

Candidate RCE Wales

BRIEFING PAPER 2

The story so far...

First of all: a 'thank you' is due to all of you who have contacted us following the first briefing, to request more information, to ask to be included on the (Candidate) RCE Wales mailing list, or to give us information about some of your ESDGC activity. We would like to convey thanks also to those of you who returned letters of support for Candidate RCE Wales. We have had a good response, and these carry a lot of weight with the UNU application scrutineers. If you haven't yet returned one, and would like to, please get back to us electronically with your organisation details at the bottom of the supporting letter, or request an unsigned letter if you have not already seen one (please contact RCEWales@swansea.ac.uk). We look forward to hearing from you, it is not too late!

All of your input is very welcome, and bodes well for the future of a dynamic RCE Wales, once we are granted that status. Thank you.

The first stage of the application documentation for RCE status for Wales has been completed and submitted to UNU-IAS in Japan on time. The Interim Steering Group has been liaising on this, and with a lot of hard work from all concerned we made the 15th June deadline.

The application papers will now be scrutinised by the RCE Service Centre before being sent to the Ubuntu Committee of Peers for acceptance. We anticipate some amendments to be carried out and/or extra information to be required over the coming weeks, before this happens, and we will be working with the Interim Steering Group and stakeholders, as required, to achieve the safe passage of our application. We expect to hear the outcome of the application towards the end of the year. We do not anticipate any major problems in gaining acceptance and RCE status, as we consider Wales in many respects to be at an advanced stage with its ESDGC arrangements, in global terms.

It was agreed at the last Interim Steering Group meeting that Swansea University should take on the role of the Secretariat, attending to the ongoing administrative requirements of a successful application, and the onward administration of a future RCE Wales through its establishment and implementation stages. In so doing, the Secretariat will continue to work closely with, and on behalf of, the incumbent Steering Group and stakeholders.

Over the period between now and the end-of-year decision, the Interim Steering Group and the Secretariat will be busy establishing effective communication and administrative systems, and giving careful consideration to questions of management (including governance). A start has been made on all of this, but there remains much still to do to ensure that we are ready with a viable RCE Wales for the beginning of next year.

So how is RCE Wales shaping up?

Thanks again to consultation input, we now have a Vision Statement, to serve as an overarching guide when we wish to contribute to a concerted ESDGC mission under the aegis of a future RCE Wales:

RCE Wales facilitates collaboration to research, develop and promote Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship, so that this learning is central to the emergence of a sustainable Wales.

We have clarified the criteria to be met for activities and projects seeking recognition by a future RCE Wales. Together, these describe key qualitative characteristics of projects, which will mark out RCE from RCE Briefing Paper 2 (16 June 2009)

other ESDGC activity across Wales. In applying these criteria, the RCE will aspire to encourage constructive and complementary collaboration between stakeholders to support development and provision of top quality, effective, ESDGC across Wales. Specifically, RCE Wales projects should be about transformative ESDGC, be collaborative and include an element of research. Reflective learning, and sharing this learning, will be expected. A future RCE Wales will thus challenge us all to improve the quality and effectiveness of our ESDGC work.

Short-term objectives are currently focused on ensuring that a sound and supportive mechanism is in place via a carefully thought-through RCE management structure, including appropriate and clear Terms of Reference for the Steering Group and the Secretariat. At the same time, and into the mid-term and beyond, the objectives will of course encompass the real work of the RCE ...

RCE Wales activities and projects

Already there has been interest in the work of the proposed RCE Wales, and approaches from stakeholders about possible activities and projects. Indeed, funds permitting, we envisage some of the project work starting ahead of the decision – ESDGC in Wales will, of course, continue while we await RCE Wales' recognition – as it always has! We have begun to collect information about ongoing ESDGC projects in Wales, as required for the application documentation.

With our next briefing paper we will include an RCE Wales Project pro-forma, with guidance notes for its completion. This is currently being drafted, with a view to distilling the salient information we believe will help a future RCE Wales to capture the rich and diverse range of quality ESDGC activity in Wales, and to make the most of the energy, enthusiasm, and significant knowledge and expertise it represents.

For the purposes of the application we have had to consider not only current, but also future, ESDGC projects. Consultation has provided essential input to this part of the documentation. For example, our objectives include the identification and recognition of themed Working Groups. This is in train, guided by the results of the consultation events that were held across Wales in 2008. In due course, as we develop the RCE Wales Working Group concept, we will be coming back to you to help move it forward, as we anticipate these Groups representing a key focus for RCE activity. Once the first tranche of Working Groups are identified, the focus will shift to their effective working and outputs.

Another proposed focus for the work programme of a future RCE Wales in the mid-term, is promotion and facilitation of evidence-based practice in ESDGC, and dissemination of research findings, knowledge, experience and good practice through the RCE network in Wales and beyond.

What next?

As our Candidate RCE Wales application and associated preparatory work progresses, we will continue to issue RCE Wales Briefing Papers. (Once RCE status is approved, we plan to transform our communications into a more substantive newsletter written by and for all stakeholders.) In the meantime, during this application and approval stage, as noted above, we will return with requests for your input at the appropriate points in the process. If you miss any Briefing Papers, and wish to fill in the gaps, or if you need further information or wish to share your thoughts on anything raised, please do not hesitate to contact us at RCEWales@swansea.ac.uk. It is essential that we maintain meaningful contact with stakeholders, at the end of this process we must have arrived at the launch of a viable RCE Wales owned, understood and wanted by us all, have achieved clarity about its complementary role in Wales and about how we can all contribute to its growth and achievements. Questions?

Candidate RCE Wales Secretariat
Swansea University