Call for Ecsite members to join CIRCLES:
A proposal for call H2020-Swafs-15-2016: Open Schooling and collaboration on science education

About the project

This project proposal is coordinated by Science LinX, University of Groningen (The Netherlands), Ecsite is a project partner and leads the working package Dissemination.

CIRCLES - Championing Regional Communities and Learning Ecosystems in Science aims to bring science centres, universities, fab labs, companies, libraries, science festivals, and local authorities in cities or regions together in sustainable STEM learning ecosystems, so called '*Circles*' in science education. The proposal will be submitted in response to the European Commission's Horizon 2020 call for proposals, under the topic SwafS-15-2016: Open schooling and collaboration on science education.

Role of Third Parties – *innovation nodes for STEM ecosystems*

Eight science centres or museums will be selected as third parties to the project. Please note that Ecsite Full Members will be prioritised in the selection.

The third parties will attune and host workshops and training (on linking formal and informal learning, co-creation and network governance) for science education stakeholders (*science centres, universities, fab labs, companies, libraries, science festivals, and local authorities*).

The selected third parties will have the following tasks:

- To establish **innovation nodes** to encourage and support existing and new *Circles*, regional STEM learning ecosystems, to grow to excellence;
- Engage science education stakeholders (*science centres, universities, fab labs, companies, libraries, science festivals, and local authorities*);

- The **innovation nodes** will be provided with training materials co-developed in the framework of CIRCLES project;
- Initiate and host workshops and trainings in their country;
- Disseminate the project outcomes and the **innovation nodes** in accordance to the Dissemination Plan of the CIRCLES project;
- Provide detailed reports on all activities as required by Ecsite and project coordinator;
- Attend two project meetings.

Indicative budget
- Maximum available budget 25.000 EUR, estimated effort 6 PM

1 PM: one person working full time for the project for one month (including taxes and other charges)

This budget includes:
- A designated project manager to do the above tasks.
- Costs for printing dissemination material for events and activities, catering local meetings and travel and subsistence to attend project meetings/events of one or two days each.

Selection

The selection of the Third Parties will be done by Ecsite and Science LinX. The project seeks third parties from countries in- and outside of the established consortium (*The Netherlands, Belgium, UK, Ireland, Germany, Austria, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Finland, Slovenia, Turkey and Israel*).

Obligatory criteria for selection:
1. Ecsite member status (Full Members prioritised).
2. Track record in similar participatory activities.
3. An English-speaking project manager.

Desirable criteria for selection:
1. Experience in linking non-formal, informal and formal education.
2. Track record with Responsible Research and Innovation and/or Sustainable Development Goals (UNEP) related activities.
3. All institutions from the EU-members states and associated countries are most

welcome to apply. However, during the selection process a balanced geographical distribution will be considered.

How to apply
For more information or for showing your interest in becoming a third party, please let us know **before August 15th**.

Please fill in this online form by **23:00 CET on 14 August, 2016**. Potential third parties will be notified of the outcome in due course. Once selected, third parties must be able to provide a signed letter of intent before 19 August 2016.

For any further questions, please contact the Ecsite project managers Antonina Khodzhaeva
akhodzhaeva@ecsite.eu or Andrea Troncoso atroncoso@ecsite.eu .

Summary of CIRCLES Project

Out-of-school learning happens for all sorts of education, but it is a necessity for *science education* in particular, as it bridges the gap between the highly specialized science and technology subjects and their unequalled importance for innovation and citizenship in cities and regions in Europe.

Schools, science centres, universities, local communities, companies, libraries and fab labs just to mention a few, already provide a rich variety of out-of-school science education opportunities. However, and in stark contrast with the societal and economical needs, these rich bottom-up initiatives are fragmented and unstructured. This fragmentation stands in the way of incremental quality improvement.

Science education stakeholders together are like an ecosystem where very diverse relationships tie many species together in strong interdependence. But where an ecosystem resists change and remains at equilibrium, our cities and regions require *science education* to improve effectiveness and meet local and global sustainability goals.

The CIRCLES-project strives to:
o combine **formal, non-formal and informal education** into inclusive and rich regional learning environments,
o recognize the utmost importance of **regional bottom-up networks** in *science education*, their ecosystem approach**,** and determine key actors and processes,
o build on existing initiatives to foster **network governance** with shared responsibility for key actors,
o bring about **incremental growth to excellence** in the region, disseminating good practices to national and international levels.

In the first and second year of the project, building the ecosystems and creating calendars in all partner-countries will take place. In the third year, partners can learn from experiences from partners, and strengthen local networks and evaluate and improve the activities.

All partners will engage local, regional or national governments to embed the calendars of activities in their long-term planning and financing structures, in such a way that *science education* through informal learning will find a sustainable structure. Within these regional ecosystems, *science education* activities will be brought together in fluid and dynamic calendars with recurring activities, tailored for students, teachers and/or the general public. Thus we can shape **network governance** with shared responsibility for key actors and bring about **incremental growth to excellence** in the region, disseminating good practices to national and international levels: our CIRCLES.