revenue from tuition fees, it strengthens our long-term sustainability by attracting more students and increasing community engagement. This inclusivity enhances our reputation and support within the community.</li> <li>3. Annual Summer School: We introduced an annual summer school program that generates sustainable income. This intensive program offers a wide range of arts activities for children during the summer months, attracting both paying students and those on scholarships. The revenue generated during this period contributes significantly to our financial stability.</li> <li>4. Community Engagement Workshops and Events: Organizing workshops, events, and community engagement activities allows us to diversify our income sources. These programs are often fee-based, and the increased community involvement helps raise awareness of our organization.</li> <li>5. Grants and Donations: We actively seek grants and donations from local and international organizations that support arts and education initiatives. These funds are used to enhance our facilities, expand our programs, and ensure long-term sustainability.</li> <li>6. Sponsorships and Partnerships: Collaborations with local businesses and cultural institutions, as well as sponsorships from corporate entities, provide additional financial support. These partnerships not only bring in funds but also increase our visibility in the community.</li> </ol> <p>Our financial sustainability over time is achieved through a combination of prudent financial management, diversification of revenue streams, strategic partnerships, and a commitment to our core mission of making arts education accessible to all. By continuously adapting and innovating our</p>

	programs and services, we have managed to secure the necessary resources to sustain and expand our operations, ensuring that Askadar remains a vital part of Nablus's cultural landscape for years to come.
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**3. Impact (please complete at least 3 of the 6 sub-sections)**

Economic significance	
Replicability and upscaling	
Employment generation	<p>Askadar has demonstrated a strong capacity to promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth by creating jobs and professional opportunities for young people and women in Nablus and its surrounding areas.</p> <p>*Job Creation: Since its inception in 2017, Askadar has contributed significantly to job creation in the community. We currently employ 12 full-time employees who play pivotal roles in program coordination, administration, and facility management. This not only provides stable employment but also supports the livelihoods of these individuals.</p> <p>*Freelance Opportunities: In addition to our full-time staff, Askadar has engaged 55 freelancers. These freelance opportunities encompass a wide range of roles, including instructors, mentors, and facilitators for various arts programs and workshops. By involving freelancers, we generate flexible employment opportunities that cater to the skills and expertise of individuals in the arts sector.</p> <p>*Youth and Women Empowerment: Askadar's commitment to providing professional opportunities extends to young people and women in particular. We actively recruit emerging artists and female professionals, offering them a platform to showcase their talents and skills. This empowers them to enter the workforce, contribute to their communities, and build sustainable careers in the arts and education sectors.</p>
Inclusiveness	<p>Askadar actively fosters societal inclusiveness, with a particular focus on engaging vulnerable communities such as women, migrant workers, and young workers. This best practice is implemented in both urban and rural settings.</p> <p>-Challenging Gender Roles: We provide young girls (150 girl/ per year) with opportunities to break free from traditional gender roles. Through sports, dance, and movement programs, we empower 5 to 15 years old girls to explore their physical abilities and express themselves freely. This not only promotes gender equality but also encourages girls to pursue their passions without societal constraints.</p> <p>-Professional Development Opportunities: We recognize the importance of professional development, particularly for young workers. Askadar offers programs that allow participants to enhance their skills and knowledge, opening doors to career advancement and increased job opportunities. This empowers individuals to take control of their futures and contribute more effectively to society. Since 2017 Askadar provides job opportunities for a 12 full time employees and 55 freelancers.</p> <p>-Supporting Work-Life Balance: Askadar plays a crucial role in supporting working mothers. By providing a safe and enriching environment for children after school, we enable working moms to focus on their careers while knowing their children are cared for and engaged in supervised</p>

	<p>activities. This contributes to better work-life balance and empowers women in the workforce.</p> <p>Each year Askadar helps more than 150 working moms finding a safe and enriching environment for children.</p> <p>-Empowering Artists from Diverse Backgrounds: We are committed to empowering young artists from various backgrounds. Whether they are from different ethnicities, socioeconomic statuses, or experiences, we provide opportunities for emerging talents to shine. This inclusivity not only enriches the arts community but also contributes to a more diverse and vibrant society.</p> <p>Askadar's best practices in promoting inclusiveness are not limited by location, benefiting both urban and rural communities.</p>
Social impact	<p>Askadar's social impact is profound and multi-faceted, making significant contributions to community development, the valorization of cultural heritage, reduction of inequality, and the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies in Nablus.</p> <p>1. Community Development: Askadar hosts more than 300 individuals around the year. Through our diverse arts programs, we provide a platform for children, youth, and adults to nurture their talents and skills. By fostering artistic expression, we empower individuals to become active contributors to the cultural and social fabric of Nablus. Our annual summer school, community workshops, and events serve as focal points for community engagement, forging stronger social bonds and a sense of belonging.</p> <p>Askadar hosts more than 300 individual around the year</p> <p>2. More than 48 events Valorization of Cultural Heritage: We are dedicated to preserving and promoting Palestinian cultural heritage. Through participatory and creative approaches, we encourage children and youth to rediscover their heritage, share stories, and express their cultural identity through art forms like Dabka, music, and visual arts. This not only preserves cultural traditions but also strengthens a sense of pride and belonging among the community.</p> <p>3. Reduction of Inequality: 35 Students holding scholarships every year Our scholarship program is a powerful tool in reducing inequality. By offering financial assistance to students, regardless of their socioeconomic background, we ensure that talented individuals, who might otherwise face barriers to accessing arts education, have the opportunity to flourish. This approach actively promotes a more equitable society where talent and potential are not limited by financial circumstances.</p> <p>4. Promotion of Peaceful and Inclusive Societies: Askadar is a beacon of inclusivity and tolerance in Nablus. Through our diverse programs and inclusive social activities, we bring together individuals from different backgrounds, fostering understanding and tolerance. Arts have a unique capacity to bridge divides and promote dialogue, contributing to a more peaceful and inclusive society. By offering a safe space for creativity and self-expression, we contribute to the cultivation of a harmonious community.</p>
Innovation	
Environmental sustainability	
<p><b>4. Challenges and lessons learned</b></p>	

<p>Challenges</p>	<p>1. Recruiting Creative Instructors: The challenge of finding art, dance, and music teachers with fresh ideas was addressed by actively seeking out local talent. We collaborated with art schools, universities, and local artist communities to identify emerging instructors. Additionally, we provided professional development opportunities to our existing team, encouraging them to bring innovative approaches to their teaching.</p> <p>2. Sustainable Income Streams: To address the need for new services with sustainable income, Askadar introduced an annual summer school program. This initiative ensured a consistent revenue source while offering a valuable service to the community. Moreover, we explored partnerships with local businesses and organizations to diversify income streams and reduce reliance on tuition fees.</p> <p>3. Public Relations and Advertisements: Recognizing the importance of public relations and advertisements, we engaged volunteers and interns to manage our online presence and social media platforms. We also initiated local awareness campaigns and collaborated with local media outlets to promote Askadar's activities, increasing our visibility within the community.</p> <p>Through these strategies, Askadar overcame challenges and continued to thrive, ensuring the sustainability of its programs and services while enhancing its outreach and impact within the community.</p>
<p>Lessons learned</p>	<p>1. Community-Centric Approach: Prioritizing the needs and aspirations of the community is paramount. By actively engaging with community members and adapting our programs based on their feedback, we have fostered a stronger sense of ownership and participation.</p> <p>2. Diversification of Revenue Streams: Relying solely on tuition fees can be challenging. Diversifying income sources, such as introducing annual programs like the summer school and seeking partnerships and sponsorships, ensures financial sustainability and resilience.</p> <p>3. Inclusivity and Equity: Our experience underscores the importance of inclusivity and equity. Providing scholarships for underprivileged students and creating opportunities for marginalized groups, including women and young artists, not only enriches the community but also fosters a more equal and diverse society.</p> <p>4. Continuous Learning and Innovation: Stagnation is a barrier to growth. Investing in professional development for our team and encouraging innovation in teaching methodologies has allowed us to stay relevant and appealing to our students.</p> <p>5. Effective Communication: Public relations and effective communication are vital. Our efforts to improve our online presence, engage with local media, and involve the community in our activities have significantly enhanced our outreach and impact.</p>
<p><b>5. Demographic Information</b></p>	
<p>Is the organization led by a woman?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>What age is the lead of the organization?</p>	<p>Between 16 and 35 years old</p>
<p><b>6. Reference contact information</b></p>	

