EIP- SCC General Assembly 'Shape' Table Discussions, 27th – 28th June, 2018

"Small Giants" Shape Table Session

Participants

Name	Organisation
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Session Notes:

Q1) Why Small Giants?
- Need to start with "the why" to ensure the focus is of value.
- Initiatives often faster to implement in smaller cities
- Collaboration should be based on need/challenge/interest rather than geographic proximity
- Big cities struggle to collaborate and are often in competition – maybe Small Giants can set an example, offer a solution?
- Should be noted that there are often advantages of being 2nd for small cities – less risk
- Need to create solutions, don't solve problems
- Urban rural relationships are key and may set a Small Giants apart in that they are better equipped to connect with their rural hinterland
- It was noted that relatively small sums could be transformational in small cities via a *whole city* approach rather than pilots in large cities. Use this to set example to larger cities and develop expertise in scale ups
- "A new generation collaborating in new ways"

Q2) How do we define a Small Giant?
- Suggested that Small Giants should: -
    - have a population ranging from 30,000 to 300,000,
    - are progressive and ambitious, and
    - are committed to collaborating with other Small Giants to build a community that will tackle and resolve common challenges
- The desire to collaborate is considered *critical* " You are *small* until you collaborate"
- The term "*Giant*" is about ambition through collaboration
- Finally, there was agreement that the definition should be *flexible* due to the national context. In some countries all cities could be regarded as small when compared with those in another.

Q3) How should the Small Giants Initiative operate?
- To be successful the initiative needs to be led and driven by someone

- It was noted that collaboration is hard where no historic foundation or physical linkages
- We should identify 5 to 10 lead cities
- We should perhaps use the term *cluster* of cities
- Those cities could grow the cluster by building on existing twinning arrangements or by inviting or nominating a neighbour or partner city
- We need to build a joint vision and mission supported by a financial model
- "Small Giants" should be developed as a "Smart Brand" – building a community of like-minded cities
- The cluster would need to adopt a strategy to "sell" the Small Giants concept to other cities
- The group of cities should have a website for information, sign-up etc.
- One quick win would be to identify case studies of successful EU projects that have involved candidate Small Giants
- There may also legal considerations if collaborations become more formal
- In terms of substance it was felt the cluster identify a suite of common city needs and challenges, as a catalyst for effective multi-city collaboration. The following, potential topics were suggested but not discussed e.g.: -
  - Systemic Driven Urban Innovation
  - Circular City
  - Societal Insight tools
  - Resilience
  - Market Engagement
  - Performance Management
  - Digital Responsiveness
- Developing collaborative business models is critical potentially by bundling small city projects into more attractive business cases
- John Zib suggested collaboration with the Citizen City toolkit project. It was agreed that this should be explored further as a potential quick start.
- Finally it was agree that there may be a need to think about the timescales of the collaboration. Quick wins or long term? May need political buy-in to long-term arrangements and the ability to commit to both?
- There was a feeling that the new approach will excite the EU and lead to potential funding

Q4) Maintaining Momentum
- Establish the Small Giants as a "semi-formalised" network. There was a feeling however that there were dangers in making the initiative too complex or technical. It should be both flexible and realistic in ambition.
- Facilitate connected and collaborative approaches designed for small cities
- Potential for multiple, linked test beds focussed on smaller cities
- Identify potential funding opportunities
- Promote activity through case studies and occasional event
- The real benefit goes beyond the sharing of best practice and case studies into the sharing of capability, capacity and expertise (including bid writing experience)
- The initiative should seek funding for administrative support and first stage collaborations e.g.: -
  - Urban Innovation Action Fund– €50k potential
  - Check applicability of Social Challenge Fund (H2020) - up to €30k.
  - Track the "City Facility" new EC initiative (available from Summer 2019) aimed at supporting the grouping of small cities

Actions (drawn from the above outputs)

1. Identify lead city (currently Peterborough – UK)
2. Identify 5 to 10 lead cities as core
3. Identify a suite of common city needs and challenges, as a catalyst for effective multi-city collaboration (building on initial suggestions)
4. Grow the core cluster by building on existing twinning arrangements or by inviting or nominating a neighbour or partner city
5. Build a joint vision and mission supported by a financial model
6. Develop "Small Giants" as a "Smart Brand"
7. Adopt a strategy to "sell" the Small Giants concept to other cities
8. Develop a website for information, sign-up etc.
9. Identify case studies of successful EU projects that have involved candidate Small Giants
10. Explore collaboration with the Citizen City toolkit project (via John Zib)
11. Identify funding for administrative support and first stage collaborations e.g.: -
    i. Urban Innovation Action Fund– €50k potential
    ii. Check applicability of Social Challenge Fund (H2020) - up to €30k.
    iii. Track the "City Facility" new EC initiative (available from Summer 2019) aimed at supporting the grouping of small cities

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