

## THE IDEA

### Forum Synergies' Scholarships

Forum Synergies offers a trainee exchange programme. We are addressing young people interested in discovering a rural project, a rural organisation or another specific activity related to sustainable local & rural development.

This programme offers young people the possibility to spend some relevant time in a place of their choice - according to the hosts available - in order to discover

and learn from the experiences and practices of people & organisations dedicated to sustainable local & rural development.

Besides the scholarship, Forum Synergies' pursues the goal of motivating and enabling young people to become active in the place where they live. The idea is to implement the lessons learned through the scholarships!

## SCHOLARSHIPS FOR WHOM?

### Profile of trainees

Trainees should ideally:

- be actively involved in local & rural development projects as animator, organiser, trainer or adviser to a rural community or rural development NGO;
- be about to start activities related to sustainable rural development in their region either on voluntary or professional basis.
- should come and / or work in rural areas and be involved - in a professional or voluntary way - in a

collective initiative, local community or organisation dealing with rural issues

- having experience with rural development or voluntary work would be desirable;
- be able to communicate in one of the languages indicated by the host organisation (usually English)
- be motivated to use and share with others the knowledge and practical skills acquired during the scholarship period.

Candidates should preferably be under 35 years of age.

### Profile of host organisations

The host should be an association, organisation or institution involved in sustainable rural development at local, regional or national level and should have experience at least since 5 years.

The main requirement for such an organisation is the ability to provide the trainee with examples of good rural

development practices, as well as managerial and organisational capacity needed to facilitate and monitor the progress of the trainee.

The host should be ready to exchange experiences made with the scholarship programme with Forum Synergies.

## OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK

### What Forum Synergies offers

**To the trainee.** Forum Synergies will contribute to the costs of travel and modest accommodation of the trainee during the scholarship period. The maximum amount that a trainee can obtain is **EUR 1.000** (the allocation will depend on the actual costs borne by the trainee).

**To the host.** Forum Synergies will also make a small contribution towards the costs of the recipient organisa-

tion covering the effort for supervision and organisation of the stay – up to a maximum of **EUR 500**.

In case of applicants from new EU member states in Central and Eastern Europe Countries and candidate countries Forum Synergies will cooperate with the PREPARE Network.

## Basics & Scholarship Experiences

The following Basics & Scholarship Experiences are dedicated to bring an added value to

- the further involvement of the trainee in sustainable rural development activities showing how the knowledge and skills he/ she obtained will benefit the trainee's home project or region, community or organisation
- adding to Forum Synergies' success stories and best practise examples being incorporated in the "Handbook of Sustainable Rural Development"

**Basics** shall be provided before the scholarship is agreed. They are part of the application requirements and build the basic criteria for the selection and approval procedure. These are:

- 1) **Registration.** Both the host and the trainee have to register on the Forum Synergies website using the online application form.
- 2) **Information package.** The host organisation shall provide a package of information describing the organisation and its contributions to sustainable rural development. This package also shall include practical information like the options for travel and accommodation. For more details see the section "Application" .
- 3) **Work plan.** The host organisation is required to submit a work plan illustrating the main activities the trainee can be involved in.

**Scholarship experiences** shall be provided within 1 month after the completion of the scholarship. The approval by Forum Synergies is pre-requisite for receiving final payment.

- 1) **Report by the trainee.** Each trainee shall deliver a narrative and financial report about the training. The report shall include:

- **Profile** describing the experience of the trainee related to sustainable rural development and/ or the professional/ educational background
  - **Motivation** for taking part in the scholarship programme
  - **Description** of the activities carried out
  - **Assessment** from a personal point of view: role and impact of activities learned on sustainable rural development
  - **Interviews** carried out with 1-3 local actors involved in sustainable rural development (this can be a written summary, a blog post, short video according to FS-criteria)
  - **Lessons learned.** Short description of the most important lessons learned the trainee takes home.
  - **Action Plan.** A short description of how the trainee intends to implement the lessons learned.
- 2) **Report by the host.** The host shall deliver a report within 1 month after the training . The report shall include:
    - **Profile** of the host organisation and local actors related to the organisation.
    - **Learning from an outside view** describing the input or feedback the trainee is offering
    - **Evaluation.** Short overall evaluation describing the output of the training.
    - **Recommendations.** Hosts should provide recommendations for other hosts and/ or make proposals for improvement of the exercise, procedure

*Both trainee and host accept that elements of their reports may be used on the Forum Synergies website and the "Handbook of Sustainable Rural Development"*

## Duration

This Forum Synergies scholarship programme period starts in July 2014 up to October 2015. As of May 2014 up to August 2015. Online registration forms are available at Forum synergies' website, applications can be submitted to [info@forum-synergies.eu](mailto:info@forum-synergies.eu).

Apart from mentioned criteria the approval of applications will depend on the actual absorption of funds available for the scholarship programme.

## Application

**The trainee.** Forum Synergies asks the candidates to submit:

- **a letter of intent**, describing his/ her commitment and interest in participating in the Forum Synergies Scholarship programme. (part of the online form)

- a short **CV**
- **What the trainee could bring to the host**, describing briefly the personal background so far related to experiences with sustainable rural development and skills which might be of interest for the host.
- **an action plan** on how the lessons learned will be implemented after the scholarship. (part of the online form)
- **2 recommendations** from Forum Synergies' members or partners who know the candidate and can confirm his/ her commitment to sustainable local & rural development. In case the applicant is not related to any organisation a personal interview with Forum Synergies can replace written recommendations

**The host.** Organisations wishing to receive trainees should send to Forum Synergies an **information package** which should contain:

- Description of the topics, issues, activities offered as subjects for the learning process including the presentation of a workplan
- name and function of the person (or persons) in the organisation who would facilitate and monitor the learning process of the trainee, with a written commitment (signed by the authorised representative of the organisation) that this person(s) will be available to the trainee for at least 8 hours per week during the Scholarship period

## Financial procedure

**The trainee** will submit:

- A reimbursement sheet including the originals of all tickets, hotel bills and any other financial documents. (reimbursement sheet for download)
- a report according to the required elements explained in "Basics & Experiences"

Try to save money - find cheap flights etc. If you are travelling by car Forum Synergies will refund you a gas money according to the reimbursement conven-

- a short CV and description of tasks of the person(s) who will facilitate and monitor the learning process
- languages in which this person(s) will be able to communicate with the trainee

The host organisation will also be asked to help the trainee in finding modest accommodation (information about such accommodation should preferably be given already in the initial information package).

Potential trainees and potential host organisations can apply separately or together. The selection of trainees and host organisations will be done on the basis of information provided by the candidates according to the requirements specified below.

*Hosts indicate if they agree that this information is published in the "Handbook of Hosts for Experiences in of Sustainable Rural Development"*

**Forum Synergies.** Forum Synergies will evaluate the application documents within 14 days. After approval of submitted documents from trainee and host Forum Synergies will send a **confirmation letter** to both partners. At the same time Forum Synergies will request the signing of a **contract** between both partners (trainee and host) and Forum Synergies. (download model-contract)

**Timing and deadlines.** Online registration and applications have to be brought in at least 2 months before starting the training.

tion(download). Receipts should be addressed to Forum Synergies.

**The host** will submit:

- a report according to the required elements explained in "Basics & Experiences".

**Forum Synergies.** Forum Synergies will evaluate the delivered reports within 2 weeks. After approval of reports and submitted documents Forum Synergies will make the payment within 14 days.

## CONTACT & INFORMATION

[info@forum-synergies.eu](mailto:info@forum-synergies.eu), [www.forum-synergies.eu](http://www.forum-synergies.eu).