

RUnUP Thematic Network – Newsletter

JUNE 2011

RUnUP Closing Conference Special

Welcome to the RUnUP newsletter for June 2011. Last month saw the network's two-day closing conference take place in Gateshead, UK, which culminated in a high-profile plenary session at Baltic Place on Gateshead Quays featuring Lord Charles Falconer. This special edition of the RUnUP newsletter focuses on the Closing Conference and some of the highlights from the event. For further information, including all conference presentations and photographs, please visit our RUnUP website: www.urbact.eu/runup

Alex Cook, RUnUP Communications Officer

Site Visits

Day 1 of the event saw RUnUP project partners welcomed to Gateshead Civic Centre by the Mayor of Gateshead, Cllr Michael Hood. Partners then held the final project management group meeting, further details of which can be found on the RUnUP website. Following the meeting the group were shown several local sites of interest which link to the activities developed in the Gateshead RUnUP Local Action Plan, such as the Northern Design Centre, the Gateshead International Business Centre and the Business and Innovation Hatchery at Northumbria University.



RUnUP Project
Management Group with
Mayor of Gateshead Cllr
Hood

Northern Design Centre

The Northern Design will be a focal point for the use of design by organisations in the North East of England. Located at Baltic Business Quarter on Gateshead Quays, the Northern Design Centre will be a catalyst for innovation, growth and increased business competitiveness.



The Hatchery at Northumbria University

Northumbria University is one of the biggest creators of graduate enterprises in British higher education. The Enterprise Campus of Northumbria University currently operates 3 Hatchery sites, 1 on campus and the other 2 in partnership with Gateshead and North Tyneside Councils. At any one time 20-30 student or graduate enterprises can be receiving support with the ultimate goal of actively encouraging businesses to remain on Tyneside.

Gateshead International Business Centre

This award-winning business centre is located in the heart of Gateshead and is a key feature of Gateshead's town-centre regeneration and a major asset to local businesses. Businesses located at the IBC benefit from business support services and hi-tech ICT facilities.

RUnUP Partner Presentations

Day 2 of the RUnUP closing conference presented RUnUP partners from across the network with an opportunity to share their experiences of RUnUP in their cities. The session was hosted by the RUnUP Lead Expert Dr. Clive Winters and was split into two parts, each part addressing a fundamental question of working within the URBACT programme:

- 1 – What is the added value of being involved in an URBACT project?**
- 2 – What is the innovative aspect or dimensions of the different local action plans produced by partners?**

During the first session, partners discussed the added value of the URBACT framework, focussing on experiences that would not have arisen without the opportunity of working within the programme's methodology. The conference heard short presentations from: Gateshead Council, Águeda, Patras, Dunkirk, and Campobasso.

There were many commonalities that partners identified as areas of added-value, most notably the formation of URBACT Local Support Groups (ULSGs), the increased profile and visibility within the EU and the platform of exchange with similar European Cities facing similar issues.

Andrew Tate, Economic Development Manger at Gateshead Council spoke of the benefit of having a ULSG focussed on business development at the local level. The RUnUP ULSG in Gateshead is now a formal sub group of the Gateshead Strategic Partnership which has cemented the relationship between the Council, businesses and the universities who will continue to meet regularly with a remit of supporting business development in Gateshead.

In Águeda, the relationships between the different organisations who sit on the ULSG already existed and were strong, so the added value of URBACT was strongest in the profile that Águeda have gained nationally in Portugal and also at the EU level. In Portugal, Águeda are considered as leading the way in developing innovation networks and working with universities.

Full presentations from each partner can be found on the RUnUP website www.urbact.eu/runup

Following a brief break, the conference continued with further presentations from the RUnUP project partners. This time the issue being discussed was partners' Local Action Plans (LAPs), focussing specifically on the innovative aspects of the LAPs. The partners presenting in this session were Gateshead Council, Barakaldo, Solna, Potsdam and Leszno.

Largely partners noted that the innovative element of the RUnUP LAPs is the new focus on partnership working that is fostered through working within RUnUP, with actions in each LAP being delivered by organisations from across the triple helix structures. All of the partner presentations are available on the RUnUP website www.urbact.eu/runup



**RUnUP Partner
presentations – RUnUP
Closing Conference 12
May 2011**

RUnUP Conference – Plenary Session

Following a networking lunch for delegates, the RUnUP Closing Conference took full swing with the plenary session on the afternoon of the 12 May 2011 at Baltic Place. The speakers in the afternoon session represented the triple helix concept that is fundamental to the work of the RUnUP network, bringing together, public sector, private sector and universities. Despite the varying backgrounds of the speakers, there was a commonality between their messages - universities are critical to the development of small-medium sized cities in Europe.

Councillor Mick Henry, Leader of Gateshead Council summed up the afternoon in his closing remarks stating; *“The Knowledge economy is of significant importance to development of the Gateshead Economy and its future prosperity. Only by establishing the strong partnership relationships with the Universities in the North East region - and particularly our more local universities of Newcastle and Northumbria - can Gateshead continue to develop and grow.”*

More information including speaker’s presentations can be found at www.urbact.eu/runup



RUnUP Lead Expert – Dr. Clive Winters

Dr. Clive Winters RUnUP Lead Expert's thoughts on the RUnUP Closing Conference and RUnUP in general as we approach the end of the 30-month implementation phase.

"Cities are fundamental to the process of innovation as a location for business and as an environment where knowledge is created, disseminated and commercialised. The RUnUP network has adopted a unique approach in exploring the relationship of a university in an economic development context focussing on the role of a local authority or municipality in triple helix development.

The delivery of RUnUP funded by the URBACT II programme has helped to deliver an agenda for real change in the RUnUP partner cities through the delivery of the development and implementation phases of the network, the network baseline study and the core components of the URBACT methodology, namely the establishment of a Local Support Group of key stakeholders and the development of local action plans. Alongside this the transnational activities of RUnUP have supported the identification for partners of new ways of working and delivering activity in their City.

The network partner cities have each delivered a Local Action Plan that highlights the economic transformation that they are seeking and the actions which through their triple-helix partners that they will deliver. While the Local Action Plan is a formal output of RUnUP alongside other deliverables it is the city's participation in URBACT and in RUnUP that should provide them with an appropriate platform for the development of local activity. This is about implementing structures and approaches that last beyond the lifetime of RUnUP and can be used not only in exploring the role of Universities in our cities but in other development areas.

The Local Authorities engaged in RUnUP need to continue an open dialogue with their local universities. The action plans present an initial starting, a platform for development that should be used by the project partners and their local stakeholders for enhancing their relationships and developing more detailed and comprehensive actions of a larger scale. While URBACT as the funding programme, Gateshead Council as Lead Partner and myself as Lead Expert have provided the framework and support necessary, the real outcomes of RUnUP will be the activities and their impact that will be delivered within each of the partner cities. The responsibility for this rests firmly with each of the partners and their stakeholders. "

Dr. Clive Winters, RUnUP Lead Expert

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