

# AUDIO DESCRIPTION: A LABORATORY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW PROFESSIONAL PROFILE



Multiplier Event 3, University of Antwerp, 5 March 2018

Dept. of Legal, Language, Translation and Interpreting Studies, Section of in Modern Languages for Interpreters and Translators  
University of Trieste, Via Filzi, 14 - 34144 Trieste, Italy  
Project numberStudies: 2016-1-IT02-KA203-024311  
[www.adlabproject.eu](http://www.adlabproject.eu)

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# The ADLAB PRO project: A snapshot

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# Project details

- **36 months** (Sep. 2016 – Aug. 2019) > We are now halfway through it
- Financed by European Union under **Erasmus+ Programme, Key Action 2 – Strategic Partnerships**
- Coordinator: **University of Trieste** (IT)
  
- EC Project Number: 2016-1-IT02-KA203-024311
- National Project ID: GU10213041978



# Partnership

**8 partners** (7 EU countries, 19 people)

## **Academic partners:**

University of Trieste  
Autònoma of Barcelona  
University of Antwerp  
University of Poznan

## **Non-academic partners:**

Utopian Voices Ltd. (UK)  
Soundfocus B.V. (The Netherlands)  
RTV Slovenija (Slovenia)  
Royal National Institute of the Blind (UK)



# Sustainability and goals

Carrying on the work **started with ADLAB (2011-2014)** which resulted in European strategic recommendations for audio describers.

**Creating a curriculum and training** free & open-access, flexible, modular, customisable **materials** to be used to train audio-describers both in academic and in professional (in-house) contexts.

Stabilizing of the audio describer professional figure.



# Intellectual outputs

- Working activities to be accomplished over a precise timeframe leading to tangible results.
- 6 IOs.
  - **01**: Gathering EU best practices (UAM).
  - **02**: Defining audio-describer competences (UNITS).
  - **03**: Producing course design (UA).
  - **04**: Creating training materials (UAB).
  - **05**: Testing and evaluating training materials (UV).
  - **06**: Attributing ECTS/ECVETS to materials (UNITS).



# Where are we now?

- **O1**: Completed!
- **O2**: Completed!
- **O3: Ongoing – towards the end**
- **O4**: Will start soon
- **O5: Ongoing** (constant evaluation)
- **O6: Just started** (Jan. 2018)
- **Website**: live and kicking ([www.adlabproject.eu](http://www.adlabproject.eu)), only selected results and IO reports, accessible

# **IO1: Gathering EU best practices**

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# IO1 | Aims and study design

- To create a snapshot of the current AD training situation in Europe
- 2 stages: quantitative and qualitative:
  - online questionnaire > 192 courses sampled
  - course materials and interviews > 5 courses analysed



# IO1 | Stage 1 findings

- Few differences between academic and non-academic courses
- Teachers are practitioners
- Teachers cooperate with VIPs
- Film AD taught most often
- Skills: AD voicing and recording more important in non-academic courses



# IO1 | Stage 2 findings

- Teacher-centred and student-centred approaches
- Most ingredients of an effective course (Laurillard 2012) – learning through:
  - acquisition
  - inquiry
  - discussion
  - practice
  - collaboration
- Situated learning

# IO2: Defining audio-describer competences

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## I02 | Aims: define **skills and competences** needed to train AD professionals

- Questionnaire development
  - online distribution (4<sup>th</sup> July-17<sup>th</sup> August 2017)
  - Web Survey Creator
  - Multilingual (project languages - 6: EN, ES, IT, NL, PL, SL)
  - Accessible!
- Target respondents (183 in all):
  - Audio describers
  - AD providers
  - AD users
- Data analysis and report (cf. website)



# Pinpoint the skills

## DESCRIBERS

### Soft skills

Organise work efficiently

### Theoretical knowledge

World knowledge

### Technical skills

AD script writing

### Textual and linguistic skills

Select significant visual info

## PROVIDERS

Organise work efficiently

AD principles

AD script writing

Select significant visual info



# Most difficult aspects

## Describer

Fight to recognise the quality of AD

Improvising

Time pressure

## Provider

Mixing AD with original sound

Deadlines

Select visual information



# Most appreciated aspects of AD

Narration of AD

AD that helps to understand and enjoy AV products

Clear sentence structure





# In spite of the importance of the data

... we are aware of the limitations of the survey and of the study. Results necessarily cover the European perspective – and mostly the perspective of the countries directly involved in the project:

... the following output (IO3) will have the critical task of drawing on findings from very specific fields related to didactics (e.g. pedagogy, cognitive psychology, translator training, curriculum design, assessment, etc.) in order to start designing an AD training course.

# **IO3: Producing course design**

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# IO3 | Aims

- Design a flexible modular AD curriculum
- Based on competences formulated as Learning Outcomes
- Taking into account European accreditation criteria (ECTS)
- Suitable for different contexts: Universities & companies
- Suitable for different, student-centred, teaching methods



# IO3 | Challenges

- Fill the gaps in existing curricula (IO1) and take into account the recommendations of audio-describers & providers (IO2)
- Cater for a diverse potential audience: students, professionals,...
- Create a coherent curriculum with modules that can function independently
- Create a coherent curriculum that can be adapted to different levels of difficulty and specialization
- Incorporate the input from ADLAB (guidelines) and specialized literature on AD and curriculum design
- Make the curriculum accessible



# IO3 | Starting point

- Level of the curriculum: post-Bachelor (languages, literature, film, theatre, cultural studies, ...)
- Entry requirements: linguistic/textual, computer, basic vocal, information mining, transferrable communicative and interpersonal skills
- Teaching of: knowledge, skills and attitudes
- Moving from competences to learning outcomes to teaching methods and learning materials (IO4)



# IO3 | Core competence topics

- History, developments in AD practice & research
- General knowledge of the concept of AD and main target audience(s)
- Understanding of the functioning of AV texts
- Software solutions production, reception, distribution of ADs
- Knowledge of work flows & production processes (teams)
- Skills for the production of AD scripts for different contexts
- Skills for the delivery of different ADs
- Knowledge of the parameters for qualitative AD, assessing & editing
- Knowledge of use of AIs and AST in different contexts
- Willingness to remain informed of new developments in AD



# IO3 | Course structure

**MODULE 1**  
Introduction &  
transferrable skills

**MODULE 2**  
Screen AD

**MODULE 3**  
Dynamic  
performances &  
events

**MODULE 4**  
Static arts &  
environments

**MODULE 5**  
Additional services  
& specific contexts

**MODULE 6**  
Technological  
Issues, New  
developments

Different suggested trajectories will be defined.  
Combinations can be tailor-made.



# IO3 | Concrete examples of standard LOs

## Module 1:

Students can explain the importance of a well-timed AD script	Comprehension	Basic	Lecture-viewing-analysis-discussion	Powerpoint & clip	Hours/ECTS + one or more other LOs
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## Module 3

Students can write an AD script for a live perf., defend their choices	Synthesis/application	Basic	Watch recorded scene performance, script AD, class discussion	Clip & script template	Hours/ECTS + one or more other LOs
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## Module 6

Students can identify the requirements for translation of AD	Knowledge/comprehension	Basic	Lecture-viewing-analysis-discussion	Powerpoint & clip	Hours/ECTS + one or more other LOs
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# IO3 | Concrete examples of advanced LOs

## Module 2:

Students can compile the parameters for a quality AD end product.	Synthesis-creation	Advanced	Exercise & discussion	End product: a check list	Hours/ECTS + one or more other LOs
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## Module 3

Students can summarise & evaluate new AD trends (live perf.)	Analysis	Advanced	Independent study	Presentation	Hours/ECTS + one or more other LOs
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## Module 6

Students can explain how research supports additional AD applications	Comprehension	Advanced	Inquiry & discussion	Reading (literature review)	Hours/ECTS + one or more other LOs
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# IO3 | Work in progress

- Fine-tuning the level and sequence of the LOs per module and across modules
- Grouping LOs and assigning hours/ECTS to the modules
- Fine-tuning and suggesting further learning methods and materials for IO4 to develop



# TO CONCLUDE

## Questions for the audience:

### *Universities:*

- how many hours or weeks, how many ECTS would you want to devote to an AD curriculum such as ADLAB PRO?
- how can you imagine implementing such a curriculum: master degree, postgraduate, summer school, modules integrated into an existing master programme, ...

### *Providers / audio-describers:*

- Would you be interested in implementing such a curriculum or parts of it?
- Would you rather have staff attend an implementation of the curriculum at an HI?



Thank you for your attention  
your answers  
and  
your questions



More on:  
[www.adlabproject.eu/](http://www.adlabproject.eu/)

**Thank you!** The ADLAB PRO team

