

PARTNER SEARCH REQUEST – LLP (Leonardo), February 2010 deadline	
Organisation	Surrey County Council
Type of Organisation	Local Government (Adults with disabilities)
Member State	United Kingdom
Date	November 2009
What we are looking for in partner organisations:	
<p>We are looking to make contact with organisations undertaking community focussed, vocational opportunities for those most distanced from the workplace. These can be paid or voluntary positions, but should be open to all regardless of level of disability. It may be social enterprises performing roles to help the local community and increase the citizenship of the participants. For example local gardening services for older people, building projects, community cafes or professional drama/ dance groups.</p> <p>We are interested in exchanging experiences about work that improves the independence of the participants. We have a particular interest in those utilising assistive technologies to help people with learning disabilities to lead independent lives. This could include the use of GPS position software or other tools to assist in travel training, alarms used for task reminders or easy read computer programmes.</p> <p>Also of interest is to look at the impact of user-led disability organisations in the design and development of projects.</p> <p>Our intention is to design a project suitable for submission within the EU Lifelong Learning Programme (Leonardo) by the February 2010 deadline. We plan a series of exchanges of professionals who work to support individuals in the workplace. We are keen to begin initial planning as soon as possible and arrange a preparation meeting if possible.</p>	
What we can offer prospective partners:	
<p>Surrey County Council has an award winning scheme to address the under representation of people with learning disabilities in the workforce. Using innovative techniques in recruitment and job customisation, 19 people were given the opportunity for paid work in the first year. Examples of the changes included “easy-read” contracts of employment and medical questionnaires, working interviews, job trials and positive discrimination.</p> <p>The supported employment team within the council are also implementing a scheme based on one run in the Cincinnati Children hospital in the USA called “Project search”. This brings together adult education, supported employment providers and large employers to run 12 week supported work placements on a rolling programme for young people with learning disabilities.</p> <p>Our Portal project explores the needs of people with high functioning autism or Aspergers syndrome and combines social skills training with work experienced and supported employment into paid work. The changes in confidence levels have been marked and many participants are able to access work or work experience for the first time.</p> <p>As part of re-provisioning of traditional day-time activities in large institutions, several projects have been moved into the community. These include a horticultural project to maintain footpaths; an Office services project offering basic office tasks at a low cost for non-profit organisations; and a rock band formed of people with learning disabilities.</p>	
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