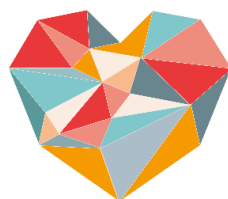




Choir "Sonidos de la memoria"

(Sounds of memory)

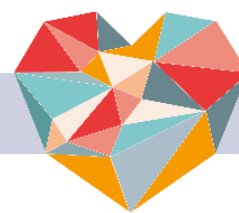


Dementia
in Cultural Mediation



With the support of the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

The activity



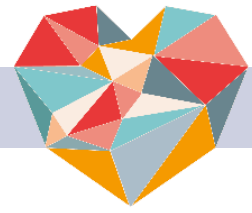
Name of the activity

Choir: "Sonidos de la memoria" (Sounds of memory). A choir for people with dementia.

Summary

The Choir "Sonidos de la memoria" was created in February 2019, in Vigo, thanks to the alliance between "AFAGA Alzheimer" and "Fundación Coral Casablanca", a local choir. It is a choir formed by people with dementia. The members of this group are 26 people with Alzheimer's or other dementias and their caregivers and relatives, as well as some volunteers. It is under the direction of Óscar Villar, a famous choirmaster, who is accompanied by different musicians.

Content



Target group

The participants of the choir are people with mild and moderate dementia who love music and singing. Moreover, they must be people without serious behavioural disturbance accompanied by caregivers and volunteers.

Objective

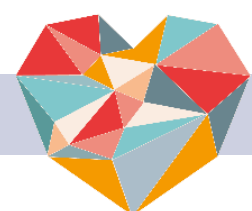
The objectives of this project are:

1. Firstly, to avoid social exclusion.
2. Secondly, to promote the social inclusion of people with dementia in community activities.
3. Thirdly, to improve the quality of life of people with dementia and relatives.
4. Moreover, cognitive stimulation of the people with dementia.
5. And at last, reminiscence to evoke memories.

Partners

To develop this project it is necessary the union between an institution or entity that cares for people with dementia and a local choir. On the one hand, the institution would carry out the registration and assessment of users who meet the characteristics to participate and benefit from the activity. On the other hand, the local choir would direct the purely musical aspects such as rehearsals, selection of songs to be performed, etc.

It is important to mention that when selecting the songs to rehearse, the professionals of the care institution for people with dementia can collaborate, because they know better the musical preferences and hobbies of the users.



Practical

Venue

The activity takes place in the facilities of the local choir, but in case it is not possible to carry it out due to lack of facilities, it would be advisable to carry out the activity in a cultural center or theater. It is important that the facilities have an access free of architectural barriers and have enough seats for all users in case we have any participant with mobility problems or fatigue.

Day, time & duration

Choir rehearsals take place one day a week and last for one hour. You can join the choir whenever you want, the group is opened all year around. In July and August rehearsals stop for holidays.

Group size

The number of people who can participate in the choir is limited by the capacity of the facilities. There is no capacity limit.

Supervisors and hosts

Each person with dementia must be accompanied by a family member or reference person. In addition there are volunteers from the choir itself, such as singers, musicians and some employees of the Alzheimer's association to help lead the group.

The number of volunteers depend on the number of participants.

The ideal situation is one volunteer with one person with dementia.

Materials & facilities

People with dementia and their relatives do not need to bring any materials to the choir rehearsals.

It is important that the rehearsal facilities are accessible to people with dementia and have adapted toilets.

In addition the facilities must have seating for all people with dementia and to have instruments for the musicians.

Costs

People with dementia and their relatives do not have to pay anything to participate in the choir. They have to arrange their own transport to go to the choir rehearsals and performances.

Name tags

Name labels will not be necessary as the group is not too large and people with dementia are not alone, they are accompanied by families and volunteers.

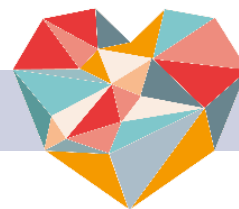
Memento

The participants of the choir do not receive any gifts for taking part, however, two public performances are held during the year, one at Christmas and the other in summer. These performances are recorded and broadcast on social networks and in the media with the consent of the family. In this way they can see themselves singing on stage, which for most of them is a dream come true.

Afterwards

After the rehearsals, two public performances are held in a local theatre, with the rest of the choirs of the “Fundación Coral Casablanca” open to public.

Communication & Registration



Communication

The project of the choir for people with dementia is disseminated in various ways in order to reach as many families of people with dementia who are interested in participating as possible:

Offline:

Posters of the programme are put up in different parts of the city.

Flyers are handed out to families and users who come to the association.

The start of the project is announced in local media such as newspapers, magazines, radios, etc.

Online:

The activity will be announced on the social networks of the Alzheimer's association and on the choir's social networks. In addition, the local media spread the news in their digital formats.

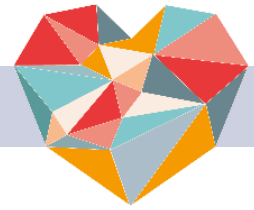
Registration

People interested in joining the choir must contact AFAGA for an assessment before joining the programme.

In the occupational therapist's initial interview with the family, the therapist collects information about the user who is going to take part in the choir, such as: age, diagnosis (it is essential to have a diagnosis of dementia to be able to take part in this choir), degree of mobility, whether they have significant behavioural disorders, musical preferences, whether they have ever taken part in a choir, etc.

Basic information to know if the person can benefit from the activity or not.

Description & Program



Preparation of the rehearsal

A few weeks before rehearsals begin, the director meets with us to get to know the characteristics of the group: number of participants, names of the people with dementia and their family members, average age, musical tastes, etc.

The association send a list of all the participants and their families to the choir director.

In order to do this, families must sign a data protection document to authorise the sharing of their personal data, phone numbers, images, etc, with members of the choir.

This information is necessary in order to keep track of attendance at the choir, in case it is necessary to inform them of any kind of information such as a change of rehearsal date, cancellation, delay, etc. Once we know the average age and musical tastes of the participants, we select possible songs to rehearse.

The rehearsal

On the rehearsal day we welcome the participants at the entrance. Once there, volunteers from the choir accompany the person with dementia and their family member to the place where they will be seated.

When we are all there, the choir director welcomes everyone and explains the musical themes we are going to rehearse.

The lyrics of the songs we are going to sing are handed out. This way we will all know the songs without any problems.

Choral volunteers stand behind people with dementia and their families in this way they can guide them.

The choir director tells us the song we are going to sing so that we can take the lyrics of the song and marks the beginning.

The director gives guidelines and important aspects for each song like when to turn up the volume, repeat the verse, etc.

We usually rehearse four to five songs and repeat each one a couple of times.

The songs we rehearse are sung at public performances at Christmas and summer.

The end of the rehearsal

The director bids us farewell until next week with a round of applause from all participants.

At the end of the rehearsal, participants take away a copy of the songs to have at home to practice.

Volunteers accompany people with dementia and their family member to the exit.

Performance day

In the last rehearsal before the performance, the director will give guidelines for the performance to the families of people with dementia and the volunteers: place, dress, arrival time, performance schedule, meeting point, etc.

When it is time to perform, it is normal that some users are nervous or do not remember that they have a public performance today. Therefore, it is important to let them know that we are all going to go on stage to sing some songs to the public and if they become very nervous or upset, do not force him to go up and sing.



Evaluation

This practice is currently not being evaluated, largely because of the abrupt discontinuation of the practice due to COVID-19. When it is resumed again, some form of observational scale will be administered to determine the benefit of the practice, for example with “LIBE Scale”.

Checklist, when to do what



One month before the activity

- We held a meeting between the Casablanca's Choir and the Alzheimer's Association to choose the place and time for rehearsals.
- The start of the choir is being publicised among the users of the Alzheimer's Association and the volunteers of the Casablanca's Choir.
- Start the dissemination in our social networks: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, etc.

Two weeks before the activity

- Interviews should start with the families and users who want to participate.
- The list of participants and volunteers is starting to be filled.
- Meeting with the choir director to discuss the average age of the participants and their characteristics.
- We must go to the rehearsal facilities to see that it is fully accessible for people with mobility problems: ramps, toilets, seating, etc.
- Continue the dissemination on social networks: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, etc.
- Some posters are starting to be pasted up around the city or town.

The week before the activity

- All participants and volunteers are called to confirm the place and time of the rehearsals.
- We meet with the choir director to see the number of participants to date and their musical tastes and average ages to start to choose possible songs for rehearsals.
- We should invite the local media to come to the first rehearsal in order to get more coverage.
- The beginning of the choir is published in the local media.
- Continue the dissemination on social networks: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, etc.

The day before the activity

- We speak to the choir director to send him the list of all the participants.
- We should have the necessary material ready for the rehearsals: print out the lyrics, chairs, etc.

Day of the activity

- The volunteers are welcomed an hour early for some extra explanation and additional information about the activity and people with dementia.
- We will be at the entrance welcoming volunteers, people with dementia and their families.

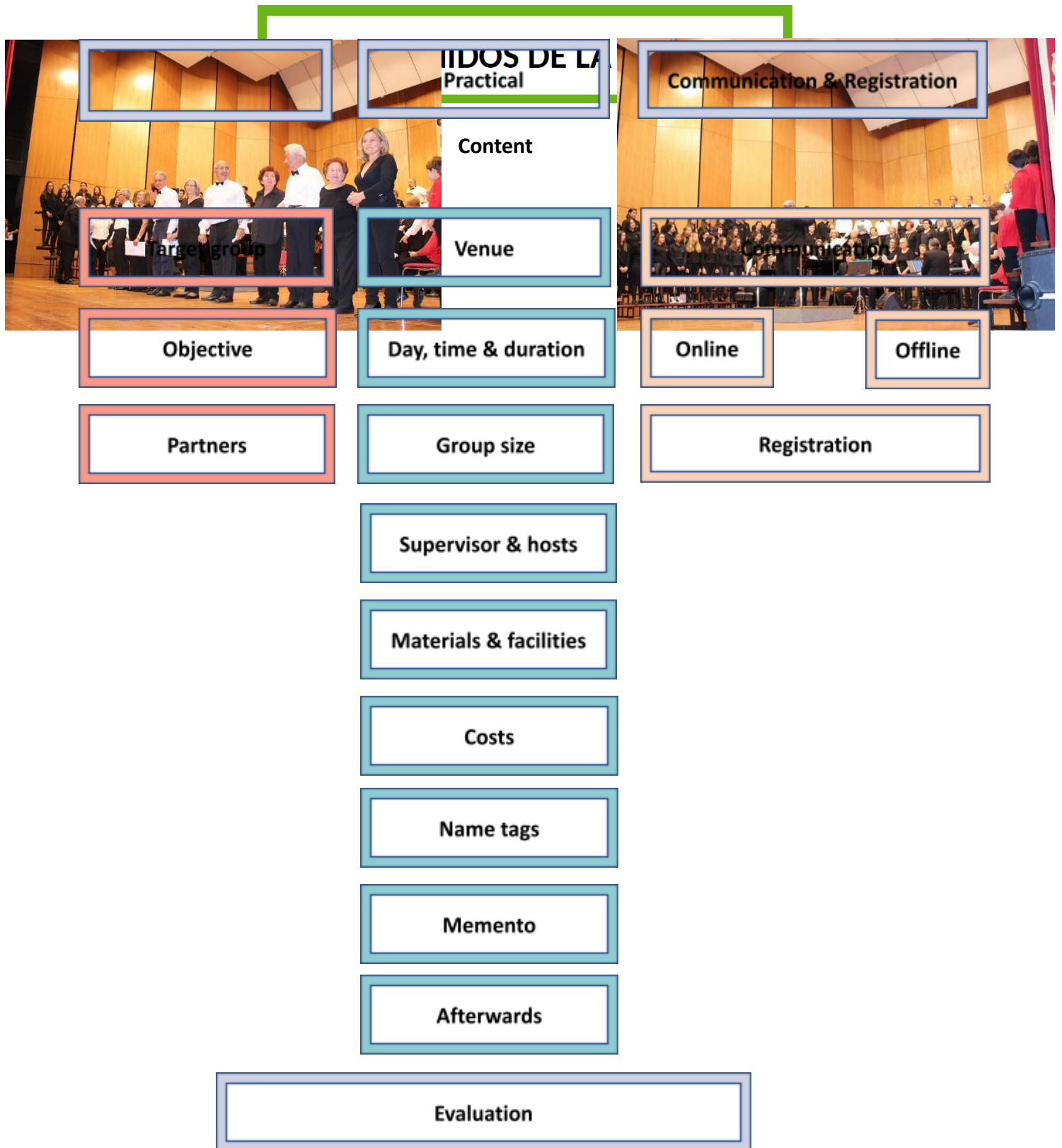
Corona

Coral is currently not being developed due to restrictions imposed to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, the choir's rehearsals and performances have been



interrupted. We hope that in a few months we will be able to resume the activity taking the necessary measures to minimise the risk of contagion, for example: with more social distance, reducing the number of participants, rehearsing in an outdoor space, etc.

Points of attention



afaga
Alzheimer

25 años
@ teu corazón

Cognitive stimulation of
the people with dementia.

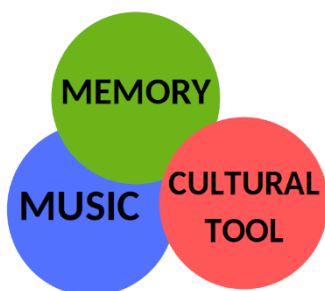


A CHOIR FOR PEOPLE
WITH DEMENTIA



Reminiscence to evoke memories.

To avoid social exclusion



To promote social inclusion of people with dementia
in community activities.