

21–23 October 2013, Beijing, China

International Conference on Learning Cities

Lifelong learning for all: Inclusion,
prosperity and sustainability in cities



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



International Conference
on Learning Cities
Beijing - 2013



Background

The influence of cities in national and world affairs has increased considerably in recent years. This is partly due to the growth in the number of city dwellers. Since 2008, the majority of the world's population lives in cities. By 2030, the proportion is likely to exceed 60 per cent.

As cities expand, municipal governments face challenges associated with social inclusion, new technologies, the knowledge economy, cultural diversity and environmental sustainability.

In response, a growing number of cities are developing innovative strategies that allow their citizens – young and old – to learn new skills and competencies throughout life, thereby transforming their cities into 'learning cities'.

The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning – the global centre of excellence for lifelong learning for all – has taken the initiative to further develop the concept of a 'learning city' by creating a dynamic international platform that allows cities to exchange ideas and good practices on building learning cities.



Aim, themes and expected results

The aim of the Conference is to create a forum that mobilizes cities to promote lifelong learning for all as a vector of equality and social justice, social cohesion and sustainable development.

The theme of the Conference is: **Lifelong learning for all: Inclusion, prosperity and sustainability in cities.** It will include the following three sub-themes:

- Making a case for building a learning city;
- The building blocks of a learning city;
- The major strategies for building a learning city.

More specifically, the Conference will adopt the *Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities* and the *Key Features of Learning Cities*, a set of action points to guide city governments and other stakeholders in their efforts to build learning cities. It will also facilitate the exchange of best practices in building learning cities among the international community.

Through the Conference, participants will obtain an enhanced understanding of the contribution of lifelong learning for all to socio-economic development; some effective elements and considerations for developing city-level policies and strategies; and strategies and approaches for developing learning cities.

Given the challenges cities face, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning and the Expert Group for Developing Learning Cities have adopted the following working definition:

A Learning City is a city which effectively mobilizes its resources in every sector to

- promote inclusive learning from basic to higher education;
- re-vitalize learning in families and communities;
- facilitate learning for and in the workplace;
- extend the use of modern learning technologies;

- enhance quality and excellence in learning; and
- nurture a culture of learning throughout life.

In so doing, it will create and reinforce individual empowerment and social cohesion, economic and cultural prosperity, and sustainable development.

Participants

Ms Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, is inviting each Member State to form a delegation to participate in the Conference, with members selected from among city mayors, city education executives and experts dedicated to the promotion of lifelong learning for all.

UNESCO is also inviting representatives of international organisations/agencies, non-governmental organisations, private sector partners, and renowned experts in the field of lifelong learning, urbanization and sustainable development, to participate in the Conference.

As observers, the host county is inviting mayors, city education executives, university presidents and experts.

In all, about 500 participants from all over the world are expected to attend and use this opportunity to exchange ideas, practices, knowledge and experience in developing learning cities, regions and communities

Languages

English, Chinese, French and Spanish (with simultaneous interpretation) will be used for all plenary sessions. Simultaneous interpretation in different language combinations will also be provided for the mayors' forum and the parallel regional forums.

Collaborating Partners

To facilitate international collaboration and build synergies between different initiatives, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning invites relevant national, regional and international organisations and agencies, as well as private sector corporations, to become partners for establishing a dynamic international platform for cities to exchange ideas and good practices on effective approaches to building learning cities.

By July 2013, the following organisations, authorities, agencies and corporations have confirmed that they will serve as partners for establishing the international platform, and will support the organisation of the Conference.

In addition, Cisco Systems, Inc. and other organisations provide strategic advice in the preparatory process.

International and regional organisations and agencies



UN-HABITAT



Arab Urban Development Institute (AUDI)



European Commission



Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture

Ministries of education of Member States



Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science & Technology of Japan



Ministry of National Education of Romania



Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea



Ministry of National Education of Turkey



Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam

International and non-governmental associations



Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA)



International Council of Adult Education



PASCAL International Observatory



dvv international

Foundations and corporations



Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)



Intel, Inc.



Festo Didatic



Kings Group



IBM



Microsoft

Universities



University of South Australia



Cape Higher Education Consortium South Africa (CHEC)



Beijing Normal University



Swansea University

Conference agenda

The agenda includes plenary sessions, parallel regional forums and a mayors' forum.

	20 October	21 October	22 October			23 October
Morning session 1	Arrival and registration Visit to the Conference venue and exhibition	Opening ceremony	Plenary session (4): Introduction to the <i>Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities</i>			Study and cultural visits: Best practices for the construction of a learning city in Beijing Some of the UNESCO World Heritage sites in Beijing
		Tea break				
Morning session 2		Plenary session (1): Making a case for building a learning city	Parallel regional forums: • Arab States • Africa • Asia and the Pacific • Europe and North America • Latin America and the Caribbean			
		Lunch				
Afternoon session 1		Plenary session (2): Building blocks of a learning city	Mayors' forum: Lifelong learning for all is our cities' future	Meeting of the drafting committee	Open marketplace organised by the collaborating partners	
		Tea break				
Afternoon session 2		Plenary session (3): Major strategies for building a learning city	Closing ceremony • Adoption of the <i>Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities</i> • Approval of the <i>Key Features of Learning Cities</i> Closing addresses			
Evening		Reception and cultural activities	Dinner			

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Educational, Scientific and
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Ministry of Education
of China



Beijing China

Beijing Municipal People's
Government

Co-hosting organisations



United Nations
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UNESCO Institute
for Lifelong Learning



CHINA

中国联合国教科文组织全国委员会
Chinese National Commission For UNESCO



BEIJING Municipal
Education Commission

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