



“New technologies for education to support hospital schools”: the Andrea Bocelli Foundation workshop dedicated to ABF’s projects in Italian children’s hospitals, today in Florence.

A day of training and discussion around educational innovation within hospitals, with our founder Andrea Bocelli extraordinarily in attendance.

Florence – Today, November 18, in the setting of the San Firenze Complex, the ABF – Break The Barriers workshop dedicated to the ABF Digital Lab was held, an innovative project created by the Andrea Bocelli Foundation and sponsored by the Italian Pediatric Hospitals Association, as well as the subject of a memorandum of understanding with the Italian Ministry of Education.

Councilor Funaro of the Municipality of Florence opened the event, welcoming those present, Alberto Zanobini, President of the Italian Pediatric Hospitals Association and our founder, Andrea Bocelli, on behalf of the city. A special greeting also came from Gianni Rezza, Director General for Prevention from the Italian Ministry of Health.

“The participation of the institutions in today’s workshop tells me that the Foundation has made great strides, has gained credibility and has done so through what it has accomplished, and the rebuilding of the schools is the best example of that” – said Andrea Bocelli at the opening of the day – “We have gone through a complex period from which we are slowly emerging. Today we are working to give opportunities to children who find themselves suffering from difficult health conditions. Offering them access to quality education means giving them the chance to be able to face life on an equal footing with others. To me this is a noble gesture that should be the basis of any society that wants to have hope in the future. I’ve had some experience with this, I’ve gone to visit and perform in hospitals, and I think that it is something that could be repeated with benefit and profit. It is always a very moving experience because art in these places leads to life”.

The purpose of the day was to outline the prospects and opportunities for the hospital school system, together with those present, starting from the results of the first digital projects launched last year, in 2020, in the wards of the Gaslini Institute in Genoa and the Salesi Hospital in Ancona. Since 2021, ABF – together with its partners the AOPI and the Italian Ministry of Education – has implemented the network by building Digital Labs in 3 other Italian hospitals: the Burlo Garofolo Pediatric Institute in Trieste, the Santobono-Pausilipon Pediatric Hospital in Naples and the Meyer Children’s Hospital in Florence.

During the event, as part of the celebrations for the Foundation's 10th anniversary, speakers from ABF, managers and teachers from the Italian hospital schools and various bodies from the education sphere took turns in offering their contribution to the topics of school activities in the hospital setting and the implementation of digital education, in a desire to share and compare the results of a unique systemic approach at European level in terms of value and coordination capacity, and with a view to replicating this model to benefit more and more students, in Italy and around the world.

Pre-COVID data certified that there were over 70,000 so-called “hospital” students in Italy. This rises to one million if we include children with chronic diseases who are suffering from complex illnesses. It is all these children that this project wishes to reach in order to foster the inclusion and empowerment of sick children who are either hospitalized or day hospital patients and attending the school within the hospital.

Through its Digital Lab project, ABF wishes to help create and maintain the conditions that make the new educational technologies tools for supporting, integrating and enriching relationship-building, knowledge and learning processes in hospitals.

In implementing this educational pathway, ABF makes use of three key elements: the *Teachbus*, a library of devices capable of guaranteeing that students are able to maintain their relationships with



their schoolmates, teachers and atelieristas; the online *ABF Educational* platform that creates a network between a rich selection of educational tools; the *Digital Atelierista*, a 4.0 librarian specializing in the use of new educational technologies who promotes new and transversal perspectives on the use of technological tools for students, thereby supporting teachers and families in how to best use these devices.

“Soon, in addition to the digital project, ABF will create well-maintained and welcoming environments where students will be able to acquire new knowledge and skills in contexts of interaction, stimulated to learn by an enhanced educational offer integrated with activities such as art, music, digital languages and foreign languages” – concluded Laura Biancalani, ABF President.

For those who are interested, this meeting can be viewed at abfworkshop.com.

The Andrea Bocelli Foundation: *empowering people and communities.*

The Andrea Bocelli Foundation was created in 2011 from the desire of Maestro Bocelli and his family to help people in need due to illness, poverty and social exclusion. ABF promotes and supports national and international projects, which foster the overcoming of these barriers and the full expression of one’s potential.

With the Challenges Program, ABF works in the area of scientific and technological research to bring together the best minds to find innovative solutions that can help people in tackling and overcoming the limitations imposed by their disability, offering them a better quality of life.

The Break the Barriers Program aims to support and promote projects that help the most vulnerable segments of the population in Italy and in developing countries, where conditions of poverty, disease, malnutrition and complex social situations negate or reduce life expectations.

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