

To european institutions working with
the training of child care takers.

INVITATION TO A GRUNDTVIG 1 PARTNERSHIP:



The Watertower Project

- MEDIA AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMPETENCIES IN PRESCHOOL CHILDRENS ADULT ENVIRONMENTS

The title *The Watertower project* was created during a meeting between the IBAF and The Social and Health College in the summer 2004. From the top of the Tower – the highest point in Aarhus – we could see in all directions and the tower itself was a brilliant mixture of old and new: art, technology, offices. We were discussing the implementation and extension of the innovative aarhusian pedagogical projects and suddenly realized, that this Tower – and the fact that we were able to look in all european directions and the fact that water is used in all countries, in very different ways, but lifelong essential to all the cultures – should be the symbol of the project.

Background

Thousands of adults working with child care and parents to preschool children throughout Europe will not be able to act in the media based society and will not be able to meet the challenges presented by the childrens use of the new media. Nor will the childrens adult environments be able to meet the challenges of the increasing demands for learning activities in preschool institutions.

The media gap between the children and their institutions and families are growing and this has three serious consequences:

- the adults will not be able to interact with the media world of the children and thus loose contact with them
- the care takers and the parents will not be able to change the childrens passive use of the new media to an active constructing and learning approach
- the adults will not be able to benefit from the media ressources in their own careers and lives.

The concept

The Watertower project is created to produce, disseminate and implement exampels of practical training and cooperation environments, that will change the adults media exclusion to media fluency.

The basic concept of the project is developed by the IBAF in Germany and can be expressed like this:

- ⇒ the care takers and the parents must acquire technical ICT competencies
- ⇒ the care takers and the parents must acquire competencies to act in the new media based social and communicative environments
- ⇒ the care takers and the parents must be able to handle information and produce information
- ⇒ the care takers and the parents must learn to integrate the media technologies in their own lives
- ⇒ the care takers and the parents must be able to use the new technologies to *include themselves* in the active citizenship communities and to integrate the european dimension in the childrens environments.

The project will have a special focus on institutions and families from underserved social and cultural environments.

The Grundtvig call and the project

From 2000-2004 the Grundtvig program was focused on producing innovative adult learning environments. It still is, but from 2004-2006 the focus will be more on the dissemination and implementation of good innovative practices.

Therefore the Watertower project will be based on extensions of a

large and creative child care project in Aarhus Denmark, running from summer 04 to summer 05. **The Grundtvig cooperation project will, if granted, start after summer 2005 (1.9.2005) and last two years till 31.8.2007.** The child care project in Aarhus is a cooperation between the Social and Health College, IBM and the Municipality of Aarhus. The project uses a blended learning approach and is about IT and multimedia training for child care takers, implementation of creative multimedia practices in the child care institution, cooperation between care takers, children and their parents and the ultimate goal of the project is to produce a wide range of IT and multimedia competencies in the child care environments.

The basic idea

The basic project idea is therefore: the partnership analyses, describes and *extend* the best practice model from Denmark and implement the concepts in the practice of the partner environments in the different partner countries, thereby inspiring and developing innovative training and learning cooperations between institutions and families in these partner environments. The model might be extended and implemented in different ways – with regard to the local and regional conditions and intentions.

It is a key element in the concept, that common european themes will be expressed in small multimedia projects, produced by the children - supported by the trained child care takers and parents. So the computer will be used as a media for integrating common european themes in the life of the institutions and the families. The dissemination of the creative products will support the experience of "being european" in these environments.

The initiative

The project concept is developed on the basis of a dialogue between the IBAF, Germany, and The Social and Health College, Denmark, and we hereby invite institutions working with the training of child care takers throughout Europe to join the project – either as a **key partner (working with the preproposal with deadline 1th of November) or as a regular partner.**

We would especially welcome institutions from the new EU countries and institutions from Southern Europe, because we would like to create a balanced european partnership.

The Watertower project addresses the Grundtvig *The promotion of supply through the development, exchange and dissemination of innovative approaches or good practice* and the specific 2005-6 priority *Parental and family learning* – but will also address several other Grundtvig goals. The project will be a European Cooperation Project within the Grundtvig 1 program.

Preproposal timeline

The production of the preproposal will follow this overall timeline:

| week | action | who |
|---|---|--------------|
| 37 | <i>invitation to european institutions</i> research Grundtvig Call partnership creation | JG / MH |
| 38-40 | working on the project descriptions and budget contact national offices | JG / MH |
| 41 4 th -5 th of October Rendsburg Germany | key partner meeting (possibly financed by the national offices: <i>Preparatory Meeting</i>) basic agreements and action plan | Key partners |
| 42-44 | key partners work on the preproposal | Key partners |
| 44 | preproposal submitted | MH |

If you are interested in joining this very creative project, please contact:

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