

Proposal for cross-border skills development under the auspices of the Edge Cities Network, including objectives, methods and organisation

In light of globalisation, international skills development is a natural progression of the existing skills development within the municipalities, and the overall objective is to boost the development in inter-cultural skills, for which demand is steadily increasing due to globalisation.

Furthermore, cross-border skills development within the **Edge** Cities Network will contribute to:

- Creating inspiration, learning and new **perspectives** on the task solution through the meeting with other cultures and other ways of solving tasks – and thus developing and improving the services of individual municipalities;
- Creating job satisfaction and pride in the municipalities/departments/institutions that **receive various study visits**;
- Branding the individual **municipalities/creating** attractive workplaces which will appeal to competent employees.

METHODS

Workplace study visits

The focus here is on mutual exchange.

Professional networks

A meeting between colleagues with the same professional background and interests. They will meet and exchange their experiences of **selected** themes, typically over 1-2 days. The sending **country** will pay for all travel costs etc., whilst the receiving **country** will arrange and pay for the meeting itself.

Management network

Like the professional networks, but for **managers**.

For example, management **across** international borders: **meeting** with the countries' HR managers with a view to arranging a sequence of international management development events.

Each country can take it in turns to host. The costs will be paid by the individual countries.

Placement and job swap

A placement can last anything between **3 days** and **3 weeks**.

A placement can either be one-sided or take the form of a job swap between one or more cross-border colleagues.

Financing: The sending country is responsible for all the financial costs involved, whilst the receiving country takes care of all **the practical arrangements** such as booking hotels etc. For shorter stays, private accommodation **could** also be **arranged**.

Conferences

Inter-cultural events with participants from all cities, e.g. 2 days in each place aimed at project managers.

Organisation

1: "See more about your opportunities for skills development in your professional area in the Edge Cities Network."

Edge Cities employees can find out about the opportunities on offer at www.edgecitiesnetwork.com, where the individual municipalities have posted English-language information about their municipality.

2: Each of the municipalities' international coordinator/ECN steering group member must have an open advisory session for municipal employees, as well as establishing the relevant contact with the member countries.

Opportunities for (co)financing

Funds for international skills development can be applied for from the EU programme "Life Long Learning". Contact the EU Programme Office. The Edge Cities Network has an ad hoc advisory scheme which can help.

A travel fund organised by the ECN could also be set up, to which employees, trainees and apprentices could apply for funding.

Example from Ballerup

For around 10 years, staff from Ballerup's Elderly and Disabled department have taken part in a skills exchange with South Lanarkshire, Ballerup's Scottish twin municipality, something which has greatly benefited both parties.

Managers on Best Practice study visit

Managers working with the elderly from the two municipalities have thus over a 10-year period been on "Best Practice" study visits to each other's municipality, usually in groups of 3-10 people. Through these visits, the managers from Ballerup have found inspiration for a major development in work with dementia patients in Ballerup.

Social and health carers on placement and study visits

17 social and health carers on week-long placements divided between a 3-day study visit and a 2-day placement with training from a colleague.

Financing: The sending country has paid the travel, accommodation, etc., whilst the receiving country has paid for hosting duties.



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PROPOSAL OF EXTERNAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE PRESIDENCY OF THE EDGE CITIES NETWORK

The difficulty of the members of the ECN to assume the presidency and coordination of the network (in addition to the economical crisis) may have a relation with the effort that these charges involve. The main activities during the period of the presidency have to be assumed by Local staff of the members and it is a lot of job, [especially if in the municipality there is not an international projects coordinator] For this reason the current triumvirate proposes to have an external technical assistance to support the presidency. *permanent*

The main targets of the assistance should be:

- *assuming current affairs*
- Publicizing the network
- Promoting the participation of new members
- Improving internal organization

The following activities could be performed:

- Design of the Presidency Agenda
- Cooperation in the organization of meetings. Minutes of the meetings
- Monitoring of the agreements made in the meetings
- Updating of the contents of the web
- Information about European calls of proposals
- Creation and updating of database partners and contact persons
- New partners proposals

Our proposal is to define a model of collaboration that allows to continue the same assistance when the presidency changes.

Nacka, 28th-29th January 2010

** that demands extra local resources*