

Version 1,

Minutes for first partner meeting in Copenhagen, 15 – 16 Feb 2016**Content**

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Aims and key activities of the first meeting

The overall aim was to engage the essentials of the project idea and clarify management issues as well as to get to know each other and gain shared ownership and high commitment.

The key activities are:

- Presentation of persons and organisations
- Present and discuss project idea and partners' initial plans for pilot work
- Discuss and adopt documents for legal and financial matters
- Discuss and adopt internal communication, dissemination and evaluation strategies
- Detail planning of next steps
- Evaluation of preceding work and current meeting

Annexes to the agenda

NB: All the mentioned annexes below can be downloaded at the virtual project archive at the Google site - <https://sites.google.com/site/balticlever/home>

Item 1: Formalities

- c) LEVER - WP 02, first meeting, agenda, v2
- d) LEVER – WP 02, meeting attendance List, v1

Item 2: Presentations

- a) PP-Presentation of the Association of Lithuanian Castles and Manors
- PP-Presentation of Foundation of Alternative Educational Initiatives
- PP-Presentation Kulturelle Samråd i Danmark
- Prezi presentation of United Ways

Item 3: The project concept and initial local project plans

- a) The project concept, v5 and Perspectives on background, need and aims, v1
- b) PP-presentation KSD's initial pilot plans

Item 4: The work programme and budget

- a-b) LEVER - Project Bible, v1
- c) LEVER, budget, v3

Item 5: Conditions and demands for a NCM's NGO project

- a-b) The Commissioning Agreement with Nordic Council of Ministers and Audit guidelines

Item 6: Legal agreements

- a) LEVER - Partner Agreement, v1, proposal
- b) LEVER - Rules of Procedure, v1, proposal

Item 7: Financial management

- a-b) LEVER - Financial Guidelines, v1, proposal
- c) Financial templates, see the archive: <https://sites.google.com/site/balticlever/home>

Item 8: Internal Communication, use of ICT and document archive

- a-b) Possible guidelines for internal communication is presented in Project Bible, page 10, section IV

Item 9: Dissemination plans and procedures

- a) The dissemination strategy is presented in the Project Bible, page 10 - 11, section IV,2: Valorisation plan
- b) Local dissemination strategies, all partners (may be distributed during/after meeting)
- c) Proposal for visual design b/ Bente will follow
- d) Initial website design b/Bente will follow

Item 10: Guidelines of monitoring, evaluation and QA

- a) The evaluation methodology is presented in the Project Bible, page 12 -14, section IV,3-4: Evaluation and Verifiable Indicators.

Item 12: Evaluation of the previous work

- c) Evaluation questionnaires for WP 01 and WP 02, will be e-mailed latest primo February to all and up-loaded to the Google archive.

Minutes

Item 1: Formalities

a) Welcome and practical information

Bente welcomed the participants and informed about practical matters.

b) Appoint a moderator and a reporter

For this first meeting, Hans was appointed as moderator and Bente/Hans appointed as reporters.

c) Approval of the agenda

The proposed agenda, version 2 was approved.

d) Sign Attendance List

The Attendance List was signed by all participants.

Item 2: Presentations

a) Present persons, organisations and experiences with international projects

Simona presented the Association of Lithuanian Castles and Manors (LPDA). The PP-presentation is part of the annexes.

Agnieszka presented the Foundation of Alternative Educational Initiatives (FAIE). The PP-presentation is part of the annexes.

Bente presented Kulturelle Samråd i Danmark (KSD). The PP-presentation is part of the annexes.

Vadim presented United Way (UW). The Prezi presentation is part of the annexes.

Tomas gave an oral presentation of Finnish Swedish Youth Association (FSU).

Hans gave an oral presentation of Interfolk (IF).

b) Present possible experiences with Culture activities in sparsely populated areas

LPDA has high experience with culture activities in sparsely populated areas, because most Manor Houses are situated in such areas.

FAIE has to some degree experiences with culture activities in sparsely populated areas, especially in relation to Farmer's Wife Circles" and the organisations of old craftsmen traditions.

KSD has Cultural Councils with activities in such areas, and also good examples of local culture activities that made a change in these local communities.

United Way has as an information and support portal contacts to several culture associations that are active in sparsely populated areas.

FSU main activities are in the Swedish rural areas of Finland, maintained by the regional and local associations.

IF has to some degree knowledge of and networks with lifelong learning associations operating in rural areas.

c) Present expectations to the project, personal and organisational benefits

All participants saw the LEVER project as an opportunity to enhance the professional capacity to support cultural activities in sparsely populated areas and to develop new approaches in the work of their associations.

Item 3: The project idea and plans for local pilot work

a) Dialogue on project concept – need, aims and core activities. Introduction by Bente

Bente outlined the essentials of the project concept as presented in the “Project Bible”, page 5-8.

The meeting confirmed the presented needs, aims and core activities as appropriate.

b) First dialogue on local activity plans - each organisation outlines plans for local pilot work

Bente outlined the local pilot plans of KSD. The PP-presentation is part of the annexes.

Rafal presented the initial pilot plans of FAIE, where local associations of the old craftsmen traditions would be the main partner.

Simona mentioned that LPDA intended to apply best practise from former Manor projects in the development work with 1-2 new manor project.

Vadim mentioned that UW had planned to contact some culture associations working in rural areas to prepare a joint pilot plan.

Tomas mentioned that FSU haven't decided specific pilot plan yet, because first they would need to find local member associations to engage in the pilot work.

Item 4: The work programme and budget - present, discuss and adopt

a) Main planning tool is “The “Project Bible”

Hans presented the main sections of the Project Bible, v1. It includes in a re-ordered form the text from the application and some new more detailed text for the work packages, which include main text from the key activities of the budget as well as more detailed descriptions of the main deliverables of each work package.

b) The overall task plan including division of labour and responsibilities in the partnership

The overall task plan/work programme for the 3-year project year was approved.

c) Clarify the time schedule - do we need more time for some tasks and less to others

The overall time schedule of the 3-year project was approved.

d) Clarify and adjust the budget including full refunding of meetings costs.

The budget, v3 for the 1st project year was approved without changes. The meeting confirmed that

- Travel and subsistence costs for partner meetings for up to two participants from each association are refunded 100 pct.
- Salary costs are refunded with 70 pct.
- In-kind work done by voluntary staff can be used as part of own financing, as far as the value of this in-kind work is well documented.
- Possible costs for external book-keeping and account for each partner must be paid by the partners by use of their refunded work days.

Item 5: The Conditions of the funder, Nordic Councils of Ministers

a) The Commissioning Agreement and Audit guidelines

Hans informed about the Commissioning Agreement and the current lack of official Audit Guidelines. The officer of the NCM'S NGO programme has told that the Audit Guidelines would be ready ultimo January, but they are still not published or distributed.

b) The procedures for reporting and new applications for support to project year 2 and 3

Hans informed that the beneficiary organisation must report the activities after half a year to get the second instalment of the grant for the first year, and report the activities as well as the account with an external audit at the end of the first year to get the last instalment of the first year.

Furthermore, we must re-apply for the next year to get the continuation of the project approved and granted. Unfortunately, the guidelines on how to do it and when hasn't been published yet by NCM.

Item 6: Legal agreements - present, discuss and adopt

a) The Partner Agreement

Hans presented the main issues of the proposed Partner Agreement. The proposal was adopted by the meeting, and signed at the end of the meeting by the parties, except UW, where the director, Alicia Shibitskaya must sign. Vadim got the original Partner Agreement, signed by all except Alicia, so she can sign it in Minsk, and scan it and send it to the parties.

b) Rules of procedure

Hans presented main points of the Rules of Procedure. The proposal was adopted by the meeting.

Item 7: Financial management - present, discuss and adopt

a) Financial Guidelines

Hans presented the main issues of the Financial Guidelines. The meeting discussed the proposals, and it was adopted with the following revisions:

- The last sentence in Item 7: Documentation of salary costs included an outdated text, and was replaced by "The salary levels of the paid staff as well as voluntary staff must be documented, before the salary costs can be refunded or recognised as part of the own financing".
- First sentence in item 13: Schedule for cost refunding. Here the time for reporting of work package costs is increased from 3 to 4 weeks after the conclusion of the work package.

b) Documentation of salary levels, good advices and questions

The meeting discussed how to document the salary costs, especially regarding the documentation of in-kind work provided by voluntary staff. The method of documentation may vary from organisation to organisation.

In general, employment contracts and other supporting documents must be translated to English to clarify the content in case of external audit.

c) Reporting financial costs, procedures with templates, etc

The pre-made cost templates must be used for cost refunding. To clarify the costs for external audit, it may be needed to make an English summary of the costs provided in the attached cost documentation.

Item 8: Internal Communication, use of ICT and document archive

a) Common needs for use of ICT, web meetings, Netiquette

All partners use the Microsoft Office programme. Decided that we

- for the time being only use Skype for one-to-one meetings, but not for web-meetings for the full project team. In such cases with decision-making between the meetings, the written procedure using e-mails may be more efficient;
- as far as possible answer mails from other partners latest 1 day after receiving it, either by full answer or just to confirm we have received it and will answer in a certain time.

b) Needs for common virtual work space, document archive and Dropbox for photos

The meeting discussed the needs and decided that we

- may supplement the Google archive with Dropbox;
- don't need a common virtual work space to edit shared files etc.

Item 9: Dissemination plans and procedures

a - b) The overall dissemination strategy and the local strategies

The dissemination strategy is presented in the "Project Bible", v1, page 10 -11. Bente outlined main points of the dissemination activities; and Hans outlined the main target groups. The meeting recognised the importance of implementing on-going dissemination activities to the main target groups.

Furthermore, the meeting decided

- Bente could latest 1 March distribute a check-list for common dissemination activities, such as news-mails, use of social media, PR at own websites with links to the project website, promotion at meetings in own organisation and at other events, production of leaflets, etc.
- All partners present latest 1 March a list of their main target groups, not only in their own country, but also for possible partners in other countries in the Baltic Sea region (which also was part of the key activities in WP 01: Start-up). Thereafter, Bente can prepare a list on division of contacts to target groups in countries outside the partnership.
- Hans prepares latest 1 March a common leaflet in English in word format, which can be printed as a PDF-leaflet for general dissemination and also be used in the word format as a dummy for all partners to prepare local leaflets with translated or changed text.
- All partners have latest 1st of April completed their first dissemination campaign.

c) The project website

KSD is lead partner for the dissemination, including the project website, but may transfer the main task of designing and launching the website to IF. The website may be designed with inspiration from the website of DFKS, see <http://dfks.dk>

Decided that

- Hans latest 1 March present an initial draft design and menu of the project website, where the overall text is in English. After comments from the partnership, this website can be official launched latest 1 April.
- A short summary of the project may be presented in the national languages at the website, and it will have links to the partners' own websites, where the project is presented in national languages. Bente will latest 1 March present as short standard presentation in English,

which the partners may use and translate as the national text to the website, latest 10 March.

- All partners latest 1 March prepare a short paragraph (5-10 lines) in English, where they state why they think this project is important. These paragraphs can be presented at the project website. For inspiration, see the use of paragraphs at the Culture Guide website: <http://www.cultureguides.eu/partners/project-paragraphs>

c) The visual design of the project materials

The meeting agreed that it would be important to have a common visual identity of the project materials and project website.

Simona proposed she could soon prepare proposals for a project logo and thereby also outline the features of the visual identity. Thereby the budgeted 1 day work for this task can be transferred from KSD to LPDA.

- This proposal of logo may be ready latest 1 March, and after comments from the partnership, it can be finally approved latest 10 March.

Item 10: Guidelines of monitoring, evaluation and QA

a) The evaluation methodology

The evaluation methodology is presented in the “Project Bible”, v1, page 12 -14. Hans outlined the main points of the evaluation activities. The meeting took note of the presentation.

b) Ongoing procedures for monitoring and evaluation of progress, by all partners

Hans mentioned that the progress evaluation could be provided by the use of evaluation questionnaires for all work packages, including partner meetings.

- Decided Hans prepares and distributes such progress questionnaires to the partnership as soon as possible.

c) Important impact evaluations, when and how, by all partners

Hans mentioned, impact evaluation first is relevant, when the project has started to produce results, and it means it will first be relevant in the 2nd project year. The meeting agreed with this.

Item 11: Detail planning of the next steps

a) WP 03: The baseline surveys – what to do, how and when

The meeting discussed the description of the mapping task as presented in the “Project Bible”, page 34-35. It is not so much a genuine baseline survey, but rather an outline of 4-5 good practise examples in the field in each partner country, which we can learn from and extract recommendations and ideas from for the subsequent pilot work. Decided

- All partners present the results of mini-mapping, English ed, approx 5 pages, latest 1 May
- The editor (IF) publish the multilateral English report, including the local mappings and a common introduction and concluding recommendations; approx. 35 pages, latest 15 May

b) WP 04: The overall pilot work strategy and the varied local pilot plans

The meeting discussed the description of the task as presented in the project Bible, page 37-38. Decided

- All partners present the draft version of their local pilot strategy, English edition, approx 3-5 pages, latest 15 June
- The pilot plans are presented, discussed and refined at the second partner meeting, 20 – 22 June 2016 in Lithuania.
- All partners deliver their final pilot strategy, latest 1 July 2016
- The editor (KSD) publishes the multilateral pilot strategy compendia, English PDF-edition, approx 20 pages, including the local plans and a common introduction and concluding recommendations; latest 5 Aug 2016.

c) WP 05: The second partner meeting in Lithuania – what, where and when

Simona presented possible meeting places at Manors in Lithuania. The presentation is part of the annexes.

- Decided the meeting take place Monday – Wednesday, 20 – 22 June 2016 at a manor at the country site.
- Simona will clarify best place with good logistic for travel and good extra culture programme, and inform the partners as soon as possible, latest 15 March 2016.

d) WP 07a: The upstart of dissemination activities

The detail planning of the dissemination activities until next partner meeting was discussed and decided above in item 7: Dissemination.

Item 12: Evaluation of the previous work

a) Oral evaluation round on WP 01: Start-up planning

Overall the partners thought that a separate work package for preparing the management questions and presentations to the first meeting gave more time and quality to the initial planning.

b) Oral evaluation round of WP 02: The first partner meeting

Bente: Good finally to meet the partners. The meeting did proceed as it should. It looks good for the future cooperation.

Tomas: Interesting to meet you all. Look forward to realising the aims of the project.

Vadim: Happy to meet you all. It has been interesting to hear about the different organisations and their experiences in the field. I will be happy to inform the office at home about the meeting and the decision taken.

Rafal: Glad to participate and meet you all. The tasks seem clearer now, and I look forward to implement the project plans.

Agnieszka: Nice to meet you all here in Copenhagen. Interesting for our organisation to enter into this new area of culture activities. We expect to gain important outcome of the project.

Regina: Thank you for being part of this interesting project. Hope to share the challenges with all and gain new experiences with high relevance for your organisation.

Simona: Nice to meet you all and to get a clearer picture of the task to fulfil. I look forward to implement the project.

Hans: Happy, we finally meet after a long initial period, first with preparing the application and then to start the project. It has been a positive meeting with a good atmosphere and shared commitment. It looks good for the next step in the project.

c) Fill-in the evaluation questionnaires for WP 01 and WP 02 (latest 2 weeks after the meeting)

Hans will as soon as possible send the evaluation questionnaires for WP 01 and WP 02 to the partnership, so they can be filled-in latest 2 weeks after the meeting.

Item 13: A.O.B. (any other business)

The moderator thanked all for a positive contribution to the meeting. Bente thanked the moderator for the needed moderation, and all thanked Bente for her job as host.