# COMMUNITIES IN ACTION

RESTART+
communities in action

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# RESTART+
## communities in action

## Welcome to the Restart+ Project Magazine!

We are delighted to introduce you the first issue of the magazine dedicated to the Erasmus+ project Restart+ Communities. Building on success of RESTART Entrepreneurship, our new generation follow-up project aims to support the local community champions, who can drive the sustainable transformation!

**What is in?**
Our first issue aims to highlight the motivations and the vision of the project, as well as shedding light onto the ongoing process of establishing the Restart+ Alliances in the project countries (Ireland, Northern Ireland, Portugal, and Romania). While the work in progress, the first stepping stones have already been laid and we are happy to share those developments with you.

The community rejuvenation starts with the leaders that insire a more open, entrepreneurial mindset among its community to facilitate the bottom-up local growth. This issue brings you the examples of the initiatives on the regional level that facilitate the (social) entrepreneurship in creative and cultural industries with the international project "SHADOWS", while highlighting a spectacular project singlehandedly initiated by student to promote a more active engagement and entrepreneurship in Münster region (Germany)- Venture Club Münster.

As the pre-requisite of our project, we recognise that helping the community to reach new peaks involves initiative from local public stakeholders and their close interaction with the society itself. With this in mind, we would like to share the stories from Hollands Kroon Municipality (The Netherlands) on how they face the challenge of innovating from within, as well as how the public alliance in Valencia has utilised the hidden potential of a historic harbour La Marina (Spain) to open the space for community co-creation.

We hope you the selection of the articles in this issue of our magazine motivate you to bring new practices to your community!

*Restart+ Community Consortium*

## Our goal

The Erasmus+ project, RESTART+ Communities draws upon the findings and results of its predecessor RESTART Entrepreneurship project, which aimed at supporting second-time entrepreneurs. In its second edition, RESTART+ Communities steps forward to build the regional alliances of practice to equip community leaders with knowledge, resources and training opportunities to facilitate smart, sustainable and inclusive community growth.

**WE BUILD**

regional alliances for community growth

**WE TRAIN**

the facilitators of transformative community regeneration

**WE PROMOTE**

self-learning through open educational resources

We establish

**RESTART+ Communities' Alliances**

in Ireland, Nothern Ireland,

Portugal and Romania

Drawn from public, private and non-profit sectors, each of 7 RESTART+ Communities' consortium partners bring valuable knowledge and networks which will contribute to the project goal.

## We support communities with these outputs:

- Restart + Communities' Toolkit

- Restart + Communities' Alliances
  (Ireland, Nothern Ireland, Portugal and Romania)

- Restart + Communities' Self-Assessment Tool

- Restart + Communities' Open Educational Resources

- Restart + Communities' Online Learning Platform

#ErasmusPlus

RESTART+
communities in action

lyit
Institiúid Teicneolaíochta
Leitir Ceanainn
Letterkenny Institute
of Technology

ADR
Agentia pentru Dezvoltare Regională
NORD-EST

momentum
[educate + innovate]

EUEI

município de
lousada

Banbridge
District
Enterprise

UIIN
University Industry
Innovation Network

# RESTART+ PROJECT SETS TO SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY LEADERS TO BOOST LOCAL GROWTH

The effects of the economic crisis and ensuing recession are still very evident in communities across Europe. Small towns and villages have been worst hit: cuts in public services, the stark closure of businesses and high levels of unemployment contribute to the hollowing out of community life. With the new Erasmus + Strategic Partnership project Restart+ Communities we will work together to create innovative learning tools and resources which equip leaders of community groups, public authorities and educational institutions with the knowledge and skills needed to adopt a transformative approach to community reactivation.

RESTART+ Communities draws upon the findings and results of its predecessor RESTART Entrepreneurship project, which aimed at supporting second-time entrepreneurs. In its second edition, RESTART+ Communities steps forward to build the regional alliances of practice to equip community leaders with knowledge, resources and training opportunities to facilitate smart, sustainable and inclusive community growth. In the course of 2 years, the project team will develop:

• Produce a Restart + Communities  toolkit (IO1) and use it to create 4 Community Alliances (IO2) comprising 12 community leaders in each country;
• Create a Self-Assessment Tool (IO3) to help community leaders identify strengths, opportunities and assets for community reactivation;
• Develop a unique training model, delivered through OERs (IO4) and an online course (IO5), to provide community leaders with the knowledge and skills to adopt a transformative, sustainable approach to local community investment and regeneration;
• Consolidate the capacity of the Alliance members through a Communities of Best Practice 5-day training programme;
• Disseminate results widely to enable scaling of the Alliance + training approach in participating countries and replication in other regions of Europe.

The RESTART+ Communities project consortium consists of 7 organisations from 6 countries, each with a direct interest in using the project's outputs to further their work with community leaders. Drawn from public, private and non-profit sectors, each partner will bring valuable knowledge and networks which will contribute to the project aims. Partners include Letterkenny Institute of Technology (Ireland; lead partner), Momentum (Ireland), Banbridge District Enterprises Limited (Northern Ireland), North-East Regional Development Agency (Romania), The Municipality of Lousada (Portugal), European E-learning Institute (Denmark) and University Industry Innovation Network (Netherlands).

The project officially started on 31 December 2018 and was launched at the kick-off meeting at the leading partner Letterkenny Institute of Technology, Ireland on 26-27 March, 2019. After a warm welcome by Letterkenny Institute of Technology, all the partners are now ready to embark on a journey of building alliances, developing resources and training the community leaders of tomorrow. Stay tuned for the project updates and check out social media channels. ∎

@RESTART_europe

@RestartCommunities

Restart+ Communities page

# RESTART+ COMMUNITIES REGIONAL ALLIANCE – ARCHITECTS OF A SUCCESSFUL PROJECT

Letterkenny Institute of Technology has extensive experience in participating in stakeholder networks, the fact that we are the only Higher Education Institution in Co. Donegal and the uniqueness of our geography sees to that.  While we have experience in this, we still acknowledge the challenge of engaging with and asking busy people to lend us their time.

**Preparing the Groundwork**
Within the Development Office and School of Business, we dedicate significant time to planning our approach and identifying who the key stakeholders are within the context of the Restart Communities project.  Our Vice President for Research, Equality & External Affairs is extremely experienced in the regional community and economic development field and we gladly follow his lead and advice. We believe that a good functioning and successful regional alliance is fundamental to the success of the project

overall so we have several preparatory meetings.  Once we have identified the key stakeholders we lay the foundation.

**Laying the Foundation**
Together we have identified stakeholders from local government, regional development companies, education & training providers, enterprise agencies (including enterprise and community support through Irish language) and youth services.  We are mindful of our geographical location and our closeness to our neighbours in Northern Ireland.  Therefore, we decide it would be appropriate to invite representation from local government in Northern Ireland.  So, we have identified our key stakeholders but we are missing a vital link – community representation.

**Building our Alliance**
To build a successful alliance we believe that two-way engagement from the outset is crucial.

Our Vice President extends an email invitation to the key stakeholders we have identified inviting them to the first meeting.  In our invitation we provide as much information as possible about the project without the information becoming too heavy.  We set the date and ask for attendance or a nomination.

**Breaking Ground**
We hold our first meeting on 03 April 2019 over a morning period, followed by a networking lunch.  After making personal introductions, we provide an overview presentation of the project, highlighting the success of the ErasmusPlus funded project that has gone before: Restart Entrepreneurship.  Already we know that we have a good team around the table as there are lively and engaging questions and discussion.  It's going to be a good one!

**Building the Team**
We make it clear to our Restart Communities Alliance that we are missing a vital element to the project and the future success of the Alliance – representation from the community sector.  As we are a large county, we spend significant time agreeing a framework for identifying representation from the community sector. We want to ensure it is fair, with good geographical and sectoral spread.  We agree a way forward and we are confident that we will have solid and strong community representation at the next meeting of the Regional Alliance.

**Laying the Blocks**
The meeting is very productive and we come away with three concrete and substantial actions from the meeting:
- Alliance members are to identify and nominate community representation to LYIT, which LYIT will then work to recruit on to the Restart Communities Regional Alliance.
- LYIT are to begin work on a situation analysis and research into the socio-economic and community landscape in Donegal.
- Together we are to identify potential models of good practice that LYIT will then work into case studies.

**Outlining the Schedule of Works**
We agree timelines to these actions.  We agree

to have community representation secured and a first draft of the situation analysis prepared for presentation at the next Restart Communities Regional Alliance mid-June.  We also agree that the case study work will be more time-consuming and while the work will run concurrently, we will have draft case studies prepared to present at the third meeting which will take place in September/October 2019.

**Progress to Date**
Almost two months since our first meeting, progress is good.  We have secured community representation on to the Regional Alliance for the next meeting.  Our research is taking shape and almost at first draft stage.  The preparatory work for our case studies is well underway.  We started with a focus group to determine key themes, which we are now mapping before moving on to conducting individual case studies across the key themes identified.  Feedback to date has been extremely positive with all community stakeholders keen to share information and knowledge.  Working together makes the region stronger than working alone.

**Lessons Learned...**
Taking time at the beginning before starting your Regional Alliance is an investment.  It is tempting to pull a team of people together and see what emerges.  However, the input and engagement is much richer from participants when your intentions are clear.  When you ensure that members know that you value and welcome their input, it leads to an exciting and lively discussion about the possibilities and the outputs to come.  We look forward to more time with our Restart Communities Regional Alliance. ∎

*Images credit: Letterkenny Institute of Technology*

# THE FIRST RESTART+ COMMUNITY ALLIANCE MEETING IN ROMANIA

On June 21st, 2019, the North East Regional Development Agency, through the Regional Center of Studies North East, had organized in Dolhesti village, Suceava County, the first meeting within the Restart+ project - Communities Development by Building Community Alliances.

The meeting was attended by members of not-for-profit organisations from the North East Region of Romania: "Somuzului Valley NGO" and "Aurochs Land NGO", members of local tourism agencies: Iasi Travel and Rolandia, a participant from an advertising organization and a university lector from University of Geography Iasi.

We have started our event by presenting the Restart+ project, its objectives and its expected results, outlining the importance of setting up an Alliance between the leaders of the community. The discussions were focused on the Dolhesti Community and the potential stakeholders to join our Restart+ Community Alliance. Our host, Mirela Nechita presented us the aims of "Valea Somuzului" NGO, the history and the reasons they launched this initiative.

Two years ago, Mirela Nechita and her associate Camelia Ciocirlan, established a not-for-profit association, with the purpose of promoting the region and his manufacturers: the furrier, the blacksmiths, seamstresses that are sewing traditional Romanian blouses and the traditional folk dance association.

The leader of the "Valea Somuzului" NGO – Mirela Nechita, agreed the great significance that partnerships can bring. In order to develop the community, they have started a few networking actions with the local public authority and with the mayor.

We have discussed the benefits of setting up an Alliance, the major needs of the community and the possible solutions on solving these needs. The following ideas were extracted from a questionnaire we have prepared, made of 3 open-questions, regarding the importance of the alliances, the needs of the region and the solutions that can be implemented.

**The members concluded that a Community Alliance has the following benefits:**
- The possibility to access projects/financial funds which are not available for individuals
- To raise awareness of the values of the community
- To set up a constructive conduct and a healthy climate
- To identify elements that can improve the local proud
- To improve the capacity of implementing new ideas

**The major needs of the community are:**
- Trained human resources
- Access to information, regarding community development
- Know-how for project implementation
- The creation of a brand/logo/symbol of the community
- Tourism development in social media and on-line platforms

**And the solutions for these needs were highlighted:**
- Learning from Good Practice examples
- Attending community development courses
- Workshops between community members
- Encouraging the idea "Think Outside the Box"
- Involvement in European Project in order to attract financial funds

A few Case Studies of Good Practice were discussed, and also the way in which the actions from the case studies can be implemented in this local community:
- Breb Village, from Maramures county, one of the best preserved traditional village from Romania
- Viscri village, from Brasov county, a charming Saxon village of Transylvania, is among the most popular villages in Romania by tourists and it is visited annually by Prince Charles
- PACT Foundation, involved in sustainable community development projects since 2001

Every member agreed on the importance of setting up an alliance for the community development, and the fact that the educational resources that will be elaborated in the project will be very useful, almost necessary, for training the members of the community. ∎

*Images credit: p.8 NERDA*

*Map of Romania

# BEGINNING THE RESTART+ JOURNEY IN NORTHERN IRELAND

B anbridge District Enterprise is a local economic development group with a vision of sustainable regeneration fed by a growth in entrepreneurial attitudes and skills. The journey we are setting out on with our Restart Alliance partners over the next 18 months is not a simple one, but it could be a catalyst for long overdue change in many of our small communities that are easily overlooked and isolated.

Outside of the two major cities of the region the population of Northern Ireland is very dispersed, with a patchwork of small towns, villages and, increasingly, a rural landscape of scattered private houses with a limited infrastructure.

The local economy is largely service based, and we have a post conflict society still working to build positive cross community relations, as well as a more balanced, sustainable economy. Our region has plentiful cultural, built and environmental heritage assets that are undeveloped and could be the basis for more inclusive, sustainable regeneration of communities dealing with the legacy of a deeply fractured identity.

In the context of shrinking public sector budgets, traditional investment in community projects is hard to find, and the social enterprise approach is gaining ground. We have had small amounts of

community development and some well established local development bodies, such as Restart Alliance members Rural Community Network and Development Trust Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland is a society with a strong volunteering ethic, so there are also small community groups and local networks scattered across the region. However we also have a dominant and risk averse public sector that is a gatekeeper for regeneration resources. Before it collapsed in 2017, regional government had begun to make moves towards a social economy and incorporating social outcomes into its planning processes. We are now without direction amidst the turmoil of Brexit.

This creates a situation in which willing volunteers have heavy demands on their time and many professional skill sets to navigate. We have been told by Alliance members that access to training is hampered by a complete lack of resources. So while there are accredited vocational courses from entry level upwards in social enterprise, for example, there is no way to finance the course, the travel or the time commitment.

There is also intelligence that the type of training offered can be too focused on legal and governance issues. Leaving a vital basket of regen-

*"Freeing the ingenuity and energy of small communities is more important than ever and we look forward to building our Restart Alliance and being a catalyst for sustainable change."*

Northern Ireland
*tuaisceart éireann*

eration skills untouched. All of which reflects a more top down approach, vulnerable to short term political enthusiasms rather than the more strategic, long term, grass roots growth that makes sustainable community regeneration possible.

We are currently recruiting to our Restart Alliance with a meeting planned at the end of August. Already in our Alliance we have expertise in key issues such as returning land to community ownership, developing a community profile and embedding social value within local government and economic regeneration. Our partners are committed to making small communities sustainable in a rapidly changing world with many challenges that can only be met by coming together to create change. Recently we were reminded of the transformative power of the Co-operative movement that has hundreds of years of experience to offer, and of the fact that we have an instinct to work together. Freeing the ingenuity and energy of small communities is more important than ever and we look forward to building our Restart Alliance and being a catalyst for sustainable change. ∎

# "SHADOWS" - FOSTERING GRADUATE ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE CULTURAL & CREATIVE INDUSTRY SECTOR

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Entrepreneurship drives innovation, competitiveness, job creation and growth. It allows new innovative ideas turn into successful ventures and can unlock the personal potential of individuals. The Entrepreneurship Action Plan 2020 (EAP 2020) states that "investing in entrepreneurship education is one of the highest return investments Europe can make" and the Europe 2020 strategy recognises entrepreneurship and self-employment as key for achieving smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. To bring Europe back to growth and higher levels of employment, Europe needs more entrepreneurs. EAP 2020 sets out a number of actions to be taken to support entrepreneurship in Europe including "developing entrepreneurial education and training" and "identifying positive role models".

Young people have been hit hard by the global economic crisis and youth unemployment levels remain persistently high as the recovery in Europe advances slowly. Youth unemployment rates at the end of 2015 in partner countries stood at PT 32.6%; DE 7.1%; UK 13.5%; IE 19.2%; RO 23.3%; PL 20.5%; CY 31.7%; FI 22.1%. One stark feature of the current employment crisis is the high number of graduates currently out of work or working well below their skill and educational level. In the words of one commentator "this is painful human face of the crisis as world's best and brightest are wasted" (Angel Gurría, The Times).

The critical role played by start-ups in driving economic development and job creation is increasingly understood. Factory floors are pro-

gressively being replaced by cultural and creative communities whose raw material is their ability to imagine, create and innovate. In this new digital economy, immaterial value increasingly determines material value, as consumers look for new and enriching 'experiences'. Enterprise policy aimed at achieving Europe 2020 targets centres around the development of the SME sector. In 2015, SMEs accounted for over 99% of all non-financial enterprises in Europe. 92.2% of all SMEs are micro-enterprises with fewer than 10 employees while the typical European micro-enterprise employs only 2 to 3 persons. There are some 21 million SMEs in Europe, supplying about 85% of jobs (www.euronews.com) contributing 58.1% of the total value-added created by EU businesses. In past eras 'jobs for life' and 'skills for life' predominated in a marketplace of stable trades and professions; however today's young people leaving education are moving into a world of "occupational quicksands and volcanoes" in which entrepreneurship can be a viable alternative to dependent labour (OECD 2010).

On top of being essential drivers for diversity, the cultural and creative industry sector is one of Europe's most dynamic sectors comprising highly innovative companies and contributing approximately 2.6% to EU GDP. It is a sector with high growth potential and provides quality jobs to over 5 million people (Eur-Lex: Green Paper - Unlocking the potential of creative industries, 2010). Cultural and creative businesses often contribute to boosting local economies in decline, contributing to the emergence of new economic activities, creating new and sustainable jobs and enhancing the attractiveness of European regions and cities (DG Enterprise – Working Paper 2011). EU cohesion policy has recognised the multifaceted contribution of the cultural and creative industry sector to its strategic objectives of convergence, competitiveness and employment.

For most creative individuals developing a new product or idea, the focus is firmly placed on what it can do; how it can be used; what makes it different. While these are all essential pre-requisite to any future potential business of equal importance are questions like: Who are the man-

agement team behind the business? What is the business model proposed? How will intellectual property be protected? Does the product or idea have scalable potential? So while having the right idea might get you half the way to success, it will only get you half the way as core business management skills are also required. While individual capacities like creativity, motivation and powers of persuasion are often considered to be key attributes that drive new business ventures marrying those skills to business acumen brings success.

Entrepreneurship training is a rapidly developing policy field with strong potential for learning from other areas, but it is important to focus on the real needs of entrepreneurs, which extend well beyond traditional business planning and accounting skills (OECD 2011). It is widely accepted that target group specific, coherent entrepreneurship education initiatives are in short supply throughout Europe. Bringing down barriers to entrepreneurship; exploring options for becoming an entrepreneur; promoting more favourable attitudes towards entrepreneurship in public opinion; reducing the stigma of failure for entrepreneurs; promoting entrepreneurial skills as valuable life skills; are issues with a European dimension that require a European response. ∎

*Original Source: Project „Supporting Graduate Entrepreneurship in the Cultural & Creative Industry Sector – SHADOWS", authored by Artur Pinto.*

# THE VENTURE CLUB MÜNSTER INSTILLING ENTREPRENEURIAL VALUES ACROSS THE REGION

Venture Club Münster (VCM) is a non-profit association devoted to the topic of entrepreneurship. What makes it unique is the fact that it is not only initiated but also run by a group of dedicated students who believed Münster universities alone were not sufficiently addressing the topic of entrepreneurship. The aim of the club is, therefore, to activate the entrepreneurial potential of students in the region by organizing a wide variety of events that bring together students, experts, accomplished entrepreneurs, and other relevant stakeholders.

**How does the VCM promote entrepreneurship?**
VCM promotes the topic of entrepreneurship by organizing a number of events out of which two take place on a more regular basis: 'Let's Talk' speeches and Workshops.

Let's Talk speeches are organized as a 2-3 hours' event, where entrepreneurs from corporations or start-ups share their stories with an audience. At the end of the speech, the audience will be given a chance to ask questions. The events are normally open to anyone interested in participate. The objective is to inspire participants to embark on an entrepreneurial journey.

The workshops, on the other hand, address more specific aspects of entrepreneurship. Moreover, the number of participants is limited to a maximum of 30 people. The workshops are normally divided into two parts: mentoring and action. The mentoring phase familiarizes participants with the technical aspects of the topic of interest, while the action phase gives them the chance to put what they have learned into practice.

In order to facilitate the smooth running of its events, VCM follows a standard procedure consisting of four steps. The first step is defining the general theme of its events. Here an attempt is made to develop a theme that is not only interesting but also broad enough to attract a diverse audience. Secondly, a suitable expert/entrepreneur is invited to speak at the event. Once the speaker has expressed his/her willingness and availability, the VCM teamwork on the practical details of the event, such as scheduling, advertising, sponsorships, and catering arrangement. Lastly, at the end of every event, feedback is collected from both the speakers and participants, and is used as an input to consistently improve the quality of subsequent events.

**How is the VCM organized?**
The VCM does not receive any financial support, neither from the universities in Münster or from the government. Rather, it is funded by membership fees from its student-members and sponsorship from external organizations. Currently, VCM has around 150 active members who collaboratively work to handle the various tasks associated with hosting an event (from advertisement to arranging food and drinks). Once a student joins the VCM as a member, he is allocated to one of its six departments (HR, IT, Finance and Law, Sponsors & Relations, Marketing and Operations). Here, an attempt is made to find a good fit between the student's field of study and the department they work for.

**Positive impact for the region and for VCM team members**
Although difficult to quantify, it is fair to say that the activities of VCM are positively contributing to increasing entrepreneurship awareness in the Münster region. Additionally, participants and other stakeholders not only get inspired to start their own business but also acquaint themselves with relevant principles of entrepreneurship. Also, the entrepreneurs giving speeches as well as the corporate sponsors use the events as a platform to promote their businesses.

Last but not least, according to VCM's CEO Friedrich Grimm, perhaps the main beneficiaries of this initiative are VCM members themselves, who get a chance to put the knowledge they acquired from their field of studies into practice as well as gain a range of relevant competences associated with organizing large events (teamwork, raising funds, and conforming to legal requirements). As Mr Grimm put, by being part of the VCM one is also an entrepreneur. ∎

*Authored by: Alexandra Zinovyeva and Andre Perusso. This article is based on a case study originally written by Andre Perusso (Münster University of Applied Sciences), developed as part of the WEXHE Project.*

*Images credit: The Venture Club Münster.*



*"The aim of the club is, to activate the entrepreneurial potential of students in the region by organizing a wide variety of events that bring together students, experts, accomplished entrepreneurs, and other relevant stakeholders"*

# LA MARINA LIVING LAB: THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE HISTORIC HARBOUR BY LEVERAGING ITS HIDDEN POTENTIAL

*"La Marina seeks non-speculative development. Instead of the model dominated by large-scale investment of capital and infrastructure, the new model proposed is based on values – inclusivity, open public space, and activities or initiatives for all citizens"*

a Marina Living Lab is an urban laboratory, which seeks to engage citizens in the transformation of "La Marina de Valencia": the historic harbour of the city of Valencia. The Lab is based on a user-oriented process, in which public space is adjusted to the preferences of those who work, study and play in La Marina. Furthermore, it follows a multi-stakeholder approach, counting on the support of research organisations, public administrations, civic associations as well as the private sector.

La Marina is managed by Consorcio València 2007 (CV07) – a public institution, formed as an alliance between the Government of Spain, the Regional Government of Valencia and Valencia City Council.

La Marina Living Lab does not have its own physical building or laboratory. It is rather an initiative of co-creation and co-design in which CV07 commits to letting the entire urban space of Valencia´s harbour be used as a testbed for trying out new innovative projects. La Marina Living Lab is a vast and ambitious project fuelled by the conviction that bringing all relevant stakeholders on board is the only way public spaces can be designed in a way that truly work for everybody.

**A huge example of university-city collaboration**

La Marina was born in collaboration with Western Sydney University (WSU), which had an important role in the formulation of the its theoretical backbone. The Polytechnic University of Valencia also helped in the development of the sustainability strategy.

Several other educational institutions have also collaborated with La Marina. Rice School of Architecture developed a workshop in which 9 students designed solutions to activate old buildings from the south area of La Marina. Escuela de Empresarios launched "Marina Challenge" to develop a strategy for La Marina focused on 3 areas: nautical; leisure, culture and tourism; innovation, technology and entrepreneurship. The faculty of biological sciences of Valencia University also established a project in which students developed ideas to improve the accessibility and use of the space. Polytechnic of Valencia hosted a workshop in which La Marina has been involved, discussing with 3 foreign students the possible and sustainable use for the Base Alinghi de la America's Cup. This University has also contributed to the ideas' exchange between La Marina and universities from Vietnam.

Besides, La Marina has recently realized collaborations with the Scientific Park of the University of Valencia and the Faculty of Geography and History of Valencia University.

La Marina has a new vision for the future whereby both tradition and inventiveness drive the transformation of the economy

The main goals of the Living Lab can be described as converting La Marina into the city's engine for economic development through innovation, promote economic activation of the space, creating a sustainable, inclusive and dynamic public space, and foster citizen appropriation.

The activities performed include events, brainstorming activities, training sessions, leisure activities, workshops and projects, often with the collaboration of universities from the city and beyond.

**The project attempts to respond to various challenges**
First of all, at the urban level, La Marina aspires to reactivate economically an abandoned public space with a big potential for social use. It is recognized that such impact will not be limited to La Marina itself but will be expanded to the seaside area and its adjacent neighbourhoods, which were largely overlooked in past decades.

Secondly, La Marina aspires to create a "new story" and re-brand a "new and modern Valencia" as a differentiation to the previous vision defined by short-sighted construction projects, economic overspend and international events. So, this new vision will be oriented towards people, innovation and creativity.

Thirdly, La Marina seeks non-speculative development. Instead of the model dominated by large-scale investment of capital and infrastructure, the new model proposed is based on values – inclusivity, open public space, and activities or initiatives for all citizens. Hence, the project aims to strengthen the connection between neighbourhood associations, and the cultural and artistic vibe, as well as other social entities, in a participative and open way. ■

Partners: Consorcio València 2007, Western Sydney University (WSU), Municipality of Valencia

*Authored by: Catarina Reis. This blog article is written with reference to the La Marina Living Lab Good Practice Case Study Report prepared as part of the Erasmus+ University City Action Lab (UCITYLAB) Project.*

# HOW THE MUNICIPALITY OF HOLLANDS KROON ENGAGES DARING AND ENTHUSIASTIC

The call for change was waiting around the corner in the province of North–Holland when four of its municipalities merged into one in 2012. The newly established municipality Hollands Kroon (HK) completely innovated local government by decreasing bureaucracy, promoting self-managing teams, implementing flexible working hours, and stimulating its employees to have more contact with local citizens. However, to successfully implement these changes in an organization with employees that are used to work in a traditional way, Hollands Kroon needed a fresh outlook, creative approaches and enthusiasm. Who has more of the above than the talented graduates, who are eager to face the real-life challenges? With this in mind, Hollands Kroon initiated a two-year traineeship programme open to recent graduates from all disciplinary areas, who would like to support the municipality in undertaking change whilst developing their professional skills.

## The five fundamental values of HK

Hollands Kroon is responsible for 48.000 people in the third largest region in the Netherlands, and employs around 350 people that are working in 30-40 self-managing teams. As the municipality of Hollands Kroon has undergone many changes in recent years, the needs of the organization changed over time as well. The content of the HK traineeship has been adjusted to what the organization Hollands Kroon needed. The first generation of trainees were 'daring communicators', the second 'service providers' followed by a generation of 'connectors'. To make sure HK selects the right applicant, Hollands Kroon developed an unusual selection procedure. In order to find the daring communicators, for example, the first selection round was based on the format of the talent show 'The Voice'. Applicants had to pitch and convince the executive board to turn their chair. In the search for service providers, however, HK hired actors who played help requesting passers-by at unexpected moments during the selection procedure. Although the set-up of each election procedure varied, the final round always consisted of a conversation between the executive board and the last remaining applicants.

## Daring communicators, service providers and connectors

The HK traineeship programme is team and project-based in nature. In total, four to six trainees are selected, who together, form a self-managing team. Next to three individual assignments, trainees also execute four to six team assignments during the programme. The coordinator presents available assignments at the start of the traineeship. The trainee-team distributes these assignments among each other and formulates an action plan in which the trainees outline what they are going to do, what their goals are, and how they are going to share their activities. The executive board has to approve this plan. After approval, the trainees can work on their group and individual assignments. However, over the course of the traineeship trainees are expected to come up with new assignments themselves – identify the problem, see the potential and generate the solution. The progress of the trainee is supervised by the programme coordinator during each assignment. Additionally, trainees are supervised by stake holding HK employees and provided with personal mentorship for further advice.

Former trainees, for example, worked on the transition to self-managing teams, innovating the planning and control cycle and exploring the future of information technology and its security in HK. The current trainees are already working on process optimization in the municipality and have shifted their focus towards the extremal issues in the area – employability in the north of the North-Holland province.

## Opportunities for non-stop learning

The traineeship at Holland Kroon distinguishes itself in various ways. First, it has a creative selection process and focusses on personality traits rather than on academic background. Second, HK trainees become the engines of organizational and cultural change within the organization. Third, operating in self-managing teams inspires independence and strengthens the leadership qualities of the trainees, while working on multiple projects in a multidisciplinary surrounding fosters the ability to think outside the box and therefore changes one's perspective. The experience also allows the recent graduates to develop transversal skills such as time management, teamwork, and multitasking.

The majority of the trainees who completed the traineeship stayed to work in Hollands Kroon as civil servants. Many have mentioned that the traineeship helped them to better understand their own strengths and weaknesses and perhaps more importantly has helped them to identify the path they want to follow in their future career. ∎

## The Dubuque Recipe to Rebuilding a City

Dubuque is one of the oldest cities on the Mississippi River and the oldest community in Iowa. Now a sparkling city on the rise in the American Midwest, Dubuque has had to work its way back even, slowly, over the past few decades. In 1983, our city had the highest unemployment in the country and had lost nearly 10% of its population. But just as Dubuque's challenges reached their height in the 1980s, something else was born – a firm commitment to community engagement.

READ THE STORY IN FULL

## How to Develop a Sustainable Community in Australia's Fastest Growing City

The way our cities and towns are planned, designed and built has a vast impact on the economy, the environment and our wellbeing. The City of Sydney's Green Square development is a modern, commercial and residential precinct that demonstrates sustainable high density living in practice.

READ THE STORY IN FULL

## £50million Belfast regeneration project for Smithfield area

A multi-million pound regeneration project for the Smithfield area of Belfast has been given the go-ahead.The project believed to be in the region of £50million will see the space between. Bywater Properties and Ashmour Developments are behind the 260,000 sq ft project, which will create 650 jobs during construction.

READ THE STORY IN FULL
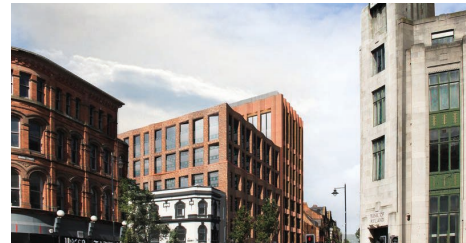
## Five Ways to Boost Your Community's Sustainability Commitment

Addressing the global challenges outlined in the United Nations (U.N.) Sustainability Development Goals (SDG) can feel overwhelming, especially if you live in a city faced with rapid growth. But, all is not lost as many organizations are charting a new path toward a greener future. Sustainability success starts with your mind — you really need to think about sustainability and integrate it into your strategy.

READ THE STORY IN FULL
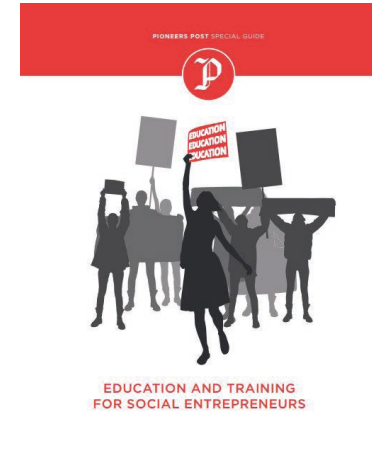
## Special Guide to Education and Training for Social Entrepreneurs

This issue's cover feature explored how – alongside engineers, lawyers and scientists – higher education institutions are now nurturing the next generation of social entrepreneurs.  This guide is a snapshot of this sector, and gathers all we knew about the ever closer ties between higher education institutions and social enterprise. All the courses you can take in social entrepreneurship and all the business support that higher education institutions are offering, alongside profiles of some of the people and organisations seen as poster boys for social enterprise success – it's all in there.

DOWNLOAD THE REPORT HERE

## Teaching and Learning About Communities

This book provides a rationale and conceptual framework for teaching and learning about community. It focuses on what community means in multiple contexts, outlines the needs and assets of communities, and discusses different approaches to community change. The book provides real life examples of integrated approaches to community transformation as well as sample exercises to promote a better understanding of community challenges and approaches to solve them. Applicable in the classroom and in actual community work, the book's conceptual and practical approach can be used to study community, or to integrate community issues into learning in virtually any field.

FIND THE BOOK HERE
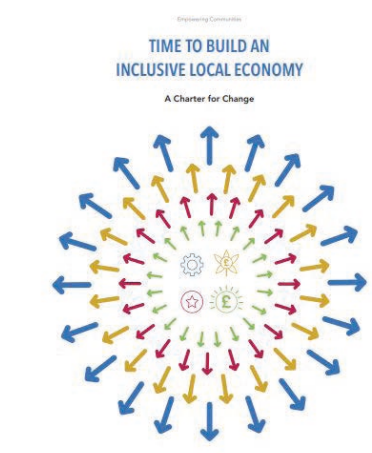
## "Time to Build an Inclusive Local Economy"  in Northern Ireland

Time to Build an Inclusive Local Economy 'sets out key steps to harness the power of communities to create resilient local economies'. Developed by Development Trusts Northern Ireland (DTNI) in collaboration with CLES and Friends Provident Foundation and the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland, 'it builds on what is already happening in communities across Northern Ireland and seeks to influence new thinking in order to create an inclusive local economy'. The charter describes an inclusive economy as an approach which 'embraces people and communities as active players in wealth creation', focusing not on external investment but on 'how we build from within'.

DOWNLOAD THE REPORT HERE

**RESTART+ Partners**

*Are you interested in collaboration, learning more about our activities in each Restart+Alliance Region, or want to share your story? Reach out to our country contact points. We are looking forward to hearing from you!*

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# COMMUNITIES IN ACTION

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