

PASCAL International Exchanges (PIE)

PIE Briefing Paper 4 : PIE Program of Forums

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This Briefing Paper is to seek the views of cities participating in PIE on a possible program of forums available to PIE cities on a voluntary basis. Three options are brought forward for consideration by participating cities.

A recent forum was held, using Skype technology, with a group of 14 academic staff from the University of Northern Illinois and involving Peter Kearns as Co-ordinator of PIE, to explore options for American involvement in PIE. This was regarded as a good discussion so that it raised the question of whether a series of forums, enabled by an appropriate technology, might be conducted for those PIE cities interested in participation.

In this context, we are raising the following options for your consideration and comment:

A. A forum with a single city.

This approach would involve any city participating in PIE in a forum with the PIE managers, perhaps similar to the Northern Illinois forum. The forum could address a few designated questions of interest, although participants would be free to raise any other matters of interest. The city participating might assemble a relevant group (e.g. culture, education, ICT, environment) depending on the subjects they wished to discuss, perhaps in one or two locations, Skype might be used as the initial technology

B. Bilateral exchanges between two PIE cities.

This approach will enable a city to designate another participating city with areas of mutual interest they would like to exchange experience with. These might, for example, involve exchanges on these subjects:

- Glasgow on the work of cultural institutions;
- Cork on the role of Learning Festivals;
- Bari on a whole-city approach to public safety and suppressing crime;
- Dar es Salaam to regenerating a rapidly growing city; environment;
- Kaunas for an old town regeneration project;
- Hong Kong and Hume for responses to immigrants with poor education and skills;
- Hume for an intercultural city project;

Cities interested in exchanges on any of these subjects could indicate the city and subject they would like to discuss.

C. Regional groups of PIE cities

This more ambitious forum might involve all European cities participating in PIE, African and Australian cities, or an Asia Pacific grouping (Asia, Australia, North America). This would probably require a more robust technology than Skype. Options are being investigated.

The role of forums

We believe that forums could have considerable value in supplementing online exchanges and providing for informal exchanges that contribute to deeper understanding of developments in participating cities. We invite your views on this.

A key aspect is that forums should serve as a vehicle to bring a group of interested people together in a participating city for either a dialogue with the PIE managers (Option A), or for a discussion with a similar group in another participating city (Option B). This occurred in the Northern Illinois forum cited above. In this way the forums could serve as an instrument for widening PIE exchanges and enhancing the value for participating cities.

The way forward

If responses are positive, we are inclined to believe that the best approach will be to start with (A) or (B), depending on interest, in a pilot program, and work up to (C) as experience is gained.

If you agree, we invite expressions of interest from cities that would like to participate in PIE forums in either category (A) or (B). If B please nominate the city you would like to share a forum with, and the subject you would like to discuss. Please advise the PIE co-ordinator of your interest.

We would be pleased to provide any further information you may wish to have.

Contact

Questions relating to this project may be taken up with the PIE co-ordinators Peter Kearns and Bruce Wilson. Contact details are:

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