

## WORKING TITLE

### **'Dream Catcher'**

#### **ABSTRACT**

A collaborative, transnational, approach to improving the prospects of unemployed young people, who are struggling to find their vocational direction and gain employment but currently find themselves outside of existing employment schemes.

Our intention is to do something different. We are going to put our combined talent in tackling challenges to good use by undertaking a groundbreaking pilot that will revolutionise how we respond to the needs of these 'forgotten' young people and transform them into active contributors to our local economy and community prosperity.

#### **SUMMARY**

This project is designed to be a transnational innovation project that will seek to establish new, whilst exchanging existing, good practice, in transforming the lives of young people who suffer disadvantage in accessing employment or who are disadvantaged in that they do not meet the criteria for existing unemployment schemes.

The work is designed to be in a number of, overlapping phases:

1. The development of an Inspiring Leaders Panel involving all of the local and regional agencies plus representation from employers and local authorities.
2. An analysis of existing good practice in the local delivery of person-centred employment support and joined-up multi-agency delivery
3. The development of a Framework of Good Practice for supporting disadvantaged young people into employment
4. An INTENSIVE intervention, where partners will work with no more than 20 young people each, which will incorporate work placements/work experience, training, joined-up provision of services and a truly person-centred approach
5. The detailed documentation of each of young person's experience, utilising interviews, video, workshops culminating in the creation of detailed individual case studies

In particular, the transnational partners will each focus upon the following:

- Young people who have lived in the 'care of the local authority' (care-leavers)
- Young people who have a learning disability
- Young people do not qualify for existing employment schemes due to weaknesses/problems with the system, but are still excluded from employment

The Inspiring Leaders Panel will use their shared expertise and resources to transform the prospects of the young people engaged within the project and guide the good practice research and Framework development.

## RATIONALE

In most European countries there have been multiple schemes to raise aspiration and create opportunities for unemployed young people. Due to the difficult fiscal position at the moment within almost all European countries, many of these are coming under increased pressure, and a number have been halted or merged.

However, despite these many trialled 'solutions', interventions have not been found that tackle the problems for young people whose aspiration is high and yet find themselves endlessly disappointed at continual rejection from employment or employment schemes.

Often reasons for this are as simple as finding it difficult to quickly build rapport with potential employers, perhaps due to unusual appearance, disability or being unable to communicate easily. Other individuals may never get to the door of an interview due to lack of previous educational attainment and many are missing the valuable presence of a significant adult to help them smooth day to day issues so that maintaining employment becomes viable.

Many existing employment schemes have prohibitive rules and regulations that mean many young people continually fail to enter them. An example from the UK is that a young person gaining only a short seasonal employment will never qualify for all of the support available as they are never continuously 6-months out-of-work.

The project recognises that it is vital to work collaboratively with employers and social partners, in all sectors in order to broker (mediate) and maintain trusting relationships between them and young people who they may currently see as 'unlikely' future employees.

The project believes in the young people of Europe, who's own talent is greatly under-estimated and we believe that the members of currently disadvantaged groups, with support, may one day develop their own enterprise and become tomorrow's generation of business leaders.

## OUR PRINCIPLES

- We will work with common purpose but without compromise to a person-centred approach where variety and diverse methods will best meet individual need.
- Collaborative working - taking pride in the success of each other, learning new methods through transparent sharing of skills and resources.
- Trust and independence - valuing the individual approach and expertise of diverse partners.
- Belief in young people's talent and passionate champion of them - going the extra mile to ensure they succeed. Thinking ambitiously on their behalf.
- Breaking the mould - overcoming unnecessary regulation that prohibits real benefit getting to real need.
- Looking beyond statistics into the lives of real young people.

## FUNDING STREAM

PROGRESS: Call for proposals for social experimentation:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=630&langId=en&callId=263&furtherCalls=yes>

## PARTNER REQUIREMENTS

We welcome interest from partners across the European Union. The partnership will be relatively small, with no more than six Countries involved.

Partner countries will set out their own plans for meeting the specific needs of young people they aim to target. The methods they choose will be relevant to the individual young people, the local community context and to the local labour force.

We have limited resource and timeframe given the pathfinder nature of the work. Partners must be able to draw together a number of expert delivery partners who will share in common the following attributes:

- They will have existing relationships with young people from our target groups.
- They will each be in a position to deliver a pilot intervention programme.
- Each partner will be experienced in working collaboratively.
- Each partner will have unique skills and expertise that they will be willing to share.
- They will have excellent knowledge of local labour market issues and be capable of devising placements that put young people in the best position to secure ongoing employment in their own area.
- They will be able to successfully involve employers.

Regardless of how they deliver their element of the programme, each partner will offer:

- A targeted recruitment of young people most in need as defined by the Inspiring Leaders Panel
- Every delivery partner will be experienced in helping young people to develop a person-centred action plan and will provide them with support to monitor their progress and achievements.
- Intensive mentoring support.
- A work-placement based on young people's aspirations, for a minimum of 3 months.

- Imaginative ways to broaden horizons.
- Each placement will be accompanied by opportunities to accredit their learning. The nature of accreditation will be flexible.
- Delivery partners will be responsible in their own right for the health and safety, wellbeing and risk assessment in relation to the placements they host and they will all have appropriate safeguarding policies and protocols and employer's liability insurance in place.

## THE YOUNG PERSON'S EXPERIENCE

Young people will be 'hosted' by organisations with which they are comfortable and already have a relationship of trust. Their experience could include any or all of the following:

- Work and learning taster courses/placements before committing to a long term work placement.
- A long term 'real' work placement where they will learn the skills of a particular industry and where they will gain accreditation that will put them in a strong position against other candidates for future jobs. This may be for as long as 12 months but will certainly last for at least 3.
- An expectation that their host organisations are committed to creating an ongoing job role beyond the placement whenever possible.
- Possibly starting an apprenticeship.
- Receiving money to help them succeed and maintain activity on the programme.
- Being introduced to a wide variety of employers so they can build their personal profile and repertoire in a way that creates a personal relationship with future potential employers in their local area
- Be able to influence how the pilot develops and have easy access to having their say about what works (or does not!).

## BUDGET

Financial aid granted by the European Union to each project will not exceed 80% of the total eligible costs. The applicant should guarantee the co-financing in cash of the remaining 20%. Contributions 'in kind' are not accepted. We intend to bid for approximately 250,000 – 300,000 Euros.

## TIMESCALE

Activities should start between 01/01/2011 and 31/03/2011, for a likely duration of 24 months.

## DEADLINE

The proposals must be submitted electronically online and sent by post or by personal delivery in two hard copies to the Commission, by **31/08/2010** at the latest.

## CONTACT

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