



European Training Course:  
**The Art of Networking**  
Alden Biesen, 28 September-3 October 2009

## **Course Description**

This document has been developed in the framework of the project  
**ComNet: Competences for Networking in European Education**  
(2007-3485/001-001).

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.



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### European Training Course: **The Art of Networking**

Alden Biesen (Belgium), 24-29 November 2008

#### >>The course at a glance

|                             |   |                              |
|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| <b>Course title</b>         | The Art of Networking   |                              |
| <b>Target group</b>         | Professionals in adult education and other education sectors who are, or want to become, actors in networks   |                              |
| <b>Content</b>              | Competences for effective networking and network management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Social networking skills</li> <li>&gt; Network theory</li> <li>&gt; Networks in the European funding programmes</li> <li>&gt; The setting-up of a network</li> <li>&gt; Network management</li> <li>&gt; ICT tools for networks</li> <li>&gt; Learning in a network</li> <li>&gt; Network evaluation</li> <li>&gt; Policy &amp; advocacy</li> <li>&gt; Making the network sustainable</li> </ul> |                              |
| <b>Language</b>             | English   |                              |
| <b>Dates</b>                | Preparation (online)  | 28/8/2009-27/9/2009          |
|                             | <b>Face-to face seminar</b>   | <b>28/9/2009 – 4/10/2009</b> |
|                             | Follow-up (online)  | 5/10/2009 – 5/12/2009        |
| <b>Location</b>             | Landcommanderij Alden Biesen, Belgium<br>( <a href="http://www.alden-biesen.be">www.alden-biesen.be</a> )   |                              |
| <b>Certificate</b>          | Certificate of attendance, specifying the course content  |                              |
| <b>Organisers</b>           | ComNet project consortium   |                              |
| <b>Course fee</b>           | 750 €   |                              |
| <b>Mobility grant</b>       | Grundtvig (adult education) or Comenius (school education) mobility grants to cover travel costs and course fee are available. Please go to the website of your National Agency:<br><a href="http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/national_en.html">http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/national_en.html</a>   |                              |
| <b>Application deadline</b> | Application deadlines for Grundtvig / Comenius mobility grant:<br><b>16 January 2009</b> and <b>30 April 2009</b>   |                              |
| <b>Contact</b>              | Guy Tilkin:<br>Landcommanderij Alden Biesen<br>Kasteelstraat 6<br>B-3740 Bilzen<br>Belgium<br>Tel.: +32 (0)89 51 93 55<br>Fa: +32 (0)89 41 70 33<br>e-mail: <a href="mailto:guy.tilkin@alden-biesen.be">guy.tilkin@alden-biesen.be</a>  |                              |

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## >>Objectives and target groups

The European training course **The Art of Networking** is aimed at professionals in adult education and other education sectors:

- > adult trainers, teachers
- > programme developers,
- > education managers
- > researchers
- > evaluators

who are already involved in networks or may wish to be so in the future.

Participants will come from different European countries.

**The Art of Networking** offers training on how to act effectively in educational networks, and how to plan and manage a network. Moreover, a particular type of network is highlighted: European networks in the framework of the European Union's funding programmes for lifelong learning.

Do you want to improve your networking skills and your network management competences?

In **The Art of Networking** course participants will

- > practise active networking with colleagues from educational institutions from different European countries
- > learn about network theory and best practice
- > try out social networking methods and ICT tools for networks
- > reflect on their own networking practice and work on network challenges they may face.

## >>Course aims

At the end of the course participants will be able to

### Network theory

- > Define the terms „cooperation“, „network“ and „networking“
- > Analyse networks in terms of qualities and ties
- > Explain the main driving forces of networks
- > Explain professional and personal benefits of networking
- > Describe different organisational forms of networks
- > demonstrate awareness of the varying organisational basis of networks

### Social networking skills

- > Describe essential elements of active listening
- > Contact people and identify networking possibilities
- > Present themselves and bring their networking potential to the point
- > Manage a group effectively in a variety of contexts
- > Structure networking activities and know tools and techniques for that task

### Networks in EU programmes

- > Know key funding EU funding streams for networks in education
- > Explain the mission, functions and structure of a European (LLP) network as opposed to a project
- > Describe the key EU policies in LLL and identify key EU reference materials
- > Demonstrate added value of European networks and identify problem areas
- > Compare own networking needs with EU programme requirements

### Setting up a network

- > Analyse own network needs and formulate these needs as network objectives
- > Decide on network typology
- > Formulate SMART network aims
- > Demonstrate awareness of different forms of involvement in a network and select network members
- > Demonstrates awareness of network’s organisational and financial needs

## >>Course aims

At the end of the course participants will be able to

### **Network management**

- > Describe the difference between project and network management
- > Identify the specific challenges of network management
- > Be aware of the diversity found in a European network and recognizes diverse learning and working styles
- > Demonstrates understanding of cultural dimensions in networks
- > Explain the role and tasks of a network coordinator and assess own capacity and development/cooperation needs

### **ICT tools for networks**

- > Demonstrates awareness of the role of ICT in group dynamics
- > Define the working needs of a network
- > Explain the technical tools that can be used in networking and their potential function
- > Select appropriate ICT tools for different purposes
- > Facilitate ICT tools relevant for communication,

### **Learning in a network**

- > Demonstrate understanding of the potential learning fields in a network
- > Apply methods how learning can be put on a network agenda
- > Demonstrates knowledge of the potential of large group learning methods for networks
- > Apply methods to visualize, map and evaluate learning in a network

### **Network evaluation**

- > Understand the added value of network evaluation
- > Describe aims and outcomes of evaluation process
- > Identify and use appropriate evaluation planning tools
- > Produce evidence of quality of structure, activities and outcomes
- > Analyse data gathered and relate conclusions to activities
- > Create the optimum team (internal and external) for the evaluation process

## >>Course aims

At the end of the course participants will be able to

### **Policy and advocacy**

- > Understand policy and advocacy at local, regional, national and European level
- > Identify key themes and key policy actors and create strategies to approach them
- > Develop a detailed advocacy action plan
- > Select appropriate advocacy methods
- > Demonstrate awareness of basics principles of media work

### **Sustainability**

- > Define the terms Dissemination, Exploitation, Promotion, Marketing, Valorisation, Sustainability in the context of networks
  - > Explain the main issues to be addressed in a promotion and dissemination plan
  - > Identify sustainable elements of a network
  - > Create a sustainability plan
  - > Can integrate outcomes into programme and market them
-

## >> Course content

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Network theory</b>            | Network and networking: definitions and concepts -<br>Network analysis - Driving forces of networks -<br>Organisational forms of networks                                      |
| <b>Social networking skills</b>  | Basic interpersonal competences - Approaching people -<br>Identifying networking potential - Creating trust -<br>Managing relationships  |
| <b>Networks in EU programmes</b> | EU policies on Lifelong Learning - The mission of networks<br>in EU funding programmes - Applying for EU funding -<br>Promotion, dissemination, valorisation - Reporting       |
| <b>Setting up a network</b>      | Mapping own networking needs - Needs analysis -<br>Network typology and strategy - Planning the network -<br>Selecting network members - Creating a financial basis            |
| <b>Network management</b>        | Challenges of network management - Diversity -<br>Intercultural aspects - Organisation, management and<br>decision-making- Network coordinator profile - Leadership            |
| <b>ICT tools for networks</b>    | Role of ICT in social networks - Group dynamics and ICT<br>Media culture - Overview of ICT tools for social networks -<br>Analysis and application of ICT tools for networking |
| <b>Learning in a network</b>     | Types of learning in a network - Methods to promote<br>learning in a network - Reflection on learning - Large<br>group learning methods  |
| <b>Network evaluation</b>        | Planning network evaluation - Evidencing and gathering<br>information - Evaluation indicators and tools -<br>Social context and change management                              |
| <b>Policy and advocacy</b>       | Mapping the policy context of a network - Developing a<br>policy action plan - Approaching key actors - Advocacy<br>methods  |
| <b>Sustainability</b>            | Network promotion and dissemination -<br>Identifying sustainable aspects of the network-<br>Creating a sustainability plan - Social capital                                    |



## >> Methodology

### Blended learning

The training course **The Art of Networking** has three integral parts:



The six day face-to face seminar is embedded within two phases which are facilitated by an internet-based platform for collaboration and learning, and by other synchronous and asynchronous online communication tools.

### Practice orientation

Participants will be encouraged to share in the course real cases, challenges or plans related to their own networking practice. Thus, **The Art of Networking** will ensure that the training content will be relevant for participants' professional practice and create an added value through the opportunity for joint problem-solving.

### Mix of working methods

Short theoretical inputs will be combined with action-oriented methods: role plays, group work, discussion and reflective rounds. In addition, project work and hands-on sessions will be facilitated. Many of the networking and networking competences dealt with will be put into practice during the training.

### Peer learning

The organisers firmly believe that the participants will learn from each other at least as much as they may learn from the course facilitators and the training materials provided. Consequently, collaborative forms of learning will be encouraged and facilitated.

### Evaluation and transfer

The course organisers will put much emphasis on feedback and course evaluation activities to make sure that participants' needs will be met and the training can be optimized.

Participants will be invited to develop concrete plans on how to integrate the new knowledge into their professional practice. In the transfer phase, they can count on support from the course facilitators.

## >>Course programme

Session 1: 9.00-10.30  
 Session 2: 11.00-12.30  
 Session 3: 14.00-15.30  
 Session 4: 16.00-17.30  
 Session 5: 19.30-21.00

| Day 1                                      | Day 2  | Day 3                                      | Day 4                                     | Day 5                                      | Day 6  |
|--|--|--|---|--|--|
|  | <b>Session 1</b><br>Network theory           | <b>Session 1</b><br>Network management     | <b>Session 1</b><br>Learning in a network | <b>Session 1</b><br>Network sustainability | <b>Session 1</b><br>Transfer into practice   |
|  | <b>Session 2</b><br>Network theory           | <b>Session 2</b><br>Network management     | <b>Session 2</b><br>Network evaluation    | <b>Session 2</b><br>Network sustainability | <b>Session 2</b><br>Results and perspectives |
|  | <b>Lunch</b>                                 | <b>Lunch</b>                               | <b>Lunch</b>                              | <b>Lunch</b>                               | <b>Lunch</b>                                 |
|  | <b>Session 3</b><br>Networks in EU programme | <b>Session 3</b><br>ICT tools for networks | <b>Session 3</b><br>Network evaluation    | <b>Session 3</b><br>Policy and advocacy    | <b>Departure of participants</b>             |
| <b>Arrival of participants until 18.00</b> | <b>Session 4</b><br>Set-up of a network      | <b>Session 4</b><br>ICT tools for networks | Trip to Maastricht                        | Policy and advocacy                        |  |
| <b>Dinner</b>                              | <b>Dinner</b>                                | <b>Dinner</b>                              | <b>Dinner</b>                             | <b>Dinner</b>                              |  |
| <b>Evening</b><br>Networking skills        | <b>Evening</b><br>Intercultural game         | <b>Evening</b><br>Storyteller              |   |  |  |

### >>Trainers

**Esther Gelibert** is an experienced external evaluator of EU networks (RETIS, ESPAIS), and EU academic expert for Comenius networks. She will also bring to the project her training expertise, as a nominated professor for a Master programme in European Studies. Finally, she acted as academic expert of the Grundtvig programme and thus knows well the programme priorities, methodology and needs of its target groups.

**Sabine Wiemann**, at BUPNET since 1999, has long-term experiences in developing and delivering blended learning solutions in various contexts. Being coordinator of a 2005 Grundtvig 1.1. project BUPNET offers European training courses on the issue of blended learning design BUPNET is founding member of the blended learning institutions' cooperative (blinc eG) representing a network of 24 partners from 12 countries, which may serve as dissemination and valorisation network.

**Guy Tilkin** is a senior staff member and European project manager in the Landcommanderij Alden Biesen. Since 1993 he has been the coordinator of a series of European projects (Comenius, Grundtvig, Lingua, Leonardo...) mostly in the field of project management, the use ICT in international projects, self-evaluation and European citizenship. He has been running a large number of national in-service training days and workshops and international (Comenius 2) in-service training seminars on these topics.

**Nick Meyer** is an experienced consultant who regularly works for NIACE on activities connected with training and development of adult learning staff. He has experience across a range of client groups and has worked on European projects for us and for his previous employer. He is an experienced staff trainer and has developed materials to support national training programmes.

**Wolfgang Jütte** is Professor for Continuing Education Research at Danube University Krems and Steering Committee member of ESREA (European Society for Research on the Education of Adults). The major field of his work is research on cooperation and networks. He also works as adviser in network development and is an associate of the Observatory PASCAL.

**Holger Bienzle**, is head of die Berater's EU department. He has gained experience with European projects from different perspectives: as Austrian Grundtvig programme manager, as external consultant to the European Commission and as manager of projects in research and education. He has coordinated two projects on European networks, **ComNet** and **Euoweaving**, and *A Survival Kit for European Project Management* which developed guidance materials for coordinators of transnational pilot projects in education.

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