



Third strand of the Innovative Learning Environments project:

‘Implementation and Change’

[www.oecd.org/edu/learningenvironments](http://www.oecd.org/edu/learningenvironments)

## SPREADING AND SUSTAINING INNOVATIVE LEARNING

### Outline for ILE ‘System Notes’

This ‘System Note’ concerns strategies and initiatives designed to spread and sustain innovative learning. The information gathered on the basis of this note will provide core material for the third strand of the OECD’s Innovative Learning Environments (ILE) project that is focused on ‘Implementation and Change’.

The aim of this exercise is to identify *promising strategies and initiatives for spreading and sustaining innovative learning* that have been put into practice. Whereas our earlier second strand (‘Innovative Cases’) looked at particular examples of innovative learning environments, we are now broadening our horizon from examples of individual schools or ILEs towards change strategies that *necessarily involve several and possibly many different sites*. They have operated through time so that there is *evidence of implementation*, rather than planned initiatives that are not yet implemented.

Consistent with the rest of the ILE project, we are particularly interested in learning arrangements for children and young people - understood broadly as referring to 3-19 year-olds or age bands within. We have throughout ILE stressed a holistic understanding of learning environments as encompassing all the different components that over time define the way in which learning is organised and experienced by students, rather than very partial or episodic elements of such environments.

#### Examples

We are interested in change initiatives designed to spread and sustain innovative learning. They will cover a variety of different approaches, often in combination: direct promotion, provision of incentives, network creation, knowledge management, leadership strategies and other professional development capacity building, creating new forms of expertise and change management, and more general drives to create climates favourable to innovative learning. They may target change in one or more of the different components of learning environments: particular learner groups; the learning professionals; content; materials, facilities, and technologies; and the different ways in which these are organised and assessed.

We are not looking for general reforms of the curriculum, institutional structures, and the management or governance of schooling that do not have the intention first and foremost to innovate learning environments.

The initiatives of interest to us may be directed and funded through the public authorities; they may be organised and funded by other partners, such as foundations, community bodies, teacher or leadership organisations, businesses or higher education institutions. They may also come from ‘bottom-up’ endeavours within education, such as networks of schools or communities of practice. They are all relevant to this strand of the ILE project.

Existing information already gathered by the ILE project as part of Strand 2 (‘Innovative Cases’) helps to illustrate the kinds of initiatives we are looking for:

*System-led innovation resources for individual sites:* For instance, the Norwegian ILE cases were part of Norway’s Directorate for Education and Training ‘From Words to Action programme’ providing financial and professional support to local innovation; the Finnish ILE cases were part of the national Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE) ‘Learning Bridges Innovation programme’.



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*Change agents:* For instance, the ‘School Improvement Advisor’ (SIA) in Ticino, Switzerland, providing advice and support for formative proposals in schools; or the ‘Itinerant Pedagogical Advisers’ organized by the National Council of Educational Development (CONAFE) in Mexico.

*Networks and communities of practice:* For example, the ‘Networks of Inquiry and Innovation’ in British Columbia, Canada, which have instigated a process through which teams of educators inquire into their practice and showcase their results to other educators.

*Awards:* For instance, the impetus generated by the ‘School of the Month Award’ by the European Schoolnet (EUN) network and the award by the Department for Education in Catalonia, Spain as exemplified in the innovative case study on the Instituto Escuela Jacint Verdaguer.

*Research and professional development network programmes:* One example is the Stupski Foundation’s ‘Innovation Lab Network’ in the United States, aligned with Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) programme on ‘Partnership for Next Generation Learning’; another example is Microsoft’s ‘Innovative Teaching and Learning project’, combining international research, dissemination, and professional development (both presented at the 2011 Banff ILE conference).

These examples are offered here as illustrations to help clarify our focus; they do not at all represent a complete list or typology.

### Completing the ‘System Note’

This note is to be completed by all the systems and organisations participating in the third strand of the ILE project on ‘Implementation and Change’. Normally, this will be done by the system coordinator to the ILE project, with whomever (s)he may call on to supply additional information. Where available, the note should draw on research and evaluation evidence but you should complete answers to all questions using where necessary your informed opinion irrespective of the availability of robust evaluation evidence.

We envisage that the average completed ‘System Note’ will be **around 5pp in length**, but that they could be anywhere from 3 to 10 pages depending on the detail of information available on each initiative and the number of relevant initiatives available to each participating system or organisation.

We ask you to provide information **on at least one** initiative/strategy for spreading and sustaining innovation by changing learning environments . You are free to submit information on more than one example of a relevant initiative or strategy. These do not have to be initiatives/strategies in which you have a personal involvement.

As optional elements of this request, we also ask about interesting initiatives and strategies to change learning environments that have been less successful (B. below).

If you already participated in ILE Strand 2 (‘Innovative Cases’) and the innovation submitted then was generated by a larger initiative, we invite you to include that as part of your ‘System Note’ as it will help to draw connections between the different facets of this international project. There may equally be other examples that you wish to feature in your reply. If the submitted innovations under Strand 2 were isolated cases or if your system or organisation is participating in ILE for the first time, then we ask you to choose whichever initiatives or strategies best fit the criteria outlined above.

Please note that like for the ‘Universe cases’ of Strand 2 we intend to upload the submitted ‘System Notes’ on our project website.



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## A. The questions structuring your submission

Information on at least one initiative/strategy for spreading and sustaining innovative learning environments should be structured around the following questions:

1. **Aims:** a) the learning to be changed; b) the learners targeted; c) the environments and sites to be brought in. Was there a particular source of inspiration behind the initiative?
2. **Leadership and partners:** What is its main leadership? Who are the main partners involved (e.g. education authorities, networks of practitioners, foundations, community bodies, teacher or leadership organisations, business organisations, higher education institutions)?
3. **Strategies and activities:** What are the specific design, features, and activities of the strategy? What is the main rationale? How is communication and feedback assured?
4. **Context:** What are the particular contextual, local or political factors that have been influential in explaining why this initiative has emerged and/or has been sustained?
5. **Resources:** What levels of financial resourcing are involved and where do these come from? What supplementary resources, if any, are involved: e.g. facilities and buildings, technological resources, additional or specialist staffing?
6. **Developments over time:** How long has this initiative been going and how long did it take to get it started? Has it changed significantly since it began and how much has it grown or spread since then?
7. **Evidence of effectiveness and efficiency:** Is there evidence relating to success in terms of the aims referred in Question 1 - a) the learning to be changed; b) the learners targeted; c) the environments and sites to be brought in? Is there evidence relating to the more efficient use of educational resources?
8. **Success factors:** What factors have, in your view, been most influential in the success of this strategy/initiative? How successfully have risks been managed?
9. **Tensions and impediments:** What, if any, are the factors that have impeded the success and spread of the initiative? How open are they to being overcome?
10. **Source information:** References to documents, websites, etc.

## B. Less successful initiatives/strategies

We are also interested in learning from initiatives/strategies that were *less successful*. These may already have been completed. If you have such an example to offer we would be interested in knowing what it was, who was involved, and why in your view it did not work. If you prefer, it need not be identified by name. The same general framework may be used, but in this case making it very clear that it is being put forward as an example that did not work well and with particular focus on those factors that explain its difficulties of implementation and lack of success.

This is an optional part of your submission.

The ‘System Note’ should be submitted electronically to Mariana Martinez Salgado at [mariana.martinezsalgado@oecd.org](mailto:mariana.martinezsalgado@oecd.org).

For more information on the Innovative Learning Environments project you can also contact Martinez Salgado by email or telephone at +33 145 24 79 94.