

Partner Search for 4-5 partners under the European Commission Enterprise and Industry Directorate General “Entrepreneurial Culture of young People and Entrepreneurship education Programme” Grant Programme 2009

Title of Project:

Rural Entrepreneurial Activity for Disadvantaged Youth (READY).

Theme/Priority Area

The READY project is developed under Lot 2 of the programme and in accordance with the priority ‘Fostering the entrepreneurial mindsets of young people outside the educational environment’. The READY proposal is complimentary to stated initiatives under the Oslo Agenda for Entrepreneurship Education in Europe.

Definition of Youth

For the purposes of the READY project the definition of Youth is between the ages of 16- 25 inclusive.

Project Co-ordinator:

Carlow County Development Partnership Ltd (formerly Carlow LEADER) is the Project Co-ordinator (www.carlowleader.ie) and is a LEADER Local Action Group which has a remit for rural development and social inclusion. The Officials from Carlow County Development Partnership Ltd developing the READY project have over 10 years experience in supporting small and medium sized enterprises and managing transnational projects. The Officials also hold graduate and post graduate qualifications in Business and Entrepreneurship, Agriculture and Rural Development and Youth Work.

Project Justification:

Carlow County Development Partnership Ltd is based in the South East Region of Ireland and covers a population base of 50,349. In Carlow 16% (8,000) of the population are aged between 15-24 years. Employment opportunities for young people in Carlow are now extremely limited due to a collapse of the construction sector, on-going company closures due to a global economic crisis and a traditional dependence on a declining Agriculture sector. The foregoing trends are a cause for major concern as they will force young people to either (a) leave Carlow and move to the larger cities/emigrate in order to find employment or (b) stay in rural areas and remain unemployed and disadvantaged. Both scenarios provide a bleak future with poor prospects for young people in rural areas. To combat the foregoing, this proposal aims to stimulate and nurture an entrepreneurial culture amongst young people in rural areas across the regions in order to equip youth to establish their own enterprises, develop self sufficiency, create employment opportunities and ultimately contribute to the generation of thriving rural communities which are attractive places to live, work and visit.

The key to the success of the READY project is the availability of untapped and indigenous resources in rural areas and their potential to serve as a foundation for the development of rural based enterprises. Therefore, rural youth should be guided and assisted to sensitively realise and convert rural based resources into enterprises e.g. the physical infrastructure may hold potential for the development of tourism or renewable energy enterprises. In addition, youth should have access to capacity building, mentoring and training in how to view rural areas and rural resources from an enterprising perspective. The READY programme will provide the foregoing training and development supports to rural youth.

Project Aim:

The overall aim of the READY project is to develop an entrepreneurial culture amongst rural based youth across the regions in order to generate self and additional employment opportunities which will improve the quality of life in rural areas and combat rural disadvantage.

Project Objectives:

The key objectives of the READY project are:

- To promote entrepreneurship amongst the participating youth through various non-academic activities
- To demonstrate the potential of entrepreneurship as a viable career choice which can lead to self and additional employment creation, rural cohesion and a better quality of life for youth in rural areas.
- To expose the participating youth to real life examples of entrepreneurship across the regions and to equip them with skills and tools e.g. business planning, product development etc, which can be transferred to their rural areas in order to stimulate rural entrepreneurship
- To equip the participating rural youth with additional skills and tools which will enable them to identify the entrepreneurial potential which can be derived from sensitive exploitation of the physical, built and cultural landscape in their rural areas e.g. tourism, leisure, food, renewable energies.
- To establish a cooperative support structure for Young Entrepreneurs to facilitate further knowledge transfer and learning after the conclusion of the READY project.

Project Complimentary with EU Objectives:

The READY project is complimentary with the Strategic Objectives of the EU as follows:

- a. Lisbon Agenda – job creation
- b. Oslo Agenda – entrepreneurial activity amongst youth.
- c. Gothenburg Agenda – job creation
- d. White Paper on Youth - participation, information, voluntary activities and a greater understanding and knowledge of youth
- e. Rural Development Programme 2007 – 2013 – quality of life in rural areas and diversification into non-agricultural enterprises

Project Actions to Include:

At a minimum the READY project actions will include:

- Recruitment and induction of 10-12 rural based youth in each of the participating countries
- Establishment of a transnational steering committee
- Joint and local technical training in business planning and starting a business, training to develop horizontal skills in creativity, initiative, self confidence and personal attributes.
- Development of tools to appraise and develop rural based assets from an enterprising perspective
- Joint and local mentoring for participants from real life entrepreneurs in relevant sectors.
- Exchanges and site visits to models of best practice/real life entrepreneurs in each of the participating countries.
- Transnational or local work placements in relevant sectors, development of individual enterprise plans with guidance from real life entrepreneurs and mentors
- Development of a co-operative structure which would include an information /advisory point for the participants when the project is concluded
- Transfer methodologies, findings and experience to decision makers in order to promote Youth entrepreneurship.
- Closing conference promoting Youth Entrepreneurship and the role of the EU institutions in this regard.

Partner Eligible Areas:

Carlow County Development Partnership is now seeking **4-5 partners** from the following eligible areas:

- EU Member States,
- EEA countries including Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway and
- Accession countries, candidate countries and other countries participating to the CIP including Albania, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Israel, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.

Partner Selection Criteria:

Partners will be selected by Carlow County Development Partnership on the 23rd of March 2009. Selection criteria will be as follows;

1. Organisations remit and experience of entrepreneurship
2. Experience of developing and implementing transnational co-operative projects
3. Organisations remit for Rural Development

All interested partners will be notified of the outcome of the selection process on the 24th of March 2009 by e-mail. Successful Partners will be required to meet once at a central EU location to finalise the proposal. It is expected that this one day meeting will take place on some date between the 6th and 10th of April 2009. (Closing date for submission of application to the EU Commission is the 20th of April 2009.)

Selected Partners will be required to:

- Identify 10-12 suitable young rural dwellers in their region.
- Implement the agreed local and joint actions in order to achieve the stated objectives of the READY project.
- Participate on the READY transnational steering committee in order to steer and monitor project implementation and also mainstream and disseminate the project findings, methodologies and experiences across the regions.
- Provide the necessary 50% co-financing for activities in their region.

Please Note:**Programme Finance**

The Entrepreneurial Culture of Young People and Entrepreneurship Education Programme provides for projects requiring a minimum of E.U. funding of €200,000 but no more than €500,000 (allowing between €33,000-€83,000 EU funding per partner). Community co-financing rate of eligible costs for the READY project is 50%. The Commission grant may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit for any beneficiary. Beneficiaries shall supply evidence of the co-financing provided, either by way of own resources, or in the form of financial transfers from third parties, or in kind. In the case of co-financing in kind, contributions must not exceed 10% of the total cost of the action.

Project Language:

English will be the working language for the READY project.

Interested Partners should complete the attached Expression of Interest Form and send on or before 5.pm (GMT) on the 20th of March 2009 by e-mail to: amurray@carlowdevelopment.ie.

Queries should be directed to Amanda Murray on +353 (59) 9720733.

READY Project

Expression of Interest Form

Administration Details	
Name of Organisation	
Contact Person	
Position in Company	
Qualifications	
Professional Experience	
Telephone	
Web-site	
Organisation Details	
What is the Remit/Purpose of the Organisation?	
What is the Legal Status of the organisation?	
What Geographical Area does the organisation cover?	
Who is the organisation's priority target audience (s)?	
Outline the organisations experience of entrepreneurship? (min of 3 years experience required)	
Outline the organisations experience of transnational projects? (including budget and number of partners)	
Outline the organisations experience of Rural Development	
Please confirm that the organisation will raise match finance up to 50% of the allocation for the organisation? (In-kind is eligible)	