

# Regional Practice Exchanges: *Intercultural Capacity- Building*

Hosting Invitation  
To Member And Partner  
Organisations  
July 2009



## Background

The Regional Practice Exchanges are an activity format of the Platform for Intercultural Europe which is based on the policy paper it elaborated through public consultation in the course of 2007/8: "The Rainbow Paper. Intercultural Dialogue – from Practice to Policy and back"<sup>1</sup>. This document contains four chapters of recommendations which the Platform for Intercultural Europe put forward at the end of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008 and aims to implement progressively through its work plan. The Regional Practice Exchanges are designed to address the issues of the Rainbow Paper's chapter II on building capacity for intercultural dialogue in (civic) organisations. They examine questions relating to reviewing staff compositions and governance structures, serving constituencies, growing intellectual resources and advancing through comparison in a European perspective.

The first Practice Exchange took place in Malmö, southern Sweden on 15/16th July 2009<sup>2</sup> and brought together professionals from artistic and cultural organisations from across the Nordic region. It was hosted by the Nordic Forum for Interculture. The Platform plans to hold at least two further activities of this kind in the second half of 2009 (and further ones in 2010) and is looking for organisations to host them in other regions of Europe<sup>3</sup>. This outline is intended to inform potential partner organisations about the tasks involved in hosting a Practice Exchange.

## Basic Concept

During a Regional Practice Exchange, representatives of civic (i.e. non-governmental or at least arms-length) organisations from ideally a variety of sectors of activity and from a regional set of countries (sharing a common political and social framework) come together. For one to two days they exchange experiences, practice and methods on intercultural strategies, policies and possibilities. The Regional Practice Exchanges are aimed at practitioners who have some track record of working with intercultural issues. In other words, they are not intended to bring together professionals who are novices or who still need to be convinced of the need to take interculturalism on board. Central to the programme can be the presentation of case studies or practice

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://rainbowpaper.labforculture.org/signup/>

<sup>2</sup> To get inspired you can read the report on [www.intercultural-europe.org](http://www.intercultural-europe.org) (scheduled for end July).

<sup>3</sup> Given the rules applying to our funding in 2010 under the EU Culture programme, we are looking to selecting a host for our next Practice Exchange in 2009 who is located in an EU Member State. Subsequent hosts in 2009 and 2010 can also be located in EU applicant countries (Croatia, Macedonia and Turkey) or in EU associated countries (Serbia).

examples, which are then discussed. The purpose of this exchange is to draw out comparable knowledge, which can inform the Platform for Intercultural Europe's policy work, but also to identify a few priorities, which some volunteers might take forward. An additional option is to bring relevant policy-makers (politicians and civil servants) into the programme of a Practice Exchange (on the second day, for example).

## **The Role of the Host Organisation**

The first motivation for any organisation interested in hosting a Practice Exchange must be to help facilitate learning about ways to make organisations in all their aspects reflect and serve the diversity of the population in which they are embedded. Host organisations must also be motivated to contribute to the larger exercise of informing intergovernmental policy making at European level with the aggregated insights of practitioners and thus to support the Platform for Intercultural Europe in its political role under the EU Structured Dialogue<sup>4</sup>. To host a Practice Exchange it is not a profit-making proposition; rather a host makes in kind (non-monetary) contributions. Hosts do, however, gain valuable inspiration and can receive international attention through a Practice Exchange. Because of the idealistic commitment involved, members of the Platform for Intercultural Europe are given priority amongst applicants (provided their proposals is of the necessary quality).

The role of the host organisation comprises the following principal tasks (details can be negotiated).

- **Proposal of a short event description and programme, which:**

- shows how the basic concept of the Practice Exchanges is adapted to the specific situation of a particular region,
- outlines any history of collaborations which the host organisation might have with the potential participants,
- describes any relevant public policy initiatives of recent years of the countries in question,
- contains a proposed date and venue, and sets out all envisaged practical arrangements.

- **Identification of a minimum of 30 suitable participants who:**

- Come from at least 3 countries, which could be considered to belong to the same region in Europe.
- Work in any domain with an interest in intercultural action (arts & culture, education, youth work, social work etc), but
- are able to contribute to the Practice Exchange in English unless the host organisation is able to provide simultaneous interpretation.
- are willing to cover their own travel cost. (If the host organisation can design a programme, which contains an interesting proposition for participants, we have no general objections against charging a participation fee to cover some expenses. However, a first consideration would be that participants cover their own expenses rather than charge them a fee.)

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<sup>4</sup> For details on the Platform's political role, please go to: <http://www.intercultural-europe.org/template.php?page=political-role>

*Two further points:*

- It is desirable that the participants do not come from one domain alone, but that the event also helps the exchange across sectors (for example that arts & culture organisations are brought together with representatives from organisations which deal with anti-discrimination or minority issues). Cross-sectoral work is a founding principle of the Platform because interculturalism needs broad alliances.
  - The activity must be open to previous participants of the Platform or indeed actively involve them. The Platform secretariat makes proposals accordingly.
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- **Issuing of invitations and handling of the registration management** (this can be negotiated if it poses a problem).
  
  - **Taking charge of the event organisation** (venue, catering and hotel arrangements, etc) (some help from the Platform secretariat negotiable). There should be no venue hire costs (this would be in kind sponsorship by the host organisations).
  
  - **Drawing up a draft budget** for the meeting expenses based on written quotes from any third parties involved (hotels, caterers, etc.). Catering choices should be modest. Accommodation should not normally exceed three star standard.
  
  - **The role of the Platform is to:**
    - Cover the travel expenses of the staff of the host organisation, one night's hotel accommodation for all participants, some venue costs (technical cost and service charge), and all catering costs. The financial support of the Platform should be in the region of 10 000 EUR. We are of course interested in moderate spending, so that we can hold more rather than fewer practice exchanges.
    - Provide the moderator, a commentator, note-taker(s) and a report writer for the event.
    - Promote the results of the Practice Exchange and their inclusion in European level policy discussions.
  
  - **Process And Timing**

Interested organisations should submit their proposal in writing

    - no later than 4<sup>th</sup> September for a Practice Exchange to be held in the second half of October, in November or December of this year
    - and no later than 15<sup>th</sup> October for any Practice Exchange to be held in the first six months of 2010.
    - Applications should be addressed to [dialogue@intercultural-europe.org](mailto:dialogue@intercultural-europe.org).

Proposals (including applied concept description, programme and budget) are examined by the platform secretariat and selected in consultation with its steering group. A host organisation is only considered to be engaged after the signature of a written agreement. After conclusion of an agreement all documents pertaining to a Practice Exchange are formatted in the Platform's organisational style.