

## **Regional Centre of Expertise on ESDGC in Wales:**

### **Candidate-RCE Wales Briefing Paper 3**

After the long summer break, we are pleased to update you on progress with 'Candidate-RCE Wales'.

Readers wishing to learn more about the RCE initiative and its relationship to the UNESCO Decade for Education for Sustainable Development, or wishing catch up with the RCE Wales story so far may take a look at previous Briefing Papers, in English or in Welsh, via the links provided on page 2, below.

#### **How is our application for formal recognition of 'RCE Wales' progressing?**

In short: so far, so good!

At the moment, we remain 'Candidate-RCE Wales'. Our application was submitted in June and we received very favourable comments from the initial scrutineers via the Global RCE Service Center and from our independent peer reviewer at the Rhine-Meuse RCE.

We responded to the requests for more information in two areas of the RCE Wales application and resubmitted it for the 10th August deadline. We now await the verdict of the Ubuntu Committee of Peers for RCEs on our application. The Committee is to meet in the autumn, though the exact date has not yet been notified to us. Without doubt, we will keep you posted as soon as we hear anything!

#### **What's in it for me: for my work and my organisation?**

The RCE Wales Vision<sup>1</sup> reflects our shared endeavour to support development of high quality ESDGC expertise in Wales. As the RCE becomes established and its operation matures, its benefits to stakeholders are likely to include:

- Access to a specialist 'shop window' for up-to-date ESDGC news, information and sources of support
- Easier and wider access to ESDGC expertise in Wales and the UK
- Easier access to international ESDGC professionals and their networks (there are currently more than 60 RCEs around the world)
- Help with identifying experienced partners to assist with your ESDGC project/activity or research
- A more extensive knowledge of potential funding sources for your ESDGC work
- Opportunities to participate in research relevant to your ESDGC work
- Opportunities to increase the visibility of your own ESDGC expertise and activities
- Awareness of a wider range of opportunities for engagement with ESDGC
- Opportunity for 'RCE Wales' badging of your ESDGC work, as a recognition of its quality

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

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#### What's been happening since the last Briefing Paper?

It seems a long time since the last Briefing Paper (16 June 2009), and now that the holiday season is behind us we are pleased to bring you up to date with some of the more practical RCE-related activity that's been going on.

In general, while you have been continuing busy with ESDGC work proper, the Steering Group and the Secretariat have been grappling with some of the more mundane aspects of establishing an RCE for Wales. As we reported previously, preparation of the submission involved us in distilling the key messages from the 2008 RCE consultations, and embedding those into the design of RCE Wales. Since completion of our final submission, we have been giving further consideration to the nuts and bolts of how RCE Wales will function, and what precisely will be needed to support the development of expertise and ESDGC excellence in Wales. Not so straightforward, especially since formal RCE recognition does not bring with it any additional funding! Hence we must give deeper consideration to precisely what formal RCE recognition and establishment will enable. How can we translate that recognition into added-value for our collective ESDGC efforts in Wales? And how, in practice, are we to ensure that RCE Wales works clearly towards its vision and does not engage in activities that duplicate existing ESDGC work in Wales? In short, we have been giving consideration to how we might translate the agreed aspirations for RCE Wales into practice.

Here is a brief summary of the practical outcomes to date of those deliberations.

**Communication:** identified by stakeholders as a key requirement for the improvement of ESDGC organisation, resource allocation and development of expertise in Wales, and a key focus for the RCE.

- The ESD&GC website has been augmented to include an RCE page (Welsh version at [http://www.esd-wales.org.uk/cymraeg/RCE\\_development/default.htm](http://www.esd-wales.org.uk/cymraeg/RCE_development/default.htm); English version at [http://www.esd-wales.org.uk/english/RCE\\_development/default.htm](http://www.esd-wales.org.uk/english/RCE_development/default.htm) ). RCE briefing papers are now translated for us and posted there, thanks to support from the Welsh Assembly Government's Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS). Once RCE Wales is formally recognised, this 'RCE shop window' will be developed further.
- During the on-going process of designing and establishing purposeful and coherent RCE Wales communications systems, the RCE Secretariat, based at Swansea University, will, on request, circulate information to the ESDGC stakeholders on our mailing lists. Please see the 'How can I get involved?' section, below, for more information about how to use this service.

**Projects and activities:** in addition to the application and establishment work, we have been careful to ensure that sight is not lost of the purpose of the RCE: support for developing ESDGC expertise in Wales.

- You are invited to complete at any time a Project/Activity pro-forma (as appended to this Briefing Paper, with guidelines for its completion) and return it to the Secretariat, to alert us to a specific ESDGC project or activity in which you are engaged, or one that you would like to propose. Following formal recognition of RCE Wales, we will update stakeholders on ways in which the RCE may be able to lend support to the projects and activities for which pro-

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formas are received. Please note that until formal recognition for RCE Wales is achieved, no further action will be taken concerning the outlined projects; your pro-forma(s) will be forwarded to the Steering Committee for their information only. This invitation is open to all and is not time-limited.

- In response to consistent stakeholder comments, two RCE-establishment project specifications have been submitted to DCELLS for funding. The projects will help establish appropriate foundations for RCE Wales:
  - a) Addressing ESDGC communications: the 'EDEN' – ESDGC Development Network - project, to research further with stakeholders how to achieve the focus, organisation, quality and ease of communication we need to support the development of ESDGC expertise in Wales;
  - b) Addressing ESDGC quality: the 'ESQUIRE' – ESDGC Quality-Indicator Research – project, to research with stakeholders what we mean in Wales by 'good quality ESDGC', and hence to help us identify some specific initial, shared and easily-applied ESDGC-indicators of quality.

A series of consultation events for ESDGC stakeholders will be organised as part of the above projects, pending successful funding applications. We await a decision from DCELLS.

**Funding:** In addition to the two establishment-project submissions to DCELLS referred to above,

- HEFCW is seeking a budget to secure a fully operational RCE Wales Secretariat over the 3 years 2010-2013, as part of the DCELLS triennial strategic planning cycle. A decision is anticipated before the end of 2009.
- The Steering Group will collate a list of potential funding sources for ESDGC activities in Wales, which will be made available to stakeholders once compiled. This work is being led by the University of Wales, Newport.

These represent some practical starting points; arrangements will evolve once the RCE is established and begins full operation.

#### How can I get involved at this stage?

- Let us know your contact details if you are not yet on the RCE Wales mailing list and wish to be so. Please let us know in which sector you work (FE, HE, Youth, Work-based learning etc).
- Complete a Project/Activity pro forma to alert us to an aspect of your ESDGC work.
- Forward to us any information about sources of funding that you have accessed, or know about, for ESDGC work. We will forward the details for inclusion in the list of ESDGC funding sources currently being compiled by the University of Wales, Newport.
- Circulate important ESDGC information via the Secretariat to a wider audience. Kindly note the following guidelines, which have been drawn up to facilitate such a service ahead of a fully operational Secretariat. We suspect that in due course such information and requests may be posted in an RCE Wales 'shop window', though this is yet to be confirmed, following EDEN project consultations.

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- a) Use "RCE info for forwarding" as your subject heading.
  - b) The information you send MUST relate to *Education for SDGC*, or it will not be deemed relevant to the RCE and will not be forwarded.
  - c) Your email message and any attachments MUST be complete, accurate and self-explanatory.
  - d) The Secretariat will add a standard generic note of explanation to your message ("The email below, and any attachments, are being forwarded to you as an ESDGC stakeholder, at the request of ...") and forward it; we neither have the authority to moderate nor the capacity to edit the information you send.
  - e) The Secretariat will forward any responses or requests for further information/clarification to you; we will not enter into discussions or provide further information.
  - f) You remain responsible for the information you send and will be considered as its 'originator'. Therefore, if you are ill-equipped, unable or unwilling to handle any correspondence arising, please make clear in your covering email to whom such correspondence should be directed.
  - g) Thank you very much for your co-operation.
- Take part in one of the stakeholder consultations to which you will be invited, if we are successful in securing DCELLS funding for the EDEN and ESQUIRE projects.
  - Contact us at any time with your comments, questions or suggestions:

[rcewales@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:rcewales@swansea.ac.uk)

Tel: 01792 602655 (Jan Morgan); 01792 602654 (Yvonne Jones); 01792 602029 (Jane Claricoates)

With thanks and best wishes from

Candidate-RCE Wales Secretariat, Swansea University

On behalf of the interim Steering Group