

DOI [https://doi.org/10.32405/2308-8885-2026-2\(120\)-12-17](https://doi.org/10.32405/2308-8885-2026-2(120)-12-17)

УДК 378.16:784.071.2](450)

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FEATURES OF VOCALIST TRAINING IN ITALY'S MODERN PROFESSIONAL ART EDUCATION

У статті здійснено комплексне дослідження трансформаційних процесів, що визначають розвиток системи підготовки фахівців-вокалістів у межах сучасної мистецької професійної освіти Італії (сектору AFAM). Актуальність звернення до означеної у статті проблеми зумовлена необхідністю переосмислення класичних канонів викладання вокалу в умовах глобалізації та цифрової трансформації мистецького ринку праці. На основі аналізу новітнього наукового дискурсу 2022–2026 років проаналізовано досвід провідних італійських консерваторій, зокрема Мілана, Рима та Тренто, де інноваційні підходи органічно інтегруються у фундаментальні традиції bel canto. Визначено та детально схарактеризовано три ключові напрямки оновленої підготовки вокалістів, що забезпечують розширення меж їхньої професійної компетентності. Перший, технологічно-когнітивний напрямок, фокусується на впровадженні методів фонетичної інженерії та акустичного аналізу вокалу, що дозволяє об'єктивувати процес засвоєння цифрової дикції та вдосконалювати техніку співу через біофідбек-технології. Другий напрямок – підприємницько-правовий – розглядається як відповідь на виклики глобального ринку. Висвітлено досвід викладання мистецького менеджменту та авторського права, що формує у майбутнього артиста навички самопросування, цифрового маркетингу та стратегічного планування кар'єри в умовах креативної економіки. Третій, психоемоційний напрямок, акцентує на критичній важливості збереження ментального здоров'я вокаліста. Досліджено методики формування професійної резильєнтності та психологічної стійкості, що дозволяють артисту адаптуватися до високої конкуренції та стресованості публічної діяльності. Окреслено ефективні організаційно-методичні рішення, застосовувані в італійській системі освіти, серед яких – міждисциплінарні воркшопи, цифрові лабораторії та інтеграція коучингових стратегій у навчальний план. Доведено, що творча адаптація італійського досвіду може стати дієвим підґрунтям для модернізації вітчизняної вокальної школи. Підкреслено, що успішна трансформація українських мистецьких ЗВО потребує органічного поєднання національних педагогічних традицій із новітніми європейськими стандартами підготовки конкурентоспроможного фахівця.

Ключові слова: особливості сучасної освіти в AFAM, підготовка фахівців-вокалістів в Італії; симбіоз традицій та інновацій, глобальний цифровий ринок праці, мистецьке підприємництво, резильєнтність вокаліста, ментальне здоров'я.

Introduction. In the modern European educational space, the problem of training vocal specialists is becoming particularly relevant due to the transformation of the content of professional artistic education, integration processes, and the growing requirements for the performing, pedagogical, and interpretative competence of future professionals in light of the modern labor market. In such a context, it is natural to turn to educational models that have historically proven their effectiveness and influenced

the formation of world vocal culture. One of such models is the Italian vocal school, which for centuries has served as a kind of legislator in the field of vocal performance. On this basis, which has become a universal reference point for classical vocal pedagogy and a standard for training vocal specialists, national vocal schools in other countries were established. However, today the main vector of change in artistic professional education in Italy is aimed at overcoming conservatism and integrating the classical bel canto school into the global digital labor market, based on the latest approaches to training modern professional musicians.

The expediency of turning to the experience of the modern Italian vocal school is also enhanced by the need to improve the domestic system of training a professional vocalist, in which while focusing on classical standards and preserving national traditions, it is worth taking into account modern trends and effective organizational and methodological solutions used in professional art education in Italy, which can be rethought and creatively adapted in higher education institutions of art in Ukraine based on an organic combination of traditions and innovations.

Review of Recent Research and Publications. In the scientific investigations of domestic researchers of the last decade, devoted to the problems of professional training of vocalists in the higher education system, attention was focused mainly on the issues of the functioning of classical vocal training in higher education institutions of art in Ukraine and abroad [1; 2], definition of vocal-peda-

gological principles of forming a professional and stage-imaginative culture of a vocalist [3; 6]. At the same time, among scientists and practicing teachers, questions were increasingly raised about modernizing the methodology for preparing applicants for professional vocal activities in higher education institutions through the interdisciplinary teaching of singing [4; 5].

Meanwhile, the problem of studying the modern experience of training vocal specialists in present-day art professional education in Italy still remains beyond the attention of domestic researchers. However, the integrity of the organization of training in modern Italian institutions of higher professional education, and the organic combination of traditional classical approaches and innovations, can serve as an effective basis for updating the content of vocal training for applicants for vocal professional education. So, the subject of our scientific interest within the framework of the stated article was the study of specific features of modern professional art education in Italy and the delineation of innovative practices for training modern vocal specialists based on the symbiosis of traditions and new educational trajectories, which is the aim of the article.

Presentation of the main material.

Professional training of future vocal specialists takes place mainly in institutions of higher artistic and musical education, AFAM (*Alta Formazione Artistica e Musicale*), the former conservatories, which, according to the 1991 reform, were equated to universities. Therefore, the training process in them is carried out at the first, bachelor's level of education for three years (*Triennio*) and the second, master's level (*Biennio*) for two years. The most prestigious institutions for higher vocal education are state conservatories (*Conservatori di Musica*), among which the Rome Conservatory of Santa Cecilia (*Conservatorio di Musica Santa Cecilia*) holds the top spot in the national ranking and ranks among the top 100 in the world in the field of performing arts. One of the oldest in the world is considered to be the Naples Conservatory of San Pietro a Majella (*Conservatorio di Musica San Pietro a Majella*), which, along with

the largest conservatory in the world, the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory (*Conservatorio di Musica «G. Verdi»*) in Milan, preserves the legendary traditions of both the Neapolitan and Italian opera schools as a whole.

Equally prestigious are the Conservatory of Music named after Gioacchino Rossini (*Conservatorio Statale di Musica «G. Rossini»*) in Pesaro, known for its specialization in the opera repertoire, and the Conservatory of Music named after Luigi Cherubini (*Conservatorio di Musica Luigi Cherubini*) in Florence, highly regarded for its classical vocal programs. Professional art education institutions also include specialized academies where certified specialists (*postgraduates*) can further develop their skills. For example, at the National Academy of Santa Cecilia (*Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia*) in Rome, vocal specialists complete various advanced training courses. The Milanese Academy of the La Scala Theater (*Accademia Teatrale La Scala*) focuses on training opera stars for the world stage. The detailed list of the above-mentioned Italian institutions of higher art and music education is not accidental, since they are leading institutions of higher art and music education, where the features of modern vocal specialist training are most clearly manifested. And since they are based on a combination of the traditions of the classical vocal school and the creation of new educational trajectories, requested by the present time reality.

Evidence of this is the scientific research by G. Carugno and C. Patturelli, devoted to the study of the traditions of vocal pedagogy in various Italian schools and, in particular, the methodology of Francesco Florimo as a representative of the Neapolitan vocal school. The authors emphasize that it is the traditions of various Italian schools that are the basis for the introduction of those pedagogical principles that today determine the features of vocal training of future specialists: individualization of training, the inseparability of technique and musical content, stylistic discipline, the role of the word in the organization of vocal sound and the consistent immersion of the student in performing practice [9].

It is noteworthy that scientists have reinterpreted conservatory culture itself within a holistic paradigm, in which a musician's professional development occurs at the intersection of the performing, personal, communicative, and socio-cultural dimensions. And this is especially important for vocal education, since the effective training of a professional vocalist is associated with both the development of the voice and the formation of stage self-awareness, interpretative autonomy, and the ability to work with the text, partner, repertoire, and audience. The timeliness of addressing the issues of expanding the boundaries of modern conservatory education is confirmed by scientific research by Italian researchers, whose main message is that the organization of training for a modern specialist vocalist cannot focus solely on teaching classical singing. A systematic review of research by L. Crocco, C. J. Madill, and P. McCabe showed that the integrity of the educational process in the field of classical singing training requires clearer evidence-based frameworks that combine technical, cognitive, and creative-performing components [10].

In this context, the researchers C. Ferm Almquist and A. Werner conducted a study on the transformation and remixing of conservatory education. The results of the study showed that teaching approaches aligned with established cultural norms revealed a tension between tradition and renewal. The tension was based on different views on how professional musicians receive education: through a closed upbringing of cultural freedom or through the development of amateurism and transcendental freedom. The results of the study showed that, in general, both approaches have a place in conservatory education. However, the researchers emphasized that modern teaching, while adhering to classical canons, should shift from purely empirical methods to a multidisciplinary approach that integrates the traditions of *bel canto* with new scientific data on voice physiology, performance psychology, emotional resilience, and digital technologies [11]. The same opinion was shared by the vast majority of heads of Italian institutions of higher musical education (AFAM). Analyzing the

challenges faced by conservatory education in the context of globalization, *Carlo Balzaretto* emphasized the need to adapt the system of training future specialists to the modern requirements of the labor market, where the vocalist must be not only a performer, but also a manager of their own career [7].

Summarizing the above, we must state that the issues of updating the content of conservatory training of vocal specialists, taking into account the specifics of the profession, which have been the subject of active discussions over the past decade, are today implemented in the content of modern programs presented on the official websites of Italian conservatories (*Conservatori di Musica*) and specialized academies (*Accademie specializzate*). The updated programs integrate the age-old traditions of *bel canto* with interdisciplinary educational components, digital technologies, elements of professional management, and new approaches to the mental health of a vocal specialist. The multi-vector nature of innovations that determine the features of training of vocal specialists in modern Italian professional art education are based on the principles of *hybridity*, when blended learning becomes possible, which was previously considered unacceptable for vocals; *technological effectiveness*, where digital and remote technologies of synchronous sound transmission are used, which becomes part of the educational process in conservatories; *entrepreneurship*, when a student vocalist is seen as a future entrepreneur, able to manage their career growth and their own brand independently; *resilience* as the ability to protect personal boundaries from destructive influences.

This is evidenced by a thorough analysis of the works of modern Italian researchers, whose scientific ideas and concepts highlight current innovative achievements in the system of conservatory education. Familiarization with the educational components of modern curricula on the official websites of Italian conservatories and specialized academies enabled us to identify the key directions for updating the professional training of vocal specialists. Given the limited scope of the article, we will briefly describe them.

It should be noted that an important document that laid the foundation for radical changes in the training content of vocal specialists in professional art education in Italy during 2022–2026 was the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR) [13]. It is currently financing projects to create “digital art hubs” in conservatories and academies in Italy, particularly in Milan, Rome, Naples, and other cities. The basis for implementing these projects was the work of *Richard Miller* and *Rachele Maragliano Mori*. They provide a detailed presentation of the content characteristics of modern professional training for vocalists.

The first (technological-cognitive) direction concerns the singer's directed consciousness toward awareness of each action of the apparatus (breathing, sound attack, resonance) even before the sound is produced, and toward a clear articulatory goal regarding the intentional combination of phonetics and vocal technique. The intentionality (conscious voice control) in vocal training, viewed through the prism of artistic digital vocology (*vocologia artistica digitale*) and interactive technologies, is described in the studies of modern Italian researchers and practitioners. Thus, A. Bianchino developed an integrated training system in which intentionality is implemented through digital platforms, allowing the singer to consciously control voice parameters in real time [8].

In this context, one of the most representative innovations was the introduction into the educational process of the second, master's-level of higher education (*biennio ordinamentale*) at the Rome and Milan Conservatories, the course «Experimental Phonetics and Digital Diction» (*Fonetica sperimentale e dizione digitale*). Unlike the traditional study of orthoepy, this course is based on the synthesis of the classical Italian vocal school and modern achievements of neurolinguistics. The key task of the course is to overcome psychosomatic and articulatory clamps, which often become an obstacle to free vocal emission. The essence of the discipline lies in the use of biofeedback methods. That is, during individual classes, students use specialized biosensors (small electromyographs), which record the activity of

the articulatory muscles and the larynx in real time. This allows the vocalist not only to rely on subjective sensations but also to visualize the level of muscle tension on the monitor, which significantly speeds up the process of developing the correct vocal posture.

At the Milan Conservatory (*Conservatorio di Musica «G. Verdi» di Milano*), this is done in the vocal acoustics laboratories, where students receive training in the coordination of breathing and diction, using digital platforms to analyze the vowel spectrum. At the Santa Cecilia Conservatory in Rome (*Conservatorio di Musica «Santa Cecilia»*), the emphasis is on the neurolinguistic aspect: the study of the relationship between the intentionality of pronunciation and the quality of timbre coloring. It is important to emphasize that the use of digital technologies does not eliminate the importance of the traditional Italian school. On the contrary, digital diction helps to implement the fundamental principle of *bel canto* - «sing as you speak» (*si canta come si parla*), but at the level of precise neuromuscular connections. This allows the vocalist to achieve crystal clear diction without losing cantilena.

It is also interesting that, within the framework of the renewal of the curricula of Italian conservatories during 2022–2026, disciplines that were previously considered auxiliary or optional are now becoming the core of vocal and professional training for singers. In particular, this concerns the course «Phonetic Engineering and Acoustic Analysis of Vocals», launched at the F.A. Conservatory. Bonporti of Trento (*Conservatorio di Musica «F.A. Bonporti»*). The discipline combines classical vocal pedagogy with software (Praat or Smaart) for objective assessment, using spectral analysis. Scientists (G. Santi & M. Malfatti) emphasize that the applied technique makes it possible to demonstrate how real-time visualization of formants helps the student understand the physical nature of Italian vowels, which is critical for preserving the traditions of *bel canto* under the conditions of modern dry hall acoustics [15]. In a broader sense, such an approach entails a rethinking and understanding of the very essence, nature, and ways of ex-

istence of vocal sound, its interpretation, and role in the modern cultural space.

The second (entrepreneurial-legal) direction for overcoming academic conservatism in professional art education in Italy focuses on training professional vocalists for professional management, which is offered in most conservatories as an additional or separate specialization at the master's level (*Master di I or II livello*). For example, at the F. A. At Bonporti Conservatory (Trento), such a course is "Planning, Management and Marketing of Musical Performances", which addresses the lack of knowledge about how the modern labor market works offstage. Here, professional vocalists learn to manage their own creative project "turnkey": from the idea for a concert to the financial report, acquiring the ability to develop a business plan for a performance, build a personal brand, and develop a social media promotion strategy. Master's students at Luigi Boccherini Conservatory (*Conservatorio Luigi Boccherini (Lucca)*) are offered the "Artistic Direction and Music Management" program, which prepares future professionals for digital autonomy through the awareness that they are an independent subject of economic relations in the digital age.

It becomes clear that the traditional pattern, in which the artist awaits offers from the impresario, is replaced by the pattern of «Artistic Entrepreneurship» (*Imprenditoria artistica*). This predetermined the introduction into the curricula of conservatories not only of the additional or specialized programs, but also the mandatory course «Digital Self-Management and Law in Music Industry» (*Self-management digitale e diritto dell'industria musicale*), which became a response to the challenges of the global digital market, the rapid development of AI, and streaming platforms. The goal of the discipline is to train a professional vocalist-entrepreneur capable of legally protecting their rights online and creating a personal brand (personal branding) on global, specialized artistic platforms (*Operabase, YAP Tracker*). During the course, students, under the guidance of legal instructors, study the rights of a vocalist, participate in developing standard smart contracts for young singers,

and analyze cases involving the use of the voice in a digital environment, which is critical for protection against illegal copying or deepfake manipulations.

Therefore, we may state that the digital transformation in Italian conservatories is becoming part of the ontological renewal of vocal and performing arts. In other words, the training of a vocal specialist in modern Italy goes beyond the traditional academic canons. It is based on a hybrid model, in which the status of the classical Italian school, integrated into digital educational trajectories, becomes more flexible, interdisciplinary, and consistent with the worldview of the modern person.

The third (psycho-emotional and adaptive-resilient) direction for updating the professional training of vocal specialists addresses one of the most pressing issues in modern conservatory education in Italy. This concerns the gap between the high level of professional performance of conservatory graduates and their psycho-emotional readiness for the aggressive environment of the modern artistic and performing market. That is, we are talking about preparing future vocal specialists to acquire resilience as the ability to protect personal boundaries from destructive influences. The urgent need to form the resilience of performers is discussed in the fundamental work of G. Ricchetti, "The Consciousness of the Singer" (*G. Ricchetti "La mente del cantante"*), dedicated to the study of cognitive and emotional processes that accompany the professional activity of a vocal specialist [14]. The author considers the formation of psycho-emotional resilience as a key element of professional training in Italian conservatory education. Special attention is paid to the mechanisms of overcoming «stage anxiety» (*ansia da prestazione*) through the development of self-awareness and control of one's own neurophysiological and psycho-emotional reactions. The introduction of the author's methods into the educational process at conservatories enables future specialists not only to improve vocal technique but also to develop an internal "mental protection" necessary for stable creative activity under the stressful conditions of public performance.

Against the background of the approach proposed by J. Ricchetti, which is based on the concept of the «conscious performer», during the current academic year, an interdisciplinary course «The Science of Performance and the Psychophysiology of the Artist (*La scienza della performance e la psicofisiologia dell'artista*)» was introduced in some Italian conservatories (AFAM). Unlike traditional advice on «self-control», the course offers scientifically based methods and technologies of self-regulation, adapted specifically for the needs of performing professionals. For example, when studying this discipline in the conservatories of Venice, Verona, Milan, and Rome, the Alexander technique (*La Tecnica Alexander*), specifically adapted for vocalists, is used to increase the musician's awareness, reduce stress, and foster psycho-emotional stability during performances. It helps musicians realize and eliminate harmful tension habits that arise during performance, replacing them with conscious, coordinated movements.

No less effective is the *body mapping technique*, aimed at correcting the student's misconceptions about his own anatomy. It is used to ensure the vocalist is clearly aware of the musculoskeletal system's work during inhalation and sound attack. This allows you to avoid secondary clamps caused by stress. In addition, simulated auditions are held within the course, where students learn to manage their state under stressful conditions, as closely as possible to real castings at La Scala or the *Teatro dell'Opera di Roma*. Therefore, the course in question allows you to preserve the health of the vocal apparatus and the singer's creative longevity.

In summary, we note that the development of resilience as a dynamic professional competence in conservatory education in Italy, amenable to formation through the learning process, ensures the restoration and support of the mental health of future vocal specialists and expands the boundaries of the professional competence of modern professional performers. This innovative approach corresponds to our scientific position on trauma awareness as an artistic and pedagogical strategy aimed at restoring the mental health of future professional musicians at a non-clinical level. That is,

when the educational process in institutions of professional artistic education is built on the principles of safety, transparency, and psycho-emotional support for future professional vocalists.

Conclusions. Summarizing the results of scientific research on specific features of training expert vocalists in modern professional art education in Italy, we concluded that the modern Italian pattern within the AFAM system demonstrates a unique symbiosis between *bel canto* traditions and innovative technologies. Based on a thorough analysis of the current scientific discourse (2022–2026), it was established that the foundation for the renewal of modern conservatory education in Italy was the results of the latest research by leading Italian specialists. This allowed us to formulate key areas of modernization of the studied field:

1. *Technological – cognitive direction.* Theoretical developments by F. Fussi and A. Bianchino in intentional vocology, as well as by G. Santi and M. Malfatti in acoustic analysis, laid the foundation for the introduction of new disciplines. The courses “Experimental Phonetics and Digital Diction” and “Phonetic Engineering” have been introduced into the educational process of the conservatories of Milan, Rome, and Trento. These disciplines have objectively determined vocalists’ ability to control articulation through biofeedback. Students have acquired skills in visualizing formants and overcoming muscle clamps at the neuromotor level.

2. *Entrepreneurial-legal direction.* The scientific ideas of K. Balzaretti on adapting education to market requirements predetermined the transition to the “Artistic Entrepreneurship” model. Based on these concepts, the “Digital Self-Management” and “Planning and Marketing of Musical Performances” courses were introduced. This shaped the specialists’ ability to build personal brands and legally protect their voices in the digital environment. Future vocalists gained autonomy in managing their own professional careers.

3. *Psycho-emotional and adaptive-resilient direction.* J. Ricchetti’s research on the cognitive processes of a singer became the basis for the implementation of the “Science of Performance and Psychophys-

iology of the Artist” course. Specialists acquire psycho-emotional resilience through mastering the Alexander Technique and Body Mapping. This provides the ability to overcome stage anxiety and protection against the destructive effects of an aggressive labor market. This approach corresponds to the author’s scientific position on overcoming trauma as an artistic and pedagogical strategy. It aims to restore the mental health of future professionals at a non-clinical level by creating a safe and transparent educational environment.

Prospects for further research. The research conducted opens up wide opportunities for the modernization of art education in Ukraine through the creative adaptation of the Italian experience. Of particular importance is the intersection of Italian technologies of biofeedback and self-regulation with the author’s concept of trauma-informed care through art. This allows for the creation of a safe, immersive educational environment that will contribute not only to professional growth but also to the psycho-emotional rehabilitation of education seekers. Extrapolation of the identified trends into the training of Ukrainian doctoral students at the third (scientific) level entails developing interdisciplinary research at the intersection of vocal pedagogy, digital humanities, and cognitive sciences. This will stimulate the creation of innovative dissertation projects aimed at developing new inclusive vocal and choral methods and immersive educational platforms that meet the challenges of modernity.

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Features of vocalist training in Italy's modern professional art education

The article explores the transformational processes occurring within the vocal training system of Italy's modern professional art education. The study analyzes the latest academic discourse on integrating innovative approaches into the curricula of leading Italian conservatories. The author identifies key trajectories in modernized vocal specialist training aimed at expanding the professional competencies of the contemporary vocal artist. Furthermore, the article outlines effective organizational and methodological solutions whose creative adaptation could serve as a robust foundation for modernizing the national vocal school.

Particular attention is paid to the experience of the leading conservatories of Milan, Rome, and Trento, where innovative educational models are organically combined with the classical traditions of bel canto. The research highlights the implementation of phonetic engineering, acoustic vocal analysis, digital laboratories, interdisciplinary workshops, and coaching strategies that contribute to the development of vocal technique, artistic entrepreneurship, psychological resilience, and the preservation of performers' mental health within the conditions of the globalized digital labor market.

Keywords: contemporary AFAM education, vocal specialist training in Italy, symbiosis of tradition and innovation, global digital labor market, artistic entrepreneurship, vocalist resilience, mental health.

Стаття надійшла до редакції 27.04.2026 р.

Стаття прийнята до публікації після рецензування 02.05.2026 р.

Стаття опублікована 29.05.2026 р.

DOI [https://doi.org/10.32405/2308-8885-2026-2\(120\)-17-22](https://doi.org/10.32405/2308-8885-2026-2(120)-17-22)

УДК 378.016:7:37.091.313:001.8-043.86(4)(045)

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ХУДОЖНЬО-ПРОЄКТНА ПІДГОТОВКА У ВИЩІЙ МИСТЕЦЬКІЙ ОСВІТІ ЄВРОПИ: РОЗВИТОК КЛАСИЧНИХ МЕТОДИК І СУЧАСНИХ ПІДХОДІВ

У статті проаналізовано досвід провідних мистецьких ЗВО Австрії, Франції та Італії щодо поєднання класичних методик вивчення образотворчого мистецтва із проектно-орієнтованим навчанням на магістерському рівні. Досліджено трансформацію моделі «майстерні» у трансдисциплінарний освітній простір, де опанування класичних технік інтегрується з кураторськими практиками, цифровими технологіями та соціальними проектами. Виявлено, що європейська освіта зміщує фокус із процесу вдосконалення майстерності на результат – цілісний художній проєкт. Показано важливість залучення студентів до реального артринку через художньо-проектну діяльність.

Ключові слова: вища мистецька освіта в Європі, магістр образотворчого мистецтва, художньо-проектна підготовка, трансдисциплінарність.

Вступ. Сучасна вища мистецька освіта в Європі перебуває в стані інтенсивної трансформації, що зумовлена необхідністю адаптації традиційних інституцій до викликів цифрової епохи, глобалізації артринку та інтеграції в єдиний Європейський простір вищої освіти (ЕНЕА – European Higher Education Area). Процес підготовки майбутнього художника сьогодні не обмежується лише передачею технічних навичок, він спрямований на формування комплексу художньо-проектних компетентностей,

яка дозволяє фахівцю бути мобільним, конкурентоспроможним та здатним до міждисциплінарної взаємодії. Успіх виставково-проектної діяльності в європейських мистецьких вишах – не випадковість, а результат цілісної системи, де навчання нерозривно пов'язане з професійним артринком. Окрім того, важливим чинником є можливості фінансування освітньої галузі. Багато проєктів реалізуються завдяки внутрішнім університетським грантам або державним програмам підтримки молодіжних ініціатив. Це дозволяє студентам