**First SPAR partner meeting in UK, 31/1 November 2016 in Birmingham.**

***Programme and Agenda.***

**Practical information**

**Time and place**

The SPAR partners meeting will take place on **Monday 31st October 2016 12.00 noon to 4.30pm and Tuesday 1st November 2016 9.30 am to 3.00pm**. The meeting will be held at the Arts Council offices in Birmingham. Address: **Arts Council, 82 Granville Street, Birmingham, B1 2LH.**

**Travel information**

The easiest and cheapest way to Birmingham would be to book suitable flights to Birmingham International Airport on Sunday 30th October, returning Tuesday evening 1st November.

From Birmingham Airport, make your way to Birmingham International rail station (there is a free bus from the airport to Birmingham International Rail Station) and catch a train into the city, disembarking at Birmingham New Street railway station. This is the main railway station in Birmingham. The train journey from Birmingham International railway station to the city is short - approximately 12/15 minutes. Rail Tickets can be purchased at the train station. For more information, see <http://www.thetrainline.com>

I would recommend that you catch a taxi at New Street, asking them to take you to your hotel. You can, of course, walk to your hotel but the route is rather complicated. It would make sense to take a taxi, particularly if you are carrying heavy luggage. There are black hackney cabs available outside of the railway station.

**Hotel**

For those staying at the Novotel Hotel we have booked rooms and made reservations for the nights requested. The Sunday (30/10/2016) night cost is £89.00 and the Monday night (31/10/2016) cost is £99 – the payment covers the cost of the room and breakfast. The hotel is based at the top of Granville Street, on which the Arts Council building is based. This is a four-star hotel with all key facilities, including Wi fi
The address of the Novotel Hotel is:

**Novotel Hotel – 70 Broad Street, Birmingham, B1 2HT.**

Erasmus+ project budget will cover the cost of your stay for two nights e.g. Sunday/Monday evening. We ask that you pay these costs yourselves when you arrive and make a claim for your travel/accommodation using the forms we will supply you with. Claims must be evidenced with invoices, travel booking details and boarding passes. Voluntary Arts will reimburse you for these claims within seven days of the receipt of your claim. If you use other facilities during your hotel stay, please make arrangements to pay for these yourselves, given these amounts are not covered through the project budget. I will send out separate details of hotel bookings for all those who have asked for me to pre-book on their behalf.

**Meals**

* Voluntary Arts will arrange to provide a sandwich buffet luncheon at the Arts Council office venue. Please let us know if you have a specific food allergy or wish to order a specific menu and we will arrange for this to happen.
* VA will organise an evening partners’ meal at a local restaurant for Monday 31st October. More details about this will be provided as part of housekeeping on the first day.

**Background Information - summary information**

The SPAR programmes consists of six partners. Voluntary Arts UK (Laraine);

Cultural Councils in Denmark (Bente); Interfolk (Hans); Hungarian Folk High School

Society (Janos); Foundation of Alternative Educational Initiatives from Poland

(Anieszka); and Municipality of Lousada in Portugal (Artur).

The overall aim is to improve the competences of the voluntary associations and their

volunteers to provide enlivening arts and culture opportunities in sparsely pop-

lated communities, with an added value for civic and democratic participation,

community bonding and local identity. The focus is on development of new courses

and curricula for culture volunteers in sparsely populated areas.

Mobile numbers of the SPAR partners

* Bente von Schindel (Denmark) (+45) 29 64 70 40
* Hans Jørgen Vodsgaard (Denmark) (+45) 51 300 320
* János Szigeti Tóth (Hungary) (+36) 20 569 66 88
* Artur Pinto (Portugal)
* Agnieszka Dadak (Poland)
* Robin Simpson VA (UK) (+44) 783 469 3819
* Laraine Winning, VA (UK) (+44) 7818 046 945

## **Aims and objectives of the first partners’ meeting**

The overall aim of the first SPAR meeting is to fully brief partners on the SPAR Erasmus programme and to fully acquaint all partners as to the necessary processes and protocols. The meeting will be key to confirming a shared vision for the programme, introduce the first project phase, including highlighting individual partner plans and ratifying an agreed way forward.

The objectives are:

* To present local project plans and course proposals.
* To discuss the Erasmus processes as determined by Ecorys (regulatory body for Erasmus+ in the UK) so we are in line with funders requirements.
* To agree the financial contractual details (budget) and how to make claims.
* To refine the valorisation processes both qualitative and quantitative.
* To explore the next phase of the programme, including the next partners meeting.

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## **Meeting Agenda**

**Monday 30 October, 2016**

**12.00 noon until 4.30pm**

**1. Formalities**

* Appoint a moderator and a reporter
* Approval of the agenda
* Sign Attendance List

**2. Contractual information**

* Erasmus processes and protocols as agreed with Ecorys (Laraine)
* Overview of the SPAR programme and key aims/objectives (Hans)
* Review of Erasmus+ financial procedures and systems (Lindsey)
* Partner Q & A’s.

**3. Project Plans**

* Presentations from all six partners as to their project plans and key priorities.
* Explore the variety of approaches to the SPAR programme and discuss similarities or differing approaches.
* Identify learning or academic partners and how these links will add to the partnership programme.
* Clarify mutual priorities in terms of life-long learning and accreditation e.g. outcomes and progression routes.
* Discuss and agree a definition for ‘sparsely populated areas’.

**Tuesday 1st November 9.30am – 3.00pm**

**4. Monitoring and Evaluation (Valorisation) led by Helene Clark.**

* We will discuss with the external evaluator what systems/procedures, both of a qualitative and quantitative nature, will work best to collate evidence as to the impact and outputs of the programme.
* We will also discuss the reporting procedures of the Erasmus+ programme and how these will tie into the wider valorisation process.
* Review how the evaluator hopes to communicate with partners.
* Agree an evaluation work plan with key milestones.
* Tie up loose ends - what needs to be done immediately after the meeting

**5. Discuss methods of communication**

* Explore when we need to communicate and why.
* Instigate appropriate communication methods, given our next meeting will not be until April 2017.
* Identify what further digital support is required by partners to ensure that we fully deliver on project objectives.

**9. A.O.B. (any other business)**

Please note that the majority of the information given below will be available at the first partners meeting. Additional information regarding the project budget and financial guidelines will be circulated to all partners as part of this agenda.

**Item 1: Formalities**

* Formal SPAR contract as agreed with Ecorys.
* Project outline form

**Item 2: Financial Information**

* SPAR budget – as determined in the original application.
* SPAR financial guidelines
* Processes and forms for claiming back expenditure
* Project review form

**Item 3: Operational Guidelines**

Erasmus+ project management processes and protocols as agreed with Ecorys,

including contract and project review form.