

NEW FLAVOUR of YOUR LIFE

Promoting Active Citizenship
and Health Awareness through
Gardening in Towns and Cities



COOPERATION & COMMUNICATION GUIDE

1. General Communication

- **RESPONSIBILITY:** All partners and participants are jointly responsible for creating and maintaining a good overall atmosphere on the project. This can be helped by following the guidelines in this document.
- **LANGUAGE:** The project language is English. Native or more advanced English speakers should use simple language, speak slowly and allow time for translation between partners at regular intervals
- **MAIN COMMUNICATION FORMS:** The main communication form for this project in between meetings is to be email. Partners can work collaboratively with each other and share information using Google Docs, which will be our common working platform.
- **INTRA-INSTITUTION COMMUNICATION:** Where there are 2 coordinators (or a main coordinator and assistant), both coordinators should regularly update each other.
- **DISSEMINATION:** All partners should consider dissemination an essential part of their internal and external communications. This includes recording & documenting activities and courses and sharing the results with fellow learners/trainers as well as the partners.

2. Email Etiquette

- When sending emails to international partners, only send to the two coordinators from each institution. The coordinators will then forward any relevant information to their learners, trainers, head of institution or any other person concerned.
- If replying to a group email, please do not 'reply to all' unless the information in your response is useful for everybody.
- When writing emails, it is helpful to be as specific and descriptive as possible with the 'subject line' of the email
- If an urgent response is required, please write 'URGENT' in the email subject line, but understand that not all partners will necessarily be able to respond immediately.

3. Planning Meetings

- **DURATION** of the meetings is three full working days + plus two days of travel on either side.
- **AGENDA:** Host institution to prepare the agenda with the coordinating partner.
- **ACTIVITIES:** While planning the meetings, relevant mixture of activities should be taken into account, including teambuilding & communication games and icebreakers
- **INVITATION:** Meeting agenda/meeting invitation with plan of activities and estimated costs (including methods of payment) should be distributed at least 3 weeks before the meeting. Each institution uses the same forms to document meetings: "Meeting Invitation", "Meeting Attendance list", "Meeting Minutes", "Certificate of Attendance". (tools recommended by "Grundtvig Learning Partnerships Navigator" http://ec.europa.eu/education/grundtvig/doc/navigator_en.pdf). Templates will also be available on shared G-Drive.
- **DEADLINES** Partners to respect and meet deadlines for giving requested information to the host
- **HOSPITALITY:** It is suggested that the host institution should allow for some 'hospitality' in

their budget, which may include coffee and biscuits/snacks/fruit for meetings.

- HOMEWORK: All partners to make sure that they do their homework before the meeting
- WORKPACKS: Host to provide partners with workpacks if needed.
- ROLES OF PEOPLE: Different roles in the meeting: every session should have at least the following: a facilitator, a timekeeper, a minute taker (separate roles). These roles can be shared at the beginning of the meeting. They could change per session or per day.

4. During Meetings

- TIMEKEEPING: All partners to respect the timetable and be on time for sessions. One person to be responsible for timekeeping and remind people of how much time there is left for sessions, the beginning and ending of breaks and so on.
- LISTEN: If someone is talking, it is respectful to listen attentively and not talk at the same time. If you think of any questions during a session or presentation, please note them down and wait until the speaker/facilitator asks if anyone has any questions.
- LANGUAGE: Allow time for translation at regular intervals when speaking. Be mindful of how you can include less proficient English speakers more, for example, allowing time for translation and doing regular 'Think and Listens' followed by 'Go Rounds'; encourage people to ask questions in their own language and have some ready to translate.
- CHECK INS & BREAKS: It is useful to check in with all partners a couple of times each day to see if their energy levels are ok and if everyone understands. Sometimes a break or breath of fresh air might be needed, even if it's not scheduled.
- COOPERATION: If there are things to be carried, cleared away or prepared, please offer to help. After all, we are all working together!
- DOCUMENTATION: All partners are encouraged to participate in documenting the meeting (photos, videos, notes, drawings, etc) and share documentation afterwards. Photos should be taken of anything that is written on a board or flipchart and then shared on the G-Drive.
- EVALUATION & FEEDBACK: it is helpful to have some kind of evaluation and feedback during and/or at the end of the meeting, in addition to the form that all partners will fill out. This could just be a verbal 'Go Round'. It would be useful to take notes of the comments and share them for other partners to consider when planning future meetings.

5. After Meetings

- EVALUATION FORMS: These should be completed by all partners (one form per country) within 2 weeks of the end of the meeting.
- MEETING MINUTES/PROJECT MEETING REPORT: This should be sent within 2 weeks of the last day of the meeting. It should only contain what was agreed, preferably in action points, stating who is responsible and what the deadline is. Templates available on G-Drive and in Grundtvig Navigator document.
- DOCUMENTATION: Please share photos, videos, etc on G-Drive. There should be uploaded within 2 weeks of returning from the meeting. Please do NOT put pictures of people on facebook without their prior permission. If someone doesn't want their photo published, this should be respected.

6. Sharing Ideas & Information (DISSEMINATION) throughout the project & outside of meetings.

- If you find a useful document, have a good idea or try something out that seems to work well, please share this with the rest of the partners by adding them to an 'Ideas' folder on the G-Drive.
- Once a month, each partner provides a mini-progress report (a paragraph is enough) of how things are going with the project. This should be completed and uploaded onto a file on the G-Drive called 'Mini-Progress Reports'.

Useful Resources for communication & meeting planning:

Communication: http://issuu.com/co-operativesuk/docs/conflict_booklet_2/1?e=0

Meetings & Decisions: http://www.uk.coop/sites/storage/public/downloads/conflict_booklet_3_web.pdf

Facilitation Guide: <http://seedsforchange.org.uk/facilitationmeeting.pdf>

Facilitation Tools & Methods: <http://seedsforchange.org.uk/tools.pdf>

Games: <http://www.youthwork-practice.com/games/cooperation-games.html>