

	URBACT III Programme Manual	Fact Sheet 2B Implementation Networks
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1. Main objectives and expected results

As stated in the URBACT III Operational Programme¹, for all cities in Europe mobilizing public or private, local, regional or national resources the quality of the implementation phase of an integrated urban strategy and of the corresponding actions in terms of speed, quality of execution, participatory process is essential to achieve the results targeted in the planning phase.

The URBACT programme has a role to play in providing cities with the support needed to improve the implementation and delivery of their integrated urban action plans.

Moreover, an increased importance is being placed on the urban dimension of EU structural funds, in particular article 7 of the ERDF regulation² which requires a minimum of 5% of the national ERDF allocation to be allocated to integrated sustainable urban development actions.

Implementation Networks are a new URBACT tool designed to assist cities in an organized process of exchange and learning across Europe. The main aim of these networks is to improve the implementation of integrated strategies/plans for sustainable urban development.

Key Features of Implementation Networks

Participation in Implementation Networks will be limited to cities which have an integrated urban strategy/plan approved by the city council and have secured funding for the implementation of this strategy/plan.

By taking part in an Implementation Network, cities with integrated strategies/plans focusing on similar thematic priorities can exchange and share experiences, discuss problems and seek possible solutions and generate new ideas to address challenges related to the different dimensions of the implementation process.

¹ URBACT III Operational Programme, section 2.A, page 30

² ERDF Regulation 1301/2013

Cities should start by identifying the main challenges of the implementation process they wish to address in the framework of an Implementation network

Challenges cities face during the implementation of integrated urban strategies/plan can relate to:

- Shift from a strategy to an operational plan
- General project management (including re-organization of municipal structures and creation of cross-department teams, organisation of the delivery chain)
- Vertical integration and governance (with other tiers of government concerned by the integrated strategy/plan),
- Project selection
- Public procurement
- Involvement of key local stakeholders in the implementation process (focusing on a participatory approach using appropriate partnership mechanisms)
- Monitoring and evaluation procedures (evaluation planning, establishing appropriate monitoring tools and results framework)
- Communication on the actions being implemented.

According to the local context, cities may decide to focus on those challenges of the implementation process that are relevant for them. Nevertheless cities involved in Implementation Networks will be expected to have a strong focus on the challenges related to the monitoring and evaluation frameworks and procedures.

Cities willing to get involved in Implementation Networks shall also commit to work on the different dimensions of the implementation process involving all key local stakeholders concerned by the integrated strategy for sustainable urban development (from within the local administration and also outside, civil society, private sectors, associations, Managing Authorities, etc.). These key stakeholders will be gathered in an URBACT Local Group. They will be actively involved in the transnational exchange activities.

Main outcomes and results

As result of their participation in an Implementation Network, city shall commit to produce an Operational Framework for implementation with concrete solutions and tools to effectively address the identified challenges in relation to implementation process. The Operational Framework for implementation will thus be both a driver of the exchange and learning activities, and a key concrete output of their participation in the Implementation Network. The URBACT Local Group should be actively involved in the development of this Operational Framework.

Through the transnational exchange activities at network level and the production of the Operational Framework for implementation, cities involved in Implementation Networks will draw lessons from their experience; will learn from one another and from URBACT experts. Building on the transnational exchange and learning activities, networks will thus be expected to share, with the outside world (beyond the network), this wealth of practical knowledge, management instruments and tools, recommendations, good practices, etc.

Support at Programme level

The URBACT Programme provides each Implementation Network and their partners with a budget for transnational and local activities. In addition, each network will have a budget for the appointment experts to support partners in implementing their activities focusing on thematic content and methods/tools for exchange and learning.

In addition to the activities implemented by the network themselves, the URBACT Programme offers regular training and capacity-building actions for partners and local stakeholders involved in networks. In doing so, URBACT intends to go beyond individual learning and support authorities to improve the way they are working with their communities for the effective implementation of integrated strategies/plans for sustainable urban development.

2. Network development

The URBACT Programme foresees a two-phase process for Implementation Networks. The process includes:

- **First phase:** a 6-month phase for the definition of the main challenges of the implementation process to be addressed by the network and the development of a complete project proposal in the form of a Phase 2 Application
- **Second phase:** a 24-month phase for the implementation of the exchange activities, at transnational and local level and the production of the expected outputs

In the framework of Calls for Proposals, interested beneficiaries are invited to submit a Phase 1 Application including information related to the network's thematic focus (building on the thematic focus of the partners' integrated strategy/plan), a first definition of the challenges of the implementation process to be addressed, the proposed partnership to be composed by 7 to 9 cities and the rationale about why and how partners are willing to address the identified challenges.

Following a first eligibility check and a qualitative assessment of Phase 1 Applications, the Monitoring Committee approves the best proposals for Phase 1.

The main aim of the 6-month phase is to provide partners of Implementation Networks with time and resources to ensure the development of a common vision of the challenges related to the implementation process of integrated strategies/plan to be addressed through the Operational Framework for implementation, the identification of potential contributions and complementarities among partners as well as the elaboration of a shared methodology for the exchange activities.

Phase 2 applications developed during phase 1 are subject to a new eligibility check and qualitative assessment to get the final approval by the Monitoring Committee and be funded for the 24-month Phase 2.

Detailed information on the application process is provided in Fact Sheet 2D "Network Creation" as well as in the Terms of Reference of the Call for Proposals for Implementation Networks.

3. Partnership

The following sections describe eligible beneficiaries that can act as Lead Partners and provides information about targeted beneficiaries to be involved in the partnership for Implementation Networks.

3.1 Targeted eligible beneficiaries

Eligible targeted beneficiaries for Implementation Networks are only cities³ fulfilling the following specific criteria:

- Strategy/Plan: Having an integrated strategy/plan for sustainable urban development, addressing all three dimensions of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental sustainability), including a participative approach in its design and implementation and having received formal approval by the city council
- Funding: Having secured funds for a significant proportion of projects/actions listed in the action plan in order to demonstrate that the city is ready to enter/has entered the implementation phase

For Implementation networks eligible targeted beneficiaries include cities implementing integrated strategies/plans for sustainable urban development in the framework of Article 7 and 8 of the ERDF Regulation for 2014-2020.

Further details on the criteria for the definition of eligible targeted beneficiaries may be provided in the Terms of Reference of the Calls for Proposals for Implementation Networks.

3.2 Partnership of Implementation Networks

The partnership of Implementation Networks shall include minimum 7 and maximum 9 eligible targeted beneficiaries (including the Lead Partner).

The proposed partnership shall be composed right from the start, already at the stage of phase 1 application. Projects approved and funded for phase 1 shall make the most of the 6- month development phase to test the initial partnership, partners' commitment and capacity to address the identified challenges related to the implementation process of integrated strategies/plans for sustainable urban development.

³ As defined in the the URBACT III Operational Programme, under URBACT III, the beneficiary "city" refers to the public local authority representing:

- cities, municipalities, towns;
- Infra-municipal tiers of government such as city districts and boroughs in cases where they are represented by a politico-administrative institution having competences for policy-making and implementation in the policy area covered by the URBACT network concerned in which they are willing to get involved;
- Metropolitan authorities and organized agglomerations in cases where they are represented by a politico-administrative institution having delegated competences for policy-making and implementation in the policy area covered by the URBACT network concerned.

The Implementation Network partnership shall:

- Be composed by cities from at least 3 different Member/Partner States
- Be balanced with cities from More Developed, Less Developed and Transition Regions⁴. Networks composed by 7 partners shall include at least 3 cities from Less Developed Regions. Networks composed by 8 or 9 partners shall include at least 4 cities from Less Developed Regions.

Phase 1 shall be used to consolidate the partnership. During Phase 1 it may happen that partners withdraw from the projects. In any case, the partnership proposed for phase 2 shall be composed of minimum 7 and maximum 9 partners including the Lead partner city, and respect the above principles.

Eligible beneficiaries may participate in no more than 2 URBACT networks under each call for proposals.

Detailed information on the role and responsibilities of partners are provided in Fact Sheet 2E Network Management.

3.3 Lead Partners of Implementation Networks

In the context of URBACT III, for each project proposal, a Lead Partner shall be appointed by the beneficiaries among themselves.

Only cities (see definition provided above) from the 28 EU Member States and from Switzerland and Norway (Partner States) can be Lead Partner of an Implementation Network.

Lead Partners are key actors of approved Implementation Networks. They are responsible for project implementation and financial management and for the coordination of the partnership.

A city may not be Lead Partner in more than one project at a time whatever the type of network.

Further information on the roles and responsibilities of Lead Partners and partners is available in fact Sheet 2E "Network Management"

4. Activities of Implementation Networks

The activities to be implemented by Implementation Networks, in each of the 2 phases, are organized around work packages. Each work package has specific objectives, defined actions and related expected deliverables.

The organization of the activities in work packages allows partners to develop a shared understanding about the project's structure, activities, objectives and expected results; it increases the capacity of Lead Partners to follow up the implementation of the expected activities and facilitates the procedure for reporting and accounting of expenditure.

The following sections describe the 2 work packages of Phase 1 and the 4 Work Packages of Phase 2.

⁴ Refer to the detailed [map](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/how/is-my-region-covered/) available in the DG Regional and Urban Policy website (http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/how/is-my-region-covered/)

4.1 – Work plan for Phase 1

During phase 1, partners involved in approved networks will work, with the support of the Lead Expert, on the development of the project final proposal for Phase 2 including: detailed definition of the main challenges of the implementation process to be addressed, baseline situations of all cities involved including detailed description of integrated strategies/plans, methodology for the exchange activities, expected results, etc.

The duration of Phase 1 is 6 months, starting from the official notification of approval that follows the decision by the Monitoring Committee.

Phase 1 of an Implementation Network shall be structured around 2 Work Packages:

- WP1 – Project Management and coordination
- WP2 – Project Development

- **Work Package 1 – Project management and coordination**

The activities to be developed under WP1 will be designed to achieve the following aims:

- To ensure a sound management and coordination of the project concerning both the overall project management and all aspects linked to the financial management.
- To organize the work between the partners by building a strong collaborative relationship. The organization of the partners' responsibilities shall result in the successful submission of all required document for the phase 2 application.

Activities to be implemented under WP1 shall include the following actions:

- To recruit appropriate staff to ensure efficient project management. For the Lead Partner, the staff required will be significantly more than for a project partner. The Lead Partner shall appoint, already in Phase 1, a project coordinator, a finance officer and a communication officer – these activities will require the equivalent of 2 full posts.
- To hold regular management meetings to ensure strong communication between partners concerning project coordination
- To submit the reporting documents requested for Phase 1
- To attend training sessions and other events organized by the URBACT Secretariat
- To receive and transfer ERDF funds to partners (responsibility of the Lead Partner)

- **Work Package 2 – Project development**

The activities to be developed under WP2 will be designed to achieve the following aims:

- To define the final partnership
- To identify the main challenges related to the implementation process to be addressed by each partner through the Operational Framework for implementation (including partners' expectations and potential contribution, focus of the Operational Framework for implementation, provisional composition of the URBACT Local Groups)
- To design the methodology for exchange activities both at transnational and local level

Activities to be implemented under WP2 shall include the following actions:

- To organize at least two transnational meetings gathering all partners
- To complete the Baseline study describing the local context and the nature of the integrated strategy/plan for each partner, the alignment of the policy issues of each strategy/plan with those of the wider network, the main challenges related to the implementation process each partner wants to address (as described in section 1 and further detailed in the Call for Proposals), the focus of the Operational Framework for implementation to be produced, the methodology for the exchange activities.
- To complete and submit the Phase 2 Application

4.2 – Work Plan for Phase 2

Phase 2 shall be devoted to the implementation of the activities, at transnational and local level, aiming at improving the capacities of each city involved to implement integrated strategies/plans for sustainable urban development.

The duration of Phase 2 is 24 months, starting from the official notification of approval, following the final decision of the Monitoring Committee.

Phase 2 of an Action Planning Network shall be structured around 4 Work Packages:

- WP1 – Project management and coordination
- WP2 – Transnational exchange activities
- WP3 – Impact on local governance and urban policies
- WP4 – Communication and dissemination

- **WP1 – Project management and coordination**

As for Phase 1, the main aim of this work package is to ensure a sound management and coordination of the network concerning both the overall project management and all aspects linked to the financial management. All the tasks outlined as requirements for Phase 1 remain relevant for Phase 2.

- **WP2 – Transnational exchange activities**

Transnational exchange activities are the core actions to be carried out by Implementation Networks. They are to be conceived as milestones for the network as they allow the exchange of experience among partners and their URBACT Local Group members, the consolidation of knowledge on specific dimensions of the implementation process of integrated strategies/plans, the mutual support between partners (peer support), etc.

The lessons learnt and good practices identified during the transnational activities of exchange are key ingredients of the Operational Framework for implementation that each city commits to produce as result of the involvement in Implementation Networks.

The experiences of other cities will inspire partners that will translate and adapt this knowledge at local level to define concrete answers and solutions to the challenges for an effective implementation of integrated strategies/plans for sustainable urban development.

The activities to be developed under this work package will be designed to achieve the following aims:

- To foster the exchange of experiences among project partners and identify good practices

- related to the implementation of integrated strategies/plans
- To strengthen the practical knowledge and skills of partners in the policy area addressed by the integrated strategy/plan as well as related to the dimensions of the implementation process addressed by the network
- To draw lessons from the exchanges on an ongoing basis and to apply them at local level, especially through the production of the enhanced Implementation Plan.

More especially, activities to be implemented under WP2 shall include the following actions:

- To organise transnational exchange seminars focussing on specific challenges related to the implementation process. Transnational seminars should be a combination of different components including learning sessions, field visits, peer review sessions, local dissemination activities, etc
- To produce thematic outputs (interim and final) capturing the knowledge generated during the transnational seminars and the main findings of the exchange activities focussing on solutions and tools addressing the main challenges related to the implementation process of integrated urban strategies/plans.

- **WP3 – Impact on local governance and urban policies**

In order to foster the impact of the transnational activities on the local capacity to implement integrated strategies/plans for sustainable urban development, each partner joining an Implementation network is required to involve relevant local stakeholders.

Partners will thus commit to set up and run a URBACT Local Group that will gather civil servants of different department, elected representatives as well as relevant stakeholders (representatives of other tiers of government, Managing Authorities, local agencies, NGOs, associations, etc.) concerned by the implementation of the integrated strategy/plan.

Local stakeholders involved in the URBACT Local Group will play a key role in the production of the Operational Framework for Implementation that each city commits to produce.

The activities to be developed under this work package are designed to achieve the following aims:

- To ensure a participative approach in the different dimensions of the implementation process of integrated urban strategies/plans
- To strengthen the capacity of local stakeholders in the implementation of integrated urban strategies/plans
- To support transnational exchange activities through the preparation of inputs for the network meetings (e.g. case studies, site visits, etc.)
- To ensure dissemination of lessons learnt (good practices, policy recommendations, etc.) to local stakeholders involved in urban development

More especially, activities to be implemented under WP3 shall include the following actions:

- To set up and run a URBACT Local Group in each partner city
- To associate key stakeholders to the steering process of the implementation of integrated urban strategies/plans
- To involve key stakeholders in the production of the Operational Framework for implementation
- To take part to the exchange activities at transnational level and contribute to these activities (participation to seminars, organisation of study visits, production of inputs, etc.)

- To take part to the capacity-building activities organised by URBACT for core URBACT Local Group members.
 - To build cooperation relations with the Managing Authorities of Operational Programme
- **WP4 – Communication and dissemination**

URBACT projects have to share their results and outputs with their partner cities but also with urban stakeholders, policy and decision makers and practitioners across Europe. Therefore, communication and dissemination shall be key activities for the project.

The activities to be developed under this work package will be designed to achieve the following aims:

- To ensure communication on the network's activities on an ongoing basis, both to network partners and to urban practitioners outside the network
- To ensure ongoing dissemination of the network's results and findings, both among network partners and beyond, to the wider community of urban practitioners outside the network

Activities to be implemented under WP4 shall include the following actions:

- Regular update of the network web page on the URBACT website
- Production and dissemination communication material
- Organisation of a final event open to all target groups and dissemination events at partners' level
- Organisation of local dissemination events by each partner
- Participation to external events to promote the network

Approved projects will be expected to respect the URBACT programme graphic charter.

5. Budget for Implementation Networks

5.1 - General Budget Information

The total eligible cost for an Implementation Network shall be between 600.000€ and 750.000€. The total budget shall be calculated based on the number of project partners and the specific identified needs of these partners. Implementation Networks requesting the higher budget allocation shall be required to justify this request by demonstrating a higher number of project partners or increased project activity. The Monitoring Committee can approve a lower than requested budget should they consider this is justified.

Implementation Networks shall be financed using European Regional Development Fund and local, regional or national contributions from city partners.

The ERDF co-financing rate for an Implementation Network is calculated at network level on the basis of the different co-financing rates for each partner.

- Partners from 'more developed' regions shall be co-financed at up to 70% by ERDF
- Partners from 'less developed' and 'transition' regions shall be co-financed at up to 85% by ERDF
- Partners from Norway shall be co-financed at up to 50% by Norwegian national funds
- Partners from Switzerland shall be co-financed at up to 50% by Swiss national funds

The calls for proposals shall provide detailed instructions for the creation of an Implementation network budget and some examples to assist applicants. Further information related to the eligibility of expenditure can be found in Factsheet 2F - Financial management and control.

5.2 – Implementation Network Budget

An Implementation network shall operate in two phase as outlined in previous sections of this Factsheet. The total eligible cost for the network combining Phases 1 and 2 shall be between 600 000€ and 750 000€ as outlined in the previous section. The Phase 1 total eligible cost shall not exceed 150.000€.

Considering the foreseen workload dedicated to the phase 1 to ensure a well balanced and coherent partnership and a high quality baseline study and phase 2 application form the costs incurred for this first phase of work shall be considered eligible for refund regardless of the approval of the project into Phase 2.

The budgets for Phase 1 and 2 shall be presented using 5 budget categories as follows:

- i) Staff costs**
Expenditure on staff members employed by the partner organisation, who are formally engaged to work on the project
- ii) Office and Administration Costs**
Operating and administrative expenses of the partner organisation that support delivery of project activities
- iii) Travel and Accommodation Costs**
Expenditure on travel and accommodation costs of staff of partner organisations and associated partners that relate to delivery of the project. This category included travel costs, accommodation costs, costs of meals, visa costs, and/or daily allowances/per diems.
- iv) External expertise**
Expenditure for external expertise and services provided by a public or private body or a natural person outside of the partner organisation. This category covers costs paid on the basis of contracts or written agreements and against invoices or requests for reimbursement to external experts and service providers that are requested to carry out certain tasks or activities, linked to the delivery of the project. This category also includes all costs linked to the organisation of meetings.
- v) Equipment**
Expenditure for equipment purchased, rented or leased by a partner, necessary to achieve objectives of the project.

For each cost category a separate Fact Sheet has been developed providing detailed information about the eligibility of costs, the methods for calculation and programme specific rules.

6. Expertise for Implementation Networks

6.1. General framework

The URBACT Programme provides to each approved Implementation Network with an additional specific budget for the appointment of experts. These experts support partners in implementing their transnational activities with both thematic content and methods for exchange and learning. They are expected to work in accordance with the URBACT networking framework and use the tools provided

by the URBACT Programme. Dedicated training sessions shall be delivered to URBACT networks experts as needed.

6.2. Services to be provided by URBACT experts to networks

The expertise resource is meant to be made available to the whole partnership. More especially, the expertise envelope should provide partners with a package of services including:

1. Expertise for the design and delivery of transnational exchange and learning activities:

- Definition and delivery, in strong cooperation with the Lead Partner and partners, of the methodology for exchange activities at transnational level to ensure high level of sharing, mutual learning and transfer of knowledge. Appointed experts will support the partnership with the definition of the main focus, design of the work plan, definition of the main expected outputs, and they play a key in the delivery of networks transnational activities (including preparation of input, collecting information from partners, designing agenda with appropriate methodology, moderating sessions during meeting, drawing lessons and reporting after meetings)

2. Thematic expertise:

- Definition and delivery of thematic inputs that will nourish the exchange and contribute to the learning process of partners involved
- Production of thematic documentation and outputs in English that will capture and disseminate lessons learnt, good practices, etc, both to network's partners and to an external audience

3. Expertise support to local authorities and other stakeholders in designing and delivering integrated and participatory policies

- Support to partners at local level in involving key stakeholders and in co-producing the main expected local outputs (especially enhanced Implementation plans).
- Support to partners in making use of tools and methods for participatory design and implementation of integrated urban policies/action plans

In order to improve the efficiency of the support provided by experts to URBACT Networks, expertise will be made available to approved networks as follow:

- A Lead Expert will assist the partnership over the entire duration of the network (Phase 1 and 2) both with expertise for the design and delivery transnational exchange and learning and thematic expertise
- Ad-Hoc Experts may also be recruited to provide support on specific needs identified by the network concerning the methodology for exchange and learning activities, thematic expertise and local support to partners

URBACT network experts are also expected to work in close collaboration with the URBACT Joint Secretariat and contribute to capitalization and dissemination of network results. They shall use the tools and guidance provided by the programme for effective delivery of activities and outputs (eg.

related to transnational exchange learning activities, production of network outputs, organization of network seminars, etc.). In this perspective, they shall take part to dedicated information and training sessions organized by the URBACT Joint Secretariat for the network experts. These will be part of their main tasks and work programmes.

6.3. Budgetary elements for expertise

Each network shall have an allocation of € 127 500 maximum to cover the costs of expertise over the lifetime of the project (Phase 1 and Phase 2). This budget available for expertise is additional to the project budget. As the daily expertise fee for URBACT experts is set at 750 euros/ day all taxes included, this budget corresponds to an envelope of 170 days (including participation to training sessions and other activities at Programme level).

For phase 1, the expertise envelope available for each network shall be limited to 30.000 euros (40 days of expertise, including participation to information and training sessions organized by the URBACT Joint Secretariat). In Phase 1, only one single expert, designated as Lead expert, may be appointed. No additional ad hoc experts shall be appointed from the programme envelope. Days not used under phase 1 from the available envelope may be used during phase 2.

For Phase 2, the allocation of days to Lead Expert shall not exceed 80% of the days remaining in the expertise envelop after Phase 1.

The allocation covers days of expertise only. Travel and accommodation costs for URBACT Experts shall be covered by the network budget.

Implementation Networks can contract additional experts for specific tasks (e.g. coordination of the URBACT Local Group, local animation, technical assistance, etc.) through the network budget under the category "External Expertise".

6.4 Appointment of URBACT network experts

a) The pool of validated URBACT experts

The additional expertise budget allocated to network shall be used to appoint experts who have been validated in the pool of URBACT Experts. Network Lead partners and partners will have to select their Lead expert and potential ad hoc experts from this pool.

The pool of validated URBACT Experts shall be created by means of an open Call for URBACT Experts defining the services to be performed to support networks and assessment criteria. An external service provider, to be selected through an open Call for Tender, will support the URBACT Joint Secretariat with the assessment and validation of the applications received by candidates URBACT Experts, following the assessment criteria outlined in the Call for Experts.

The list of all validated URBACT experts will be available on the URBACT website, with a search engine (allowing a search per field of expertise, country of residence, etc.). In cases where network Lead partners and partners do not find the relevant expertise in the pool of validated URBACT experts, they may invite experts to apply for validation following the procedure defined in the open Call for Experts.

b) Appointment of URBACT expert by network Lead partners –Phase 1

When submitting their Phase 1 Application, applicants are requested to designate the Lead Expert they intend to work with if the network is approved for Phase 1 and who will be in charge of producing the project baseline study. Ideally, this expert shall continue supporting the network as Lead expert in phase 2 if the project is approved for phase 2. Yet this appointment will have to be renewed for phase 2 once the project is approved, based on the Lead partner and partners' request.

The Lead Expert shall be proposed only from the pool of URBACT validated experts. No ad hoc experts may be commissioned during phase 1.

After the approval of the project proposal by the Monitoring Committee for phase 1, Lead Partners shall submit to the Secretariat an Expertise Request Form in which they confirm the expert they wish to commission for phase 1, building on discussions within the initial partnership.

The main tasks to be performed by the Lead expert under phase 1, the expected deliverables and work plan will be standard for all Lead experts, within the available envelope (40 days, 30.000 euros).

Following validation of the Lead partner's request by the URBACT Joint Secretariat, a contract will be established between the expert and the URBACT Managing Authority. The Lead partner shall be responsible for certifying the services performed by the Lead expert and validating the expert's activity reports (including deliverables, number of days claimed, etc.)

Lead Experts cannot be appointed to support more than one network at a time (whatever the type of network).

c) Appointment of URBACT expert by network Lead partners –Phase 2

After the approval of the project proposal by the Monitoring Committee for phase 2, Lead Partners shall submit to the URBACT Joint Secretariat an Expertise Request Form which defines the main tasks of the proposed Lead Expert, the deliverables expected, the work plan of the Expert and the number of days to be allocated. These components shall be discussed and agreed with project partners. Changes of Lead expert between phase 1 and 2 are possible, depending on phase 1 experience and achievements.

For Phase 2, the allocation of days to Lead Expert shall not exceed 80% of the days remaining in the expertise envelope after Phase 1.

Lead Experts cannot be appointed to support more than one network at a time (whatever the type of network).

Ad-Hoc Experts can be appointed by approved networks under phase 2, at the beginning of phase 2 or during the network life cycle as needs emerge. The procedure for appointment shall be similar as the one outlined above for Lead experts.

Lead experts and ad hoc experts shall be selected from the pool of validated URBACT Experts, only.

Following validation of the Lead partner's request by the URBACT Joint Secretariat, a contract will be established between the expert and the URBACT Managing Authority. The Lead partner shall be responsible for certifying the services performed by the Lead expert and validating the expert's activity reports (including deliverables, number of days claimed, etc.)

7. Capacity-building activities

In addition to the activities implemented by Implementation Networks, the URBACT Programme offers regular training and capacity-building schemes to local stakeholders in order to improve the capacity of cities to manage sustainable urban policies and practices in an integrated and participative way.

Doing so, URBACT intends to go beyond individual learning and to allow local authorities to improve the way they are working with their communities.

Partners of Implementation Networks will be invited to participate in the following capacity-building activities:

- National capacity-building seminars – this tool, tested under URBACT II, provides tools and methods to enhance capacities of local stakeholders to co-produce and implement integrated and participatory strategies for sustainable urban development. National seminars are delivered in national languages. Member/Partner States are strongly involved in these sessions, which foster dialogue between national and local players on urban policies and allow project partners to better understand the national context in which they are operating.
- URBACT Universities, which proved highly successful under URBACT II (2011 and 2013). The URBACT University consists of a large transnational capacity-building event centred on the URBACT method and aiming to provide URBACT partners and their local stakeholders with tools and methods to develop and implement integrated and participatory action-planning. Project partners from all URBACT networks come together to “learn by doing”, share good practices and test different tools they can apply in the work of their local partnerships at city level.
- Other ad hoc capacity-building actions based on established needs will be developed for specific stakeholder groups involved in the design and implementation of sustainable urban policies (e.g. elected representatives, Managing authorities of Operational Programmes, national authorities, etc.).