

Tampere eLearning Cluster as a local and regional cooperation network

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Outline

- Tampere eLearning Cluster
- Activities
- Members
- Aims and experiences
- Regional context
- Cases

Tampere eLearning Cluster

- Partnership to promote e-learning in the Tampere area, Finland
- Gathers together actors in education, training, research and e-learning development
- Offers information, resources and networking
- Spreads information, ideas, innovation and best practices among people and organizations

Cooperation network

- Cooperation model for educational and research institutions, the local and regional policy makers and the private sector
- Also a practical network for individual students, teachers, researchers and other staff in the organizations
- The Tampere way of organizing local cooperation is noted as leading the way in Finland

Activities to promote networking and collaboration

- Disseminates information on events and development in the field
- Organizes meetings, seminars, training and other events
- Matches people and ideas
- Participates actively in national and international networks
- Co-ordinates and assists in partner search and the preparation of new projects

Activities to promote networking and collaboration

- Services for the members as well as for a wider group of interested in e-learning
- Negotiating partner for the Tampere area
- Represents the members and markets their e-learning expertise and competence

Partnership

- “Grassroots” initiative from a number of institutions
- Established in 2001
- One of many initiatives taken in Tampere to promote information society development in the region
- Part of the eTampere Information Society programme www.etampere.fi

Members

- Tampere University of Technology (TUT)
- University of Tampere (UTA)
- City of Tampere
- Tampere Polytechnic (TAMK)
- Pirkanmaa Polytechnic (PIRAMK)
- AKONET Adult Education Network
- Tampere Technology Center

eLearning activity

- 6 eLearning research units (UTA, TUT)
- 5 learning technology centres (UTA, TUT, TAMK, PIRAMK, City dept. of education)
- 40+ large scale research and development projects, 1 000+ active eLearning courses
- Active members of national eLearning networks: Virtual University, Virtual Polytechnic and Virtual School

Research focus

- Evaluation of eLearning: accessibility, usability, feasibility, quality, effectiveness
- Integration of information systems
- Mobile learning
- Edugaming: potential of games, game design, pedagogy and technology

Development focus

- Teacher training and support
- Development of technical and pedagogical competences
- Appropriate use of eLearning
- Evaluation and value assurance
- Students’ eLearning skills
- eLearning for citizens
- From pilot projects to mainstream

Participants’ interests for joining

- Research collaboration
- Further training and post graduate studies
- International development projects
- General need for knowledge acquisition and keeping up-to-date with developments

Cluster's aims

- Quickly make the latest research results available for the development of quality teaching and training projects
- In return receive feedback from the field to initiate new research
- Promote co-operation between the various levels and fields of education and training

Cluster's strenghts

- Multidisciplinary approach to e-learning
- Interaction between practice and theory
- Collaboration of various actors
- General positive attitude towards eLearning

Experiences

- Cluster members mutually learn and develop collaboration and their division of work for example in project preparation and teacher training
- The result has been several local, national and European research and development projects that involve new kind of local partnerships.

Essential for success

- Active coordination
- Commitment of organisations and participating individuals
- Collaboration is invariably connected with the unit's or individual's own activities
- Collaboration is not an extra task but a real benefit to the participants

Regional context

- Various sub-regional and regional strategies in Tampere focus on supporting the development of collaboration networks and on vigorous development of the information society, education and training provision, know-how and competence
- The Cluster forms a context for assembling regional networks for developers

Future development

- Expand the network into a regional one integrating its activities with regional development
- Develop a comprehensive model for e-learning collaboration networks and value chains

Cases

- Open HE for rural areas
- eLearning network for liberal adult education
- News, Events and Announcements in Tampere
- Edugaming in Finland

Open HE for rural areas

- Coordinated by the University of Tampere / Open University (ESF funding)
- Participants 7 adult education centers in Southern Finland
- Builds simple network based cooperation models for providing university education in rural areas
- Trains eLearning tutors in the institutions
- Produces and offers an online program in adult education
- Training centres market HE opportunities in the area

eLearning network for liberal adult education

- Coordinated by Parkano Adult Education Institute
- Participants 30 adult education centers in Western Finland covering 54 municipalities
- Coordinates the supply of distance education in the adult education centres
- Develops pedagogic and technical competences and infrastructure to plan and provide online education
- Aims to foresee the education needs of citizens and businesses in the area
- Offers courses also from open university, open polytechnic or upper secondary distance learning

NEAT: News, Events and Announcements in Tampere

- Distributed system for delivery of structured news
- Cooperative model for web-service development
- XML-based automated sharing of information (RSS feed)
- Relevant news searched and delivered for consideration by "news agents"
- Moderator uses or localises information
- Pilot testing in UTA, TUT and City of Tampere
- Open for any organization to join

Edugaming in Finland

- National research project and Special Interest Group activities
- Combine gaming and learning
- Learning potential of games (basic research)
- Edugames design criteria (case projects)
- Partners universities, research institutes, companies
- Starting 2004, coordination in Tampere

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