

LIFELONG LEARNING - ENGAGING WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

This DP addresses the questions relating to the motivation and support required in getting people engaged in lifelong learning. It is working in partnership with voluntary and education organisations in the urban sub-region of London. The area is characterised by a buoyant local economy which contains concentrated pockets of deprivation and excludes many local people from participating in the local economy. This DP aims to improve employability and promote the benefits of lifelong learning by focussing on five target groups - ethnic minorities, disabled people, older workers, young people and women. The DP's overall purpose is to test approaches in engaging the target groups, and meeting the needs of both target groups and local employers.

The project is addressing the issue of empowering residents to access the local economy. This is done not only through a strong focus on employment, but also through working on soft outcomes, learning and personal development, and through helping unemployed people to move onto more positive outcomes.

The DP activities are divided into three areas: consultancy and 'health check' of employers' Human Resources policies in relation to equality and diversity; working with beneficiaries from target groups through voluntary organisations and colleges in supporting, training and developing their skills; and a job-trial programme for the beneficiaries.

The major anticipated outcomes are the beneficiaries from the five target groups travelling further in the direction of contributing to the local economy by getting a job or entering education and training. Other outcomes are the change in employers' HR policies and increased levels of soft skills like communication, motivation, or confidence amongst the beneficiaries. The new networks of voluntary organisations and colleges and ensuing new models and approaches to working with these target groups are also a valuable outcome of activities.

The DP is innovative in a number of ways. It offers the companies the health check of their HR and recruitment policies and equality and diversity advice through good practice examples. Each company involved receives a confidential report and a follow-up review. The DP is also providing support for beneficiaries from voluntary organisations, funding individuals for training and allowing them to identify their own priorities. After the initial training, individuals are given monies towards their further training, the nature of which they decide themselves.

DP has made an important contribution to the increase in the capacity of the voluntary and community organisations and to the improvement of the partnership between the voluntary sector and colleges. Early evidence has emerged that colleges have adapted their provision as a result of the project.

DP information

Member State: Great Britain

DP Identifier: Ukgb-65

Link to [DP website](#)

Link to [EQUAL database description](#)

All comments and information should be emailed to empl-equal-etg3@ec.europa.eu