

EVALUATION OF 5 NATIONAL PRACTICE TRANSFER INITIATIVES

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Summary

The URBACT programme is seeking external expert support to evaluate the results of the five National Practice Transfer Initiatives (NPTI) that were launched in June 2021, coming to an end in December 2022. Specifically, the contractor will investigate the usefulness of these initiatives, impact and results at local level and present the key lessons to help inform any future initiatives under URBACT IV.

Background

The first generation of URBACT Transfer networks sought to replicate a recognised URBACT Good Practice to other cities across Europe.

Early 2021, the URBACT Monitoring Committee decided to pilot a similar scheme to transfer networks but for the first time at national level, called National Practice Transfer Initiative (NPTI).

An NPTI seeks to further transfer a good practice, which was first transferred, adapted, or developed under an URBACT III transfer network, to non-URBACT cities, **at national level and in national languages** from June 2021 to December 2022.

An NPTI involves: a *transfer city*, which ‘holds’ the good practice to be transferred to the other non URBACT cities; 5 to 7 *participating cities* (cities that were never involved in URBACT III networks); at least one *URBACT expert* who supports the cities in their transfer process both in terms of methodology and content.

The initiatives are managed by National URBACT Points. A NUP which coordinates an NPTI receives up to EUR 111 000 for implementing the initiative. This budget covers staff costs for NUP, costs for meetings amongst the participating cities (travel and accommodation of city representatives, venue rental, catering, and equipment), webinars, trainings, and communication. A further EUR 45 000 is available for expertise fees.

Each NPTI follows a methodology proposed by NUP, experts and cities for the transfer process. This methodology includes meetings amongst the participating cities, creation of an URBACT Local Group (ULG) per city, and a transfer plan per city with the objective to implement some or all the actions already in the course of 2022.

Expected results of the NPTI:

- A new project/strategy or policy at local level for the benefit of the population
- Strengthened skills of participants in participatory and integrated policy making
- Feeding into or serving national urban policies
- Increased motivation amongst partners to participate in a future URBACT network

Another potential result would be the continuation of the NPTI within URBACT IV, if the pilot is deemed to have been successful.

On 9 March 2021, the URBACT Monitoring Committee approved the funding and testing of the following five National Practice Transfer initiatives.

The table below summarises the five NPTI , providing details of the transfer city 'holding' the good practice to be transferred, the transfer network under this practice was initially developed, and a summary of the good practice.

| NUP | Transfer city | URBACT network | Practice |
|-----------------------------|---------------|------------------|--|
| Czech Republic and Slovakia | Brno | OnStage | Involving students from socially excluded areas, incl. Roma, in music education as one of the tools for social change |
| Estonia | Tallinn | OnBoard | Creating a holistic learning environment for students with the participation of NGOs, entrepreneurs, and other local actors (a so-called Educational Innovation Network) |
| Ireland | Cork | Playful Paradigm | Introducing opportunities for play throughout the city for social, environmental and economic benefits |
| Italy | Mantova | C-Change | Engaging and training arts and cultural sectors to contribute to the fight against climate change |
| Slovenia | Idrija | RegrowCity | Establishing an NGO platform to connect citizens in need with different initiatives and services |

In total, **32 non-URBACT cities** are involved in the five initiatives:

CZ-SK: Broumov, Plzeň, Neratovice, Trenčín, Banská Bystrica, Lučenec, Nitra;

Estonia: Elva, Kambja, Kohila, Narva, Rae, Saue, Viru-Nigula;

Ireland: Donegal town, Sligo town, Rush, Rathdrum, Portlaoise;

Italy: Rovereto, Cuneo, Ferrara, Siena, Avellino, Corigliano-Rossano, Sestri Levante;

Slovenia: Bohinj, Bovec, Ormož, Podlehnik, Radenci, Razkrižje).

Proposed methodology

The assignment should at least comprise the following steps:

Deskwork (reading and analysis of the following resources):

- Reference note on the National Practice Transfer Initiatives
- Fiches on the NPTI that were submitted to the Monitoring Committee showing the progress of the NPTI
- NPTI applications
- Guides and materials produced for the purposes of the NPTI
- Summaries of baseline studies produced by NPTI experts
- Summaries of transfer plans produced by NUP
- Some relevant reports produced by the NPTI
- Other relevant materials like videos produced by the NPTI
- Article [“URBACT facilitates good practice transfer to cities of the same country”](#)

Questionnaires

To get a proper understanding of the impact at local level, the successful candidate should be able to prepare questionnaires for the people involved in the NPTI and analyse the results. When relevant, the questionnaires should include identical or interlinked questions to compare the results coming from different respondents (NPTI cities, NUP and NPTI experts).

Questionnaires should be sent to:

- All NPTI cities (and possibly members of their URBACT Local Group)
- National URBACT Points
- URBACT experts
- Optionally, members of the Monitoring Committee who were involved in the NPTI

Questionnaires for NPTI cities should be provided in the national language of the city representatives (ie. EN, CZ, SK, IT, EE, SI).

Focus group or interviews

It may also be useful to organise at least an online meeting with National URBACT Points and NPTI experts in the beginning of the assignment and towards the end to discuss some of the findings of the questionnaires and gather suggestions for the future.

Expected outputs

The findings from this evaluation should be structured in an appropriate way to feed into URBACT IV future activities in relation with the National URBACT Points. This should take the format of a report, supported by a slide deck to

be used in meetings and events (i.e. possibly online presentation at the URBACT Monitoring Committee on 29-30 November 2022).

This report should be readable and engaging. It should include an executive summary for circulation to a wider, non-specialist audience. It should contain both research findings and recommendations. A draft report should be shared with the URBACT Secretariat before the submission of the final version.

Timeline

The assignment should be completed 1st December 2022.

Ideally, the draft or final version of the report will be submitted to the URBACT Monitoring Committee on 9 November but this can be extended to end of November if necessary.

The contractor should be available to present the main findings to the members of the URBACT Monitoring Committee (representatives of national ministries across the EU) on 29-30 November 2022- possibly online.

Estimated budget

Around EUR 25 000, VAT included. Candidates should submit a detailed budget proposal, including daily rate of the people involved.

Working methods

The assignment involves a close working relationship between the contractor and members of the URBACT Secretariat, in particular with Jenny Koutsomarkou, Partnership Officer.

Meetings between the contractor and the Secretariat will take place online.

As soon as the candidate is chosen, a meeting will be scheduled by the URBACT Secretariat to kick-off the work. During this meeting, participants will agree on the steps to be followed, dates of coordination meetings, main questions to explore, and outputs to be produced.

Profile of the candidate

The successful candidate should have experience with studies, evaluations, and formulating recommendations.

Any experience in measuring results and impact at local level, and understanding of the URBACT programme will be a plus.

NPTI experts and their organisations or other people involved in the five NPTI cannot apply for this assignment to avoid conflict of interest.

How and when to apply

To apply for this contract please send:

- a letter of motivation, including experience relevant to this assignment and methodological approach
- a detailed budget proposal, including daily rate of the people involved.
- an up-to-date CV
- a signed sworn statement that the candidate and her/his organisation have not been involved in the NPTI work.

The deadline for submission is **4 September 2022**. Applications should be addressed to Jenny Koutsomarkou - j.koutsomarkou@urbact.eu and Louis Tréhard – l.trehard@urbact.eu

Candidates will be evaluated based on their:

- Experience with studies, evaluations, and formulating recommendations.
- Methodological approach for this assignment
- Budget proposal

In case of equal scoring between participants, any experience in measuring results and impact at local level, and experience with the URBACT programme will be considered an advantage.

Annex: some research questions to be considered (not an exhaustive list)

Below some questions the Secretariat is eager to get responses to but the contractor should be in position to further complete or adjust.

Profile of participating cities

The majority of participating cities are small-size cities. It is worth examining the reasons behind this (why a national 'network' instead of an EU URBACT network), have these cities ever applied for an URBACT network or participated in another EU programme/project? What has the participation in the NPTI brought to them?

Impact at city administration level:

- Have the people from the NPTI cities strengthened their skills in participatory and integrated policy making?
- Are they using new tools thanks to their participation in the NPTI?
- Have they increased their motivation to participate in an URBACT network?

Impact at local level:

- To what extent is the transfer plan/ actions developed thanks to the NPTI useful for the targeted population? How is that?
- To what extent the transfer plans are being implemented? What are the actions in place?
- Have the cities developed any systems to measure the impact/results of their actions? If so, are there any available data already?
- key elements of those successes?
- Are there shared characteristics amongst those cities who have made the most out of NPTI?
- Are there shared characteristics amongst any cities that have struggled?
- Has the NPTI been successful at local level? How do the cities define success?

Impact at national level:

- Has the NPTI work contributed to relevant national priorities or objectives?

Impact at programme level:

- Has the NPTI brought added value to the participating cities?
- What are the success factors of the NPTI as a project?
- What should be improved in the design and implementation of the NPTI?
- Has the guidance and meetings with the Secretariat been useful for the implementation of the NPTI?
- Does the common national legal framework under which operate the cities facilitate the transfer of the good practice?
- What are the key conditions that facilitate the transfer of the good practice at national level?
- Is the NPTI easier to reach by small and medium-sized cities who have not had so far the capacity or resources (staff, English-speaking coordinators, project management skills, etc) to participate in URBACT networks?
- What has the NPTI pilot taught us about ways for URBACT to engage with smaller, less well-resourced cities?
- Which elements of the NPTI should be retained or improved in the future?

Importance of the role of National URBACT Points and of NPTI expert

- To what extent the inputs of the NPTI expert(s) have been useful for establishing the transfer plan? How?
- To which extend the NUP have been useful in the NPTI journey? How?