

<https://leerica1010.wixsite.com/eridanus>

FlippED Mentorship Program (Formerly Known As ERIDANUS)

Peace:

"It isn't enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. And it isn't enough to believe in it. One must work at it." - Eleanor Roosevelt

FlippED provides a platform for diversity opinions to be created through mutual understanding and respects. It empowers local and refugee communities to discover their values and passions through the activities and transform them with enhancing intercultural understanding, communication and leadership skills through experiential education.

Background:

"What does DIVERSITY mean to you?" It was the first question that I had on the first day of participating in the Hong Kong Diversity Youth Summit, organized by Li Po Chun United World College in May 2017. At that moment, I did not know how to answer. I was thinking about all the experiences that I had in my life so far. There was not much exposure that had given me a clear definition of what diversity means. The 5-day residential summit invited speakers to provide different perspectives for raising my awareness about challenges faced by different groups in society. I was fortunate to meet and listen to various stories from other ethnic minorities and refugee participants during the conference. It has been a turning point in my life that encourages me to think globally and act locally to pay attention to the surrounding. There are lacking space and opportunities for having constructive communication between ethnic minorities and locals in the community in the local school environment. There are lots of miscommunication and biases against other ethnicities in society. These issues become barriers to many immigrants integrating into the community which hinders the process of cultivating a diverse city. That is not a city that I want to have. I found Eridanus in 2017 to foster stronger connections between ethnic minorities and local students in Hong Kong and create a multicultural platform for exchanging cultural values and stories. After working with different ethnic minority groups in Hong Kong for a few years, I decided to extend my project to the refugee community. Refugees are one of the marginalized groups in Hong Kong who are often ignored by the community. The Refugee Union is the only organization where refugees help refugees which indicates that there is a gap between refugees and local communities.¹ There are 231 substantiated claimants out of the 22,737 torture/non-refoulement claims in the past 11 years in Hong Kong. That is 1% substantiated rate. On the contrary, during the last 10 years, 67% are granted under the 1951 Refugee Convention globally. Europe's granted rate is 38%.² The low substantiated rate demonstrates the need in the refugees community because they rarely have access to education and participate in community activities because of the visa statuses and language barriers.

Proposal:

FlippED will be the first local-refugee peer mentorship program in Hong Kong which is led by secondary and university students. We believe that the cultural exchange and creating an educational network for all potential leaders of tomorrow can expand our participants' horizons and develop critical thinking. In alignment with the mentorship program, we will facilitate the in-depth discussions within mentors and provide multiple professional study abroad guidance for mentors and mentees to explore throughout the summer. FlippED consists three main elements: mentorship, language support and cultural exploration.

¹ Refugee Union, <http://refugeeunion.org/>

² Branches of Hope, <https://branchesofhope.org.hk/about-refugees>

Mentorship (June - August 2022)

FlippED aims to provide a summer-long peer mentorship program to pair up 20 refugees and 20 local participants to have cultural exchange opportunities and promote a positive learning environment. Engage, connect, and transform are the main values embedded in the mentorship program to assist every individual to integrate into the community. Local participants first participate in a foundation training session from the partners organization/ a professor at EdUHK to better understand the refugees' community in Hong Kong. Then, we will match locals and refugees participants with similar age, interests, and goals. They are required to meet once a week to participate in different activities that we organize.

Language Support (June - August 2022)

FlippED recognizes that many refugees find it difficult to adapt in society because of the language barriers. Most refugee students who FlippED had met in the volunteering session (including primary and secondary students) have negative views towards learning new languages. They are often discouraged from learning Chinese because of a lack of exposure. FlippED recruits local secondary school and university students to have a 1 on 1 tutoring with refugees to support and assist them in learning basic Chinese usage for daily life.

Cultural Exploration (July - August 2022)

The organizing team members of FlippED are mainly coming from local schools in Hong Kong. We observe that there is a huge gap between local and refugee students. We design a curriculum and a series of workshops to continue to work with local schools to promote intercultural understandings. Celebrating the difference is the main value that we have embedded in the workshops. We believe that creating a healthy discourse can provide a safe platform in which diverse ideas can be created. Students can have the hands-on experience to enjoy the conversation, explore different cultures and acknowledge what diversity truly means to them through mutual understandings.

COVID-19 Concern

FlippED organizing team is planning to execute the project in hybrid and online formats for the execution because of the COVID-19 situation and government restrictions on gatherings.

Uniqueness

There is some similar mentorship program in Hong Kong such as Boundless, ProjectAccess of helping the top-elite underprivileged local students to achieve academic success. However, there is no program specifically for the refugees' community. Critical thinking and intercultural understandings will be implemented into our program since there is a lack of focus on the local education curriculum. Our workshops become our empowerment for our community to understand the diverse opinions and exchange cultures between refugees and local communities.

Project Outcomes:

1. Facilitate intercultural understanding between refugees and local communities in Hong Kong
2. Encourage local students to initiate conversations with people coming from different backgrounds
3. Provide a platform for all the changemakers to come together to create a unique global leader network with equal opportunities to all potential leaders of tomorrow
4. Strive to create long-lasting relationships and impacts to connect with society through inclusion, celebration and responsibility

Sustainability:

We plan to a partnership with a few local organizations to recruit participants, such as Refugee Union, learningchainHK and Justice Center Hong Kong. FlippED (formerly known as ERIDANUS) is a winning project of Act!on For A Cause in 2018, organized by Kids4kids and Gomakeadifference UWC in 2020. We will measure the effectiveness of the project by collecting data through surveys and observing participants' engagement in our activities. We will utilize the social media platform to share information about the refugees' community in Hong Kong to raise public awareness. In the long-term, we are trying to build an alumni council and student ambassador cohort to recruit current participants as committee members to execute the program with partnering with learningchainHK to expand the impacts.

Projects for Peace Budget Template

Name: Erica Lee
Project Name: FlippED
School: Colby College

TOTAL FUNDS REMAINING:
0

Total Additional Funding: 0

TOTAL EXPENDITURES:
10000

Student Expenses					Project Expenses				
Travel (Including Airfare)	Lodging	Communications	Food (Biweekly)	Miscellaneous	Non-Student Travel and Lodging	Direct Equipment and Supplies	Marketing and Event Support	Staffing Costs	Miscellaneous
1200	0	80	1020	0	500	4000	1500	1000	700
Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total
1200	0	80	1020	0	500	4000	1500	1000	700

Total Student Expenses:
2300

Total Project Expenses:
7700

This form should be used to prepare your final budget and submitted with your project's final report.