

# Increasing the effectiveness of curricula for preparing specialists in megalopolis creative leisure: The Moscow case (Russia)

## Aumentar la efectividad de los planes de estudio para preparar especialistas en ocio creativo de megalópolis: el caso de Moscú

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#### ABSTRACT:

The article presents the results of a study of professional training in the creative leisure industry, using the specific case of Moscow. A number of goals were achieved through this study: clarification of the concept of the creative leisure industry as interpreted by pedagogical science and identification of actual areas of professional training in culture and leisure in light of the current social and cultural requirements.

**Keywords:** creative leisure industry, professional training in the creative leisure industry

#### RESUMEN:

El artículo presenta los resultados de un estudio de formación profesional en la industria del ocio creativo, utilizando el caso específico de Moscú. Mediante este estudio se lograron varios objetivos: aclarar el concepto de la industria del ocio creativo tal como lo interpreta la ciencia pedagógica e identificar áreas reales de capacitación profesional en cultura y ocio a la luz de los requisitos sociales y culturales actuales.

**Palabras clave:** industria del ocio creativo, formación profesional en la industria del ocio creativo

## 1. Introduction

With the increasing demands being placed on the creative leisure industry, it is important to train experts in cultural institutions so they acquire the skills to use modern technologies to organize leisure activities for different segments of the population and can focus exclusively on high-quality and relevant forms of leisure. Therefore, special emphasis must be put on social and cultural projects and the development of the interaction between universities and enterprises in the creative leisure industry as the basis for innovative training at educational

and cultural institutions.

According to Culture Statistics (2016), the number of institutions of higher education that provide training for specialists in the sphere of culture decreased by 12% over the 2009-to-2016 period. During the same period, the number of students decreased by 35.3%.

Previous studies and published material confirm that there has been a change in the content of professional training in the area of leisure and culture and that this is associated with a change in the understanding of the Federal State Educational Standard (FSSES) regarding higher education outcomes. Federal State Educational Standard of Higher Education stipulates that the training program "51.03.03. Socio-cultural activities" embraces competencies that reflect the need to implement technologies with respect to social and cultural creativity and cultural and educational activities.

The decline in the numbers of professionally trained specialists in culture and leisure, particularly in terms of their training in the use of certain technologies, presents significant challenges. It does not allow for either a quick response to changes in the creative leisure industry or the emergence of new forms and types of cultural and leisure services and the technologies related to these.

It is this incongruity between the demand for experts who are ready and able to react promptly to changes in the creative leisure industry and the insufficient orientation of the vocational training system toward relevant competencies that has made it possible to formulate the goal of the research. The research goal, therefore, is to provide theoretical substantiation for new professional training in the creative leisure industry and to characterize the methodological grounds of this training.

The study required the use of theoretical analysis, work with statistical data, a survey, and quantitative and qualitative processing of the research findings. The complementary nature of the methods used ensures that an adequately complex approach has been taken to the problem of professional training in the creative leisure industry in the light of its new challenges.

The results of theoretical and empirical research explain why people opt for certain cultural institutions rather than others and for innovative forms of leisure, as well as the need for certain professional skills that would allow experts to solve professional tasks efficiently. The theoretical relevance of the study is that it clarifies the concept of the creative leisure industry from the perspective of pedagogical science and determines the actual areas of professional training in culture and leisure in the face of current social and cultural requirements.

The methodological validity of the research is that it describes innovative forms of leisure organization and the methodological grounds for professional training for their implementation. The article presents a review of the relevant literature, the research methods, and the results obtained, as well as the principle conclusions.

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## 2. Literature review

Among the studies that have been done on the nature and content of social and cultural activities are papers written by E.I. Medved, V.P. Sergeyeva and O.I. Kiselyova (2017) and N.N. Yaroshenko (2013). The nature, forms, and types of the creative leisure industry are characterized in studies by D. Hui (2006), Jones and Hillier (2002), J. Wright (2015), M.A. Ariarsky (2000), A.B. Berendeyeva and O. Korobova (2018), E.V. Kurapina (2015), I.D. Levina (2018), and V.P. Sergeyeva and others (2018a, 2018b). Trends and prospects for the development of the creative leisure industry as a whole with respect to regional features have also been examined in depth in studies such as the following: M.I. Garcia, Y. Fernandez, and J.L. Zofio (2003), L.L. Caldwell (2008), P. Jones and D. Hillier (2002), I. Moore (2014), S. Opić and M. Đuranović (2014), V.N. Antonova and Yu. A. Kirsanova (2014), M.A. Gruzdeva and O.N. Kalachikova (2016), and E.I. Medved, V.P. Sergeyeva and O.I. Kiselyova (2017). Also relevant are studies such as the following that examine the problem of professional training in the area of creative leisure: C.B. Crowley (2017), D.A. Gorbachyova and O. Soldatenkov (2013), G.I. Gribkova (2013), T.N. Ivleva (2016) and O.I.

Kiselyova (2010), V.A. Kurina (2014), E.I. Medved, V.P. Sergeyeva, and O.I. Kiselyova (2017).

V.P. Sergeyeva, taking into account the results of studies by M.A. Ariarsky (2000) and V.Z. Dulikov (2011), describes the creative leisure industry as the interaction of universities and cultural institutions based on mastering innovative, interactive technologies by training personnel to develop a culture of creative leisure for consumers belonging to different age categories.

The research that is presented tends to view leisure from the standpoints of sociology, psychology, and tourism, while the pedagogical aspect of the leisure industry is omitted. In addition, the methodological foundations for professional training in cultural and leisure institutions within the context of changing social and cultural realities are not sufficiently developed. An analysis of the research results shows that the problem of professional training in the sphere of culture and leisure is considered from the perspective of general pedagogical science, such as the nature of training and the key features of training.

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### **3. Methods**

The paper presents the results of a study conducted by the Department of Social and Cultural Activities of the Institute of Culture and Arts at the Moscow City University. The research methods included theoretical analyses, surveys, and quantitative and qualitative processing of the results.

Theoretical analysis allows us to procure an objective vision of the professional training issues in cultural institutions in the context of new challenges, thereby determining the direction of the research within the empirical phase of the study.

The variety of research aimed at studying the issue of training professionals in the social and cultural sphere and their most demanded qualities and proficiencies confirm the relevance and significance of the research.

A survey was conducted to determine the grounds of choosing cultural institutions by Moscow residents. It will further expand the practice of training future professionals and teaching them to design various forms of cultural and leisure activities by incorporating identified preferences into the content of academic university disciplines. It was defined, that in the choice of institutions of the social and cultural sphere people also take into account the level of proficiency of the organizers of leisure activities. There was confirmed the theoretical conclusion on the dependence of the ability of a leisure field professional to make project concepts of a variety of cultural and leisure activities for various groups of people on their professional training. Simultaneously, the survey method will facilitate the process of solving our research problem through the systematic collection of information in accordance with the predetermined parameters/criteria. "Research method of knowledge and variable issues after the systematic information collection" (Buendía et al., 1998). Furthermore, a survey of the students aims to identify the skills demanded by modern institutions of culture and leisure (innovative, project-oriented, technological, creative and marketing), thereby allowing us to strengthen the practical component of training specialists during their period of study at the university.

The quantitative and qualitative processing of the research results facilitates the formulation of the primary conclusions that reflect the solutions to the issue of training specialists in cultural and leisure institutions.

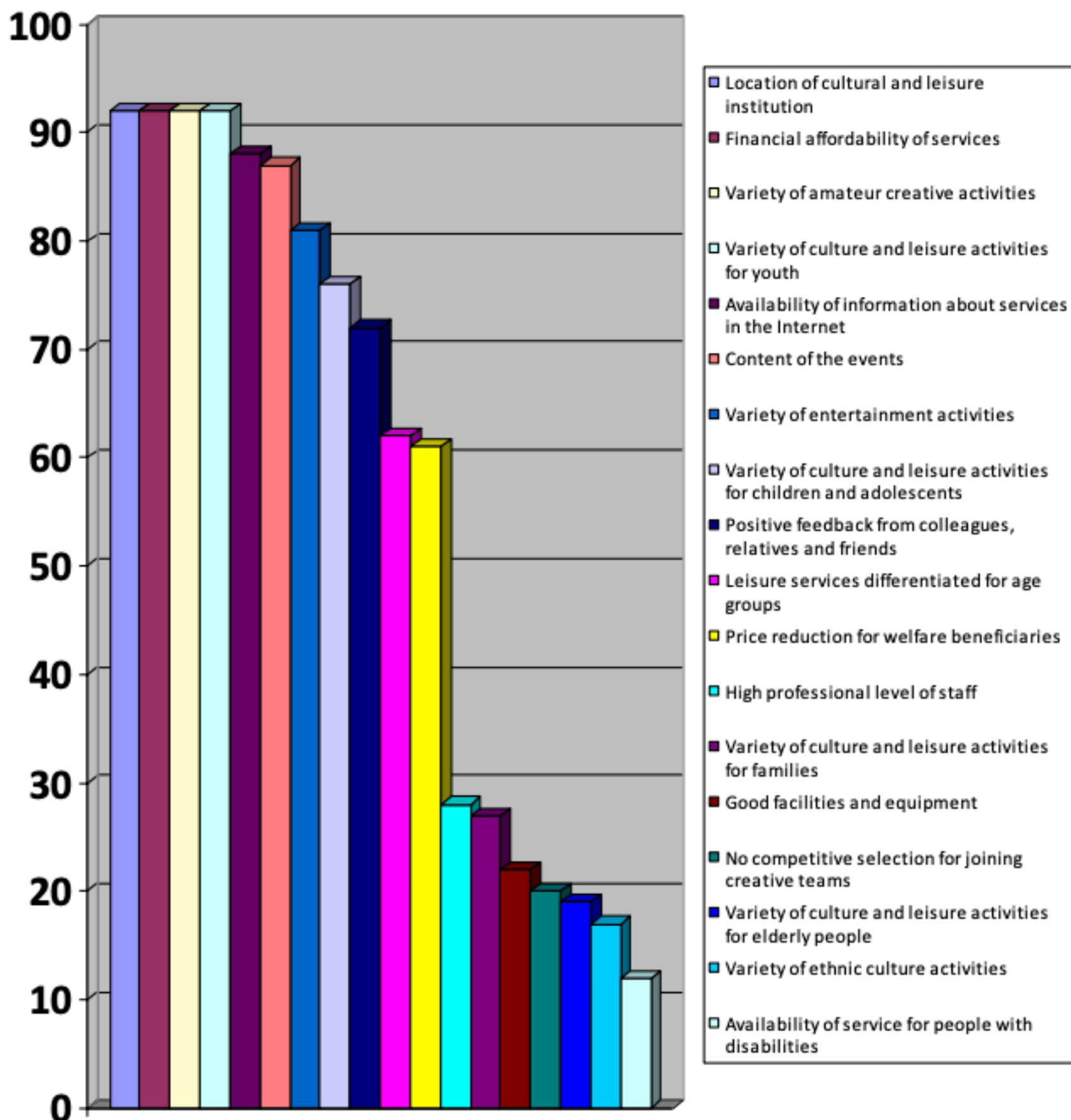
Consistent study of the issue of training the creative leisure industry professionals from the angle of all participants in social and cultural relations (various population groups, leisure professionals) ensures the research integrity, validity of findings and preventive character of the planned training programs for leisure professionals. The focus of training programs of leisure filed professionals, the arrangement of various types of practices and their content based on the needs of the community contributes to strengthening the cultural and leisure field as a significant filed of human and social activity.

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### **4. Results**

To identify the preferences while choosing cultural and leisure institutions, students from the Institute of Culture and Arts of the Moscow State Pedagogical University conducted a survey amongst the urban population. The 130 participants of the survey included adolescents (16%), youngsters (54%), adults (24%), and elders (6%). In addition, 24% of the total number of respondents own have families. The set of accidental sampling determined the criteria for the selection of cultural and leisure institutions (Figure 1).

**Figure 1**  
Criteria of preferences for choosing a cultural and leisure institution



Quantitative and qualitative processing of survey findings shows that the following criteria are on the top: "Location of cultural and leisure institution" (92%), "Financial affordability of services" (92%), "Variety of amateur creative activities" (92%), "Variety of culture and leisure activities for youth" (92%).

High values of the survey results as per such criteria as "the variety of forms of amateur creative activity", "the variety of forms of cultural and leisure activities for youth leisure organization" indicates the community demand for a variety of forms of cultural and leisure activities, its commitment to disclose human creativity and reveal the potential of a

particular public group (especially young people, although the given data illustrate the demand for cultural and leisure services for elderly and disabled people). The significance of such criteria as financial availability (92% of respondents), Internet coverage (88% of respondents), meaningful content (87% of respondents), variety of entertainment forms and entertainment activities (81% of respondents) was confirmed for the choice of people of forms of cultural and leisure activities.

The presented data make it possible to state that the most demanded leisure fields from the point of view of dedicated training of future professionals are: the ability to plan forms of cultural and leisure activities, to select its content with account of needs of various community groups; the ability to promote information about ongoing projects and activities using the most popular means (the Internet); the ability to diversify forms of cultural and leisure activities. These skills, with the account of the proficiency model of higher education, can be defined as planning, creative, and marketing ones.

The review of above-mentioned domestic and foreign papers allows us to formulate new challenges in the area of culture and leisure, which are: the social stratification of society that determines the willingness of the population to consume social and cultural services; information revolution, changing the quality of leisure activities; the growing multitude of cultures that a person encounters throughout life is not homogeneous in the degree and nature of influence.

Considering the research of various scientists (Ariarsky, 2000; Gribkova, 2013; Dulikov, 2011; Sergeyeva et al., 2018b; Yaroshenko, 2013), it can be argued that number of the types of leisure industry, significant from the standpoint of professional training, is increasing:

- In the field of recreation and entertainment (leisure industry, family leisure, children's leisure and leisure, gaming and club industry, etc.);
- In the field of travel, meetings and dating (tourism industry, corporate travel industry, hotel industry, MICE industry);
- In the field of physical culture and sports (the industry of sports and extreme sports);
- In the field of rehabilitation (fitness industry, wellness industry, health industry, etc.).

The theoretical analysis of scientific research allows us to formulate the following trends in the social and cultural sphere that determine the need to change the content of the professional training:

- Expansion of the types of industries and pedagogical means of interaction with visitors;
- The predominance of interactive forms of cultural and leisure activities;
- The emergence of new types of products of the leisure industry (all types of quests, leisure centers, clubs, entertainment complexes, discos, parks, interactive forms of theatrical activities - "audio walk", immersive theater, "kitchen theater", "street theater", solo performance and etc.) implemented on the basis of business activities;
- The fact of moving of free time to virtual space (games, film and video products, art projects, virtual tours, etc.).

At the next stage of empirical research, a survey was conducted tasked to identify the professional skills of graduates (future experts in the organization of leisure), which are important for solving professional problems. Among the respondents are heads of Moscow institutions of additional education and culture (126 persons).

The skills of project activities (the ability to control a socio-cultural project from the initial idea to getting predictable results) topped the list (96% of respondents). The ability to analyze the cultural needs of different groups of the population for providing leisure services, while keeping in mind that the cultural product has to meet the needs of visitors, came second (84%). The ability to make non-standard decisions and to think creatively came third (72%). Finally, the ability to interact with colleagues, visitors and sponsors (communicative competence of specialists) came fourth (61%).

The following professional competencies were defined as demanded by the results of the

research: innovative, project-oriented, technological, creative and marketing.

The results of the study set the following tasks for the Department of Social and Cultural Activities of the Institute of Culture and Arts of Moscow State Pedagogical University:

- Purposeful diversification of interactive technologies of creative leisure within the professional training of future bachelors and masters;
- Professional development of the enterprises of the creative leisure industry.

The department has created a Master degree program (51.04.03 Socio-cultural activities) labeled "Event-technology in the creative leisure industry", which is being introduced into the educational framework of Moscow State Pedagogical University in the 2018-2019 academic year. Besides Moscow State Pedagogical University has developed the following advanced training programs for cultural institutions and educators: *Socio-cultural technologies in the creative leisure industry*, *Script-writing and directing basics for the development of event projects in the creative leisure industry*, *Interactive technologies in education and culture areas* for the Institute of Additional Education.

One of the objectives of this cooperation is to make the heads of cultural institutions take part in the implementation of professional training, as well as including them in the Commission of the State Final Examination and engaging in conducting training classes and master classes directly at enterprises of the creative leisure industry (Onezhsky Cultural Center, Moskvorechye Creative Center, Center for extracurricular work "Na Sumskom", etc.). Student event-projects developed and implemented in the creative leisure industry that embraced Moscow residents of different age groups can be considered as a positive result of the past school year. These events included social and cultural project on the patriotic education of teenagers in an educational institution "We are proud of remembering!" (Rublyovo House of Culture), event-project "Thank you, Alphabet!" (at the University School), Cultural and Educational Project "House PRO" (implemented on the basis of the Moscow Victory Park), Coffee and Tea Library "PRO Tea", Social and Cultural Project of the Theater Festival "Windows" (Kuzminki Park), the design of the municipal competition for children and teenagers creativity "Our achievements. Losinka rules" and many others.

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## 5. Conclusion

The problem of professional training experts for cultural institutions, who would know how to use modern technologies for organizing leisure activities for various categories of the population, focus exclusively on high-quality and relevant leisure forms, is of great importance and is not sufficiently developed.

According to the stated goal of the research (to substantiate theoretically of new challenges to the professional training for creative leisure industry; to characterize the methodological grounds of their professional training), the Department of Social and Cultural Activities of the Institute of Culture and Arts of Moscow State Pedagogical University carried out a set of theoretical and empirical researches.

The study made it possible to formulate an understanding of the industry of creative leisure from the perspective of pedagogical science, namely, the characteristics of the methodological grounds for professional training in the system of vocational education. The empirical stage of the research includes all the participants of social and cultural relations in the leisure field - various social groups and leisure field professionals, which ensures the complex character of research of the issue of training future professionals in this field. The identified criteria for Moscow population preferences of cultural institutions by the population of Moscow and the necessary professional skills and abilities in modern cultural and leisure institutions allowed Moscow State Pedagogical University experts to design training and retraining programs. These programs are aimed at the development of various competencies (creative, innovative, planning, marketing, technology), gradual consolidation by students of relevant skills and experience through meaningful content of compulsory courses, forms of organizing practical classes, developing and conducting elective courses, organizing various types of practices, conducting extracurricular activities. The active cooperation of vocational education institutions and creative leisure field institutions at the stage of training future

professionals provides an opportunity to prevent a gap between the popular forms of leisure and their content, the level of training of professionals and real practice of cultural and leisure activities.

The study and the sample are not definitive in ensuring compliance with the modern challenges of the system of professional training specialists for cultural and leisure institutions. Among the promising aspects of the research are the areas that reveal: the relationship between social and cultural challenges and the demand for new forms, methods and technologies for professional training in the area of culture and leisure; features of the design of training and retraining programs in the face of new challenges.

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