

# Guidelines for Building Learning Cities

UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



UNESCO Institute  
for Lifelong Learning

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## Planning

These guidelines for building learning cities, which were developed in consultation with international experts from all five UNESCO regions, draw on insights emerging from the case studies collected in the publication *Unlocking the Potential of Urban Communities: Case Studies of Twelve Learning Cities*. The guidelines aim to provide cities with strategic approaches for building dynamic and sustainable learning cities. They contain a set of actionable recommendations that can be referred to at every stage of the process of becoming a learning city.

The guidelines are divided into the following six key areas of action, which should be tailored to every city's unique context: develop a plan for becoming a learning city; create a coordinated structure involving all stakeholders; initiate and maintain the process with celebratory events; make sure that learning is accessible to all citizens; establish a monitoring and evaluation process; and ensure sustainable funding.

### Develop a plan for becoming a learning city

Strong political leadership and steadfast commitment should be reflected in a concrete action plan.

- Involve city leaders and representatives in identifying the main issues that need to be addressed based on the city's unique challenges and priorities.
- Take stock of what has already been achieved by gathering information on relevant activities implemented by different sectors and stakeholders.
- Develop an understanding of what building a learning city involves by organizing capacity-building workshops for various sectors and stakeholders.
- Devise a concrete action plan and give it a catchy title. This plan should define the medium- and long-term objectives and means of evaluation, using the *Key Features of Learning Cities* as a basis.
- Develop a city charter outlining the actions that need to be taken to improve learning in the city. These actions should be aligned with the central government's strategies for building a learning society.

## Involvement

### Create a coordinated structure involving all stakeholders

All organizations and citizens are stakeholders in a learning city. A structure that involves all stakeholders in building the learning city through dialogue and consensus should therefore be created.

- Establish a learning city development committee comprising representatives from different sectors. This committee should reach a consensus on the principles for developing, implementing, monitoring and financing the learning city.
- Ensure that all stakeholders have clearly defined roles and responsibilities in designing and implementing the learning city plan.
- Create a learning city forum where people can contribute and share experiences.
- Form alliances with other cities, both nationally and internationally, in order to exchange experience, knowledge, ideas and best practice.
- Join the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC) and any other networks or associations that could add value.
- Maintain strong contact with the ministry of education or any other related ministry to link the local with the national development.

## Celebration

### Initiate and maintain the process with celebratory events

Generating enthusiasm is crucial to the success of a learning city. The more people and organizations that react positively to the idea of a learning city and engage with it, the better its chances of flourishing are.

- Organize a learning festival in places where people gather. Make this a joyful event and invite all relevant organizations to exhibit their courses, products and materials and offer hands-on activities that encourage all citizens to get involved.
- Hold a conference to deliver the learning city message. Invite one or more twin cities to participate and share their experience, knowledge, ideas and best practice.
- Invite the media to promote and celebrate learning.
- Renew the interest of all stakeholders in the learning city agenda by organizing regular celebratory events.

## Accessibility

### **Make sure that learning is accessible to all citizens**

Learning must be made enjoyable, available and accessible to all citizens so that they are inspired and empowered to continue learning throughout life.

- Provide adequate information, guidance and support to all citizens, including maps of learning provision in the city.
- Establish, promote and maintain community-based learning spaces and provide resources for learning in families and communities.
- Identify and respond to the learning needs and interests of citizens.
- Develop procedures that identify, validate and accredit the learning outcomes of non-formal learning, in particular.
- Provide special support in the form of flexible arrangements for marginalized groups, including families with migrant backgrounds, citizens with special learning needs and unemployed people.
- Help public and private organizations to become learning organizations.
- Foster a learner-friendly environment in the city and its institutions.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

### **Establish a monitoring and evaluation process to ensure learning city progress**

In order to assess progress made in providing lifelong learning for all in the city, it is important to monitor and evaluate performance continuously.

- Define the measures for performance and progress in the city based on your action plan and the Key Features of Learning Cities.
- Establish mechanisms for documenting the process, assessing citizens' interests and needs, and collecting data.
- Commission regular reports that capture the lessons learned and make suggestions for improvement.
- Establish collective strategies for informing all stakeholders and gathering feedback.

# Funding

## Ensure sustainable funding

In order to realize the multiple benefits of becoming and sustaining a learning city, multiple sources of sustainable funding should be secured and allocated in a fair way.

- Secure sufficient financial resources to build and maintain the basic structure of the learning city action plan.
- Develop sustainable cost-sharing mechanisms involving multi-stakeholder partnerships with companies, foundations, philanthropists, international partners, local and national governments, and supranational organizations.
- Make effective use of the learning resources of all stakeholders.
- Conduct cost-benefit analyses in order to compile evidence of the benefits of learning.
- Make special provisions for marginalized groups and individuals.

In order to support cities as they follow these recommendations, the secretariat of the Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC), which is based in the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), will lead the following actions:

- Facilitating and disseminating research on the enrichment of the concept of the learning city
- Developing tools and instruments for building learning cities
- Serving as a clearing house for successful practices in establishing learning cities
- Developing and providing capacity-development programmes for members and partners
- Promoting policy dialogue and peer learning among member cities
- Advocating the importance of lifelong learning for all as an organizing principle for education policy and promoting policy reforms that support the building of learning cities

Enjoy the benefits of becoming a city that effectively mobilizes its resources in every sector to promote inclusive learning from basic to higher education; to revitalize learning in families and communities; to facilitate learning for and in the workplace; to extend the use of modern learning technologies; to enhance quality and excellence in learning; and to foster a culture of learning throughout life.

*UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities*  
*'Lifelong learning for all is our city's future'*

For more information on the UNESCO  
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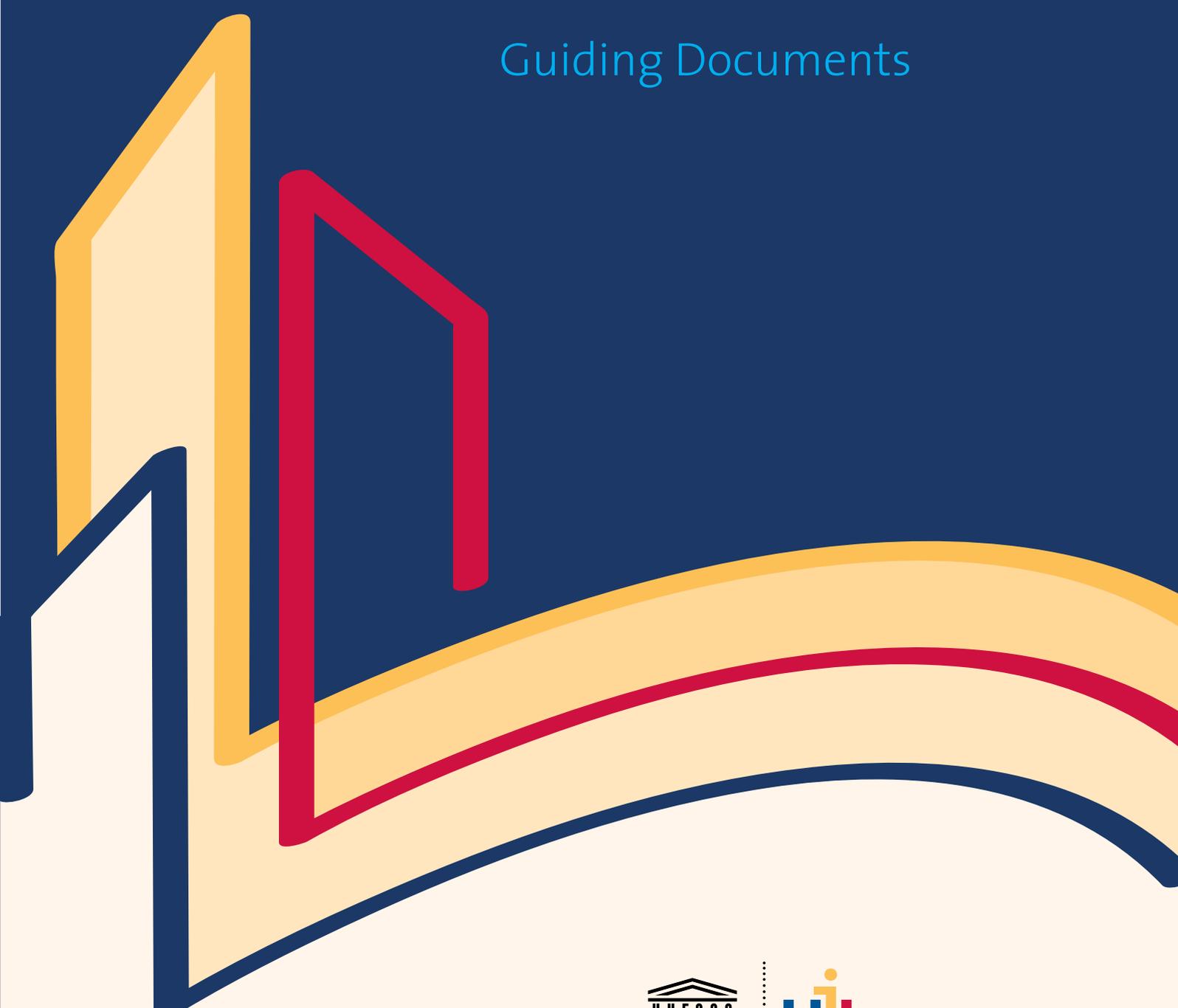


United Nations  
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# UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities

## Guiding Documents



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Its publications are a valuable resource for educational researchers, planners, policymakers and practitioners.

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## Foreword



Lifelong learning is becoming increasingly important in today's world and is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Global visions for the future of lifelong learning are being discussed at the international level, and regional and national political leaders are working towards establishing the appropriate legislative frameworks. Meanwhile, more and more of the world's cities are making implementation happen by building learning cities. Learning cities enable their citizens to learn throughout life. In doing so, they enhance individual empowerment, social cohesion, and economic and cultural prosperity, thereby laying the foundation for sustainable development.

Learning cities at all stages of development can benefit greatly from sharing ideas with other cities, as solutions for issues that arise as one learning city develops may already exist in another. The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning established the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC) in order to promote this sharing of ideas, and to provide cities with the expertise, guidance and support they need throughout the development process. This international policy-oriented network serves as a source of inspiration, know-how and best practice for those involved in building learning cities.

I am pleased to introduce the Guiding Documents of the UNESCO GNLC. These Guiding Documents consist of the *Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities* and the *Key Features of Learning Cities*, both of which were adopted at the 1st International Conference on Learning Cities in Beijing, China, in 2013. They serve as the basis of our work and provide cities and partners with guidance on building learning cities.

I wish to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to UNESCO GNLC cities, partners and supporters, all of whom recognize the major role played by lifelong learning in enhancing social, economic and environmental sustainability. I would also like to encourage cities and partners all over the world to join the initiative and create lifelong learning opportunities for all in the world's communities.

Arne Carlsen  
Director  
UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning

## Introduction

We live in a complex, fast-changing world where social, economic and political norms are constantly being redefined. Reducing poverty, boosting economic growth and employment, managing demographic transformations, promoting diversity and equality, tackling climate change, ensuring public safety and responding to urbanization are just some of the challenges we face. These challenges need to be tackled on multiple levels. At the international level, we need our leaders to set out clear visions for peace, prosperity and sustainability. At regional and national levels, politicians must establish the appropriate legislative frameworks. At the local level, implementation takes place. And at the citizen's level, change begins. Lifelong learning can lay the foundation for this change, as citizens who develop their knowledge, skills, values and attitudes throughout life are better equipped to help society overcome the challenges it faces.

Enabling citizens to learn throughout life has become a priority for communities around the world. Lifelong learning as the foundation of sustainable social, economic and environmental development is also at the heart of UNESCO's learning city concept.

To support the implementation of lifelong learning, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) established the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities. The network promotes policy dialogue and peer learning among member cities; forges links; fosters partnerships; provides capacity development; and develops instruments to encourage and recognize progress made in building learning cities.

The work of the network is based on two key documents: the *Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities* and the *Key Features of Learning Cities*. The *Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities* outlines the role of lifelong learning in promoting inclusion, prosperity and sustainability in cities, and it affirms commitments to twelve actions for developing learning cities. The *Key Features of Learning Cities* provides an overall framework of key features of learning cities and a comprehensive checklist of action points to enhance and measure the progress of learning cities. Guided by these documents, the network aims to help cities use the power of lifelong learning to secure a sustainable future.

# 1. Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities

## Lifelong Learning for All: Promoting Inclusion, Prosperity and Sustainability in Cities

### Preamble

We, the participants at the International Conference on Learning Cities, co-organized by UNESCO, the Ministry of Education of China and Beijing Municipal Government (Beijing, 21–23 October 2013) declare as follows:

**We recognize** that we live in a complex, fast-changing world where social, economic and political norms are constantly redefined. Economic growth and employment, urbanization, demographic change, scientific and technological advances, cultural diversity and the need to maintain human security and public safety represent just a few of the challenges to the governance and sustainability of societies.

**We affirm** that, in order to empower citizens – understood as all residents of cities and communities – we must strive to give them access to and encourage their use of a broad array of learning opportunities throughout their lives.

**We believe** that learning improves quality of life, equips citizens to anticipate and tackle new challenges, and helps build better and more sustainable societies.

**We acknowledge** that the concept of learning throughout life is not new; it is an integral feature of human development and is deeply rooted in all cultures and civilizations.

**We maintain** that lifelong learning confers social, economic and cultural benefits to individual learners and communities and should be a primary focus of cities, regions, nations and the international community.

**We acknowledge** that the majority of the world's population now resides in cities and urban regions, and that this trend is accelerating. As a result, cities and urban regions play an ever greater role in national and global development.

**We recognize** that “learning communities”, “learning cities” and “learning regions” are pillars of sustainable development.

**We accept** that international and regional organizations, as well as national governments, have a vital role to play in developing learning societies. However, we are aware that this development must be rooted in sub-national regions, cities and all types of community.

**We know** that cities play a significant role in promoting social inclusion, economic growth, public safety and environmental protection. Therefore, cities should be both architects and executors of strategies that foster lifelong learning and sustainable development.

**We acknowledge** that cities differ in their cultural and ethnic composition, heritage and social structures. However, many characteristics of a learning city are common to all. A learning city mobilizes human and other resources to promote inclusive learning from basic to higher education; it revitalizes learning in families and communities; it facilitates learning for and in the workplace; it extends the use of modern learning technologies; it enhances quality in learning; and it nurtures a culture of learning throughout life.

**We envision** that a learning city will facilitate individual empowerment, build social cohesion, nurture active citizenship, promote economic and cultural prosperity, and lay the foundation for sustainable development.

## Commitments

We commit ourselves to the following actions, which have the power to transform our cities:

### 1. Empowering individuals and promoting social cohesion

In today's cities, individual empowerment and social cohesion are crucial to the well-being of citizens, fostering participation, trust, connectedness and civic engagement. To equip citizens to anticipate and tackle the challenges of urbanization, cities should attach great importance to individual empowerment and social cohesion.

In developing learning cities, we support individual empowerment and social cohesion by:

- ensuring that every citizen has the opportunity to become literate and obtain basic skills;
- encouraging and enabling individuals to actively participate in the public life of their city;
- guaranteeing gender equality; and
- creating a safe, harmonious and inclusive community.

### 2. Enhancing economic development and cultural prosperity

While economic development plays a fundamental role in increasing standards of living and maintaining the economic health of cities, cultural prosperity is a powerful contributor to quality of life. As a repository of knowledge, meaning and values, culture defines the way people live and interact within communities.

In developing learning cities, we will enhance economic development and cultural prosperity by:

- stimulating inclusive and sustainable economic growth;
- reducing the proportion of citizens living in poverty;
- creating employment opportunities for all citizens;
- actively supporting science, technology and innovation;
- ensuring access to diverse cultural activities; and
- encouraging participation in leisure and physical recreation.

### 3. Promoting sustainable development

To ensure the future viability of communities, natural resources must be used in ways that ensure a good quality of life for future generations. Sustainable development cannot be achieved through technological solutions, political regulations or fiscal incentives alone. It requires fundamental changes in the way people think and act. Lifelong learning is a necessary part of making this change.

In developing learning cities, we will promote sustainable development by:

- reducing the negative impacts of economic and other human activities on the natural environment;
- protecting the natural environment and enhancing the liveability of our cities; and
- promoting sustainable development through active learning in all settings.

### 4. Promoting inclusive learning in the education system

All citizens, regardless of ability, gender and sexuality, social background, language, ethnicity, religion or culture should have equal access to learning opportunities. If a person is excluded from participating in the education system, their ability to develop as individuals and contribute to their communities may be impaired.

In developing learning cities, we will promote inclusive learning in the education system by:

- expanding access to early childhood care and education;
- expanding access to formal education from primary to tertiary level;
- expanding access to and participation in adult education and technical and vocational education and training;
- improving the flexibility of lifelong learning systems in order to offer diverse learning opportunities and meet a range of proficiencies; and
- providing support for marginalized groups, including migrant families, to ensure access to education.

### 5. Revitalizing learning in families and communities

Lifelong learning is not confined to educational or business settings. It infuses the entire life of a city. In most societies, the family is an especially important setting for learning. Learning in families and local communities builds social capital and improves the quality of life.

In developing learning cities, we will revitalize learning in families and local communities by:

- establishing community-based learning spaces and providing resources for learning in families and communities;
- ensuring, through consultation, that community education and learning programmes respond to the needs of all citizens;
- motivating people to participate in family and community learning, giving special attention to vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, such as families in need, migrants, people with disabilities, minorities and third-age learners; and
- recognizing community history and culture, and indigenous ways of knowing and learning as unique and precious resources.

#### **6. Facilitating learning for and in the workplace**

Due to globalization, technological advancement and the growth of knowledge-based economies, most adults need to regularly enhance their knowledge and skills. In turn, private and public organizations need to embrace a culture of learning.

In developing learning cities, we will facilitate learning for and in the workplace by:

- helping public and private organizations to become learning organizations;
- ensuring that all members of the workforce, including migrant workers, have access to a broad array of learning opportunities;
- encouraging employers and trade unions to support workplace learning; and
- providing appropriate learning opportunities for unemployed youth and adults.

#### **7. Extending the use of modern learning technologies**

Information and communication technologies (ICT) – particularly the Internet – have opened up new possibilities for learning and education. Modern cities must enable all citizens to use these technologies for learning and self-empowerment.

In developing learning cities, we will extend the use of modern learning technologies by:

- developing policy environments favourable to the use of ICT in learning;
- training administrators, teachers and educators to use technologies that enhance learning;
- expanding citizens' access to ICT tools and learning programmes; and
- developing quality e-learning resources.

#### **8. Enhancing quality in learning**

It is not sufficient for lifelong learning policies and practices to focus on increasing numbers of participants. In many cities, there is a disparity between the numbers of people participating in education and learning and those who succeed in mastering relevant, portable skills and competences. Quality is, therefore, of utmost importance. In particular, there is an acute need to foster skills, values and attitudes that will enable people to overcome religious, linguistic and cultural differences, to coexist peacefully, and to discover shared human, moral and ethical principles.

In developing learning cities, we attach great importance to enhancing quality in learning by:

- promoting a paradigm shift from teaching to learning, and from the mere acquisition of information to the development of creativity and learning skills;
- raising awareness of shared moral, ethical and cultural values, and promoting tolerance of differences;
- employing appropriately trained administrators, teachers and educators;
- fostering a learner-friendly environment in which learners have, as far as practicable, ownership of their own learning; and
- providing support to learners with special needs, in particular those with learning difficulties.

#### **9. Fostering a culture of learning throughout life**

Most people today experience a variety of learning environments. When the outcomes of all learning are valued, rewarded and celebrated by a city, this strengthens the position of learners in society and motivates them to learn further. This motivation should be supported by the provision of comprehensive information and advice to help people make informed learning choices.

In developing learning cities, we will foster a vibrant culture of learning throughout life by:

- recognizing the role of communications media, libraries, museums, religious settings, sports and cultural centres, community centres, parks and similar places as learning spaces;
- organizing and supporting public events that encourage and celebrate learning;
- providing adequate information, guidance and support to all citizens, and stimulating them to learn through diverse pathways; and
- acknowledging the importance of learning in informal and non-formal settings and developing systems that recognize and reward all forms of learning.

## 10. Strengthening political will and commitment

It takes strong political will and commitment to successfully build a learning city. Politicians and administrators have primary responsibility for committing political resources to realizing the vision of a learning city.

In developing learning cities, we will strengthen political will and commitment by:

- demonstrating strong political leadership and making a steadfast commitment to turning our cities into learning cities;
- developing and implementing well grounded and participatory strategies for promoting lifelong learning for all; and
- consistently monitoring progress towards becoming a learning city.

## 11. Improving governance and participation of all stakeholders

All sectors of society have a key role to play in learning and education and should participate in building learning cities. However, stakeholders and citizens are more likely to contribute to building learning cities if decisions are made in a participatory way.

In developing learning cities, we will improve governance and participation of all stakeholders by:

- establishing inter-sectoral coordination mechanisms to involve governmental and non-governmental organizations and the private sector in building learning cities;
- developing bilateral or multilateral partnerships between sectors in order to share resources and increase the availability of learning opportunities; and
- encouraging all stakeholders to provide quality learning opportunities and to make their own unique contribution to building a learning city;

## 12. Boosting resource mobilization and utilization

Cities and communities that embrace lifelong learning for all have seen significant improvements in terms of public health, economic growth, reduced criminality and increased democratic participation. These wider benefits of lifelong learning present strong arguments for increased investment in the building of learning cities.

In developing learning cities, we will boost resource mobilization and utilization by:

- encouraging greater financial investment in lifelong learning by government, civil society, private sector organizations and individuals;
- making effective use of the learning resources of all stakeholders and developing innovative funding mechanisms to support lifelong learning for all;
- removing structural barriers to learning, adopting pro-poor funding policies and providing various types of support to disadvantaged groups;
- encouraging citizens to contribute their talents, skills, knowledge and experience on a voluntary basis; and
- encouraging the exchange of ideas, experiences and best practice between organizations in different cities.

## Call to Action

Numerous places already define themselves as learning cities or regions. They are keen to benefit from international policy dialogue, action research, capacity building and peer learning, and to apply successful approaches to promoting lifelong learning. Therefore,

1. We call upon UNESCO to establish a global network of learning cities to support and accelerate the practice of lifelong learning in the world's communities. This network should promote policy dialogue and peer learning among member cities, forge links, foster partnerships, provide capacity development, and develop instruments to encourage and recognize progress.
2. We call upon cities and regions in every part of the world to join this network, to develop and implement lifelong learning strategies in their cities.
3. We call upon international and regional organizations to become active partners in this network.
4. We call upon national authorities to encourage local jurisdictions to build learning cities, regions and communities, and to participate in international peer learning activities.
5. We call upon foundations, private corporations and civil society organizations to become active partners of the global network of learning cities – drawing on experience gained in private-sector initiatives.

## 2. Key Features of Learning Cities

### 1. Introductory Note

Several approaches have been taken in recent years to translate the concept of a learning society into reality. One significant example is the growth of ‘learning communities’, ‘learning cities’ and ‘learning regions’. Although the idea of a learning city has mostly been conceptualized in developed countries, facilitated by the OECD since the 1980s and the European Commission since the 1990s, it is now rapidly gaining momentum in developing countries. In more and more Member States, local authorities now claim to be learning cities/regions/communities. Their proliferation has become a major worldwide phenomenon, with considerable educational, social, economic and environmental implications.

#### What is a Learning City?

Cities differ in their cultural and ethnic composition, in their heritage and social structures. However, many characteristics of a learning city are common to all. The initiative on learning cities developed by the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning defines a learning city as follows:

A Learning City is a city which effectively mobilizes its resources in every sector to

- promote inclusive learning from basic to higher education;
- revitalize learning in families and communities;
- facilitate learning for and in the workplace;
- extend the use of modern learning technologies;
- enhance quality and excellence in learning; and
- foster a culture of learning throughout life.

In so doing it will create and reinforce individual empowerment and social cohesion, economic and cultural prosperity, and sustainable development.

#### Why monitor progress in developing learning cities?

Since a learning city facilitates lifelong learning for all, and therefore helps to realize the universal right to education, building such a city has far-reaching appeal. This is a continuous process; there is no magic line over which a city will pass in order to become known as a learning city. There are, however, attributes by which a learning city can be recognized, mainly in terms of what it does rather than what it is. The construction of a learning city entails an operational and pragmatic approach to the implementation of lifelong learning. It is not an abstract theory. If a city has the political will and commitment to build a learning city, it will also need a set of indicators or key features against which it can monitor its progress.

Put simply, monitoring the progress of a learning city is necessary for three main reasons:

- To transform political and theoretical discourses into concrete strategies and approaches;
- To measure progress over time; and
- To evaluate the benefits of the strategies it has put into place

The Key Features of Learning Cities will make it possible:

- To support in a meaningful way the development of lifelong learning within and across member cities;
- To determine up to a certain level how much progress is being made to implement lifelong learning for all in many of the world’s communities; and
- To facilitate international comparative analysis and experience-sharing and mutual learning among member cities.

## The development of the Key Features of Learning Cities

This normative instrument for measuring learning cities is the result of a long consultation process. Initially, UIL held a workshop on developing a framework for the Key Features of Learning Cities from 3 to 5 July 2012. Experts representing some of the partners for the establishment of IPLC, including the PASCAL Observatory, Bertelsmann Foundation, CISCO Systems, Beijing Municipal Education Commission, National Centre of Education Development Research of China, Kuwait University and the Cape Higher Education Consortium, as well as some UIL professional staff and consultants, participated in the workshop.

This workshop first of all drew inspiration from the following well-established conceptual frameworks and indicators for measuring social and economic development:

- *The Human Development Index (HDI) and related indices developed by UNDP (2007);*
- *The Revised Official Monitoring Framework for the Millennium Development Goals: goals, targets and indicators (UN, 2008);*
- *The Knowledge Assessment Methodology: Variables and Clusters by the World Bank (2012);*
- *The Better Life Index by OECD (2012);*
- *The Future We Want – RIO+20 Report (UN, 2012);*
- *A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty And Transform Economies Through Sustainable Development (UN, 2013); and*
- *Post-2015 Development Agenda: Goals, Targets and Indicators (The Centre for International Governance Innovation and the Korea Development Institute, 2012).*

Inspired by a list of criteria for indicators developed in the UN report *Analysing and Measuring Social Inclusion in a Global Context* (UN, 2010), the following criteria were endorsed at the workshop to develop the Key Features of Learning Cities.

- *Ambitious but achievable* – achieving the target should represent significant progress but should also be realistic.
- *Crucial* – every feature reflects a value, a priority or a critical issue.
- *Relevant* – a feature must fit its intended purpose; achieving the target should contribute significantly to meeting a key objective.
- *Clear and understandable* – a feature must be simple and easy for all stakeholders to understand, and should make sense to the average person.

- *Easy to measure* – a feature should be measured by available data, or by data to be collected through a well-designed survey.
- *Valid and reliable* – people must trust the information that a feature provides.

As a result of intensive debates and group work, the workshop produced the first draft of the framework of the Key Features of Learning Cities. Taking the comments from experts into consideration, UIL has produced a draft which was presented in the 1st meeting of the Expert Group for Developing Learning Cities in Hangzhou, China. In April and May 2013, UIL consulted some experts and a number of cities on the relevance of the key features and the feasibility of data collection. On 4–5 June 2013, UIL held a second meeting in Jeju Island, Republic of Korea. The participants of the meeting elaborated further on the draft Key Features of Learning Cities.

Based on the expert group's validation, UIL selected a number of cities in each of the UNESCO regions for piloting, which was completed in September 2013. The Key features reflect the results of the piloting.

### Components of the framework of the Key Features of Learning Cities

As shown in Figure 1, the framework of the Key Features of Learning Cities corresponds to the pediments, columns and foundation steps of the UNESCO logo.

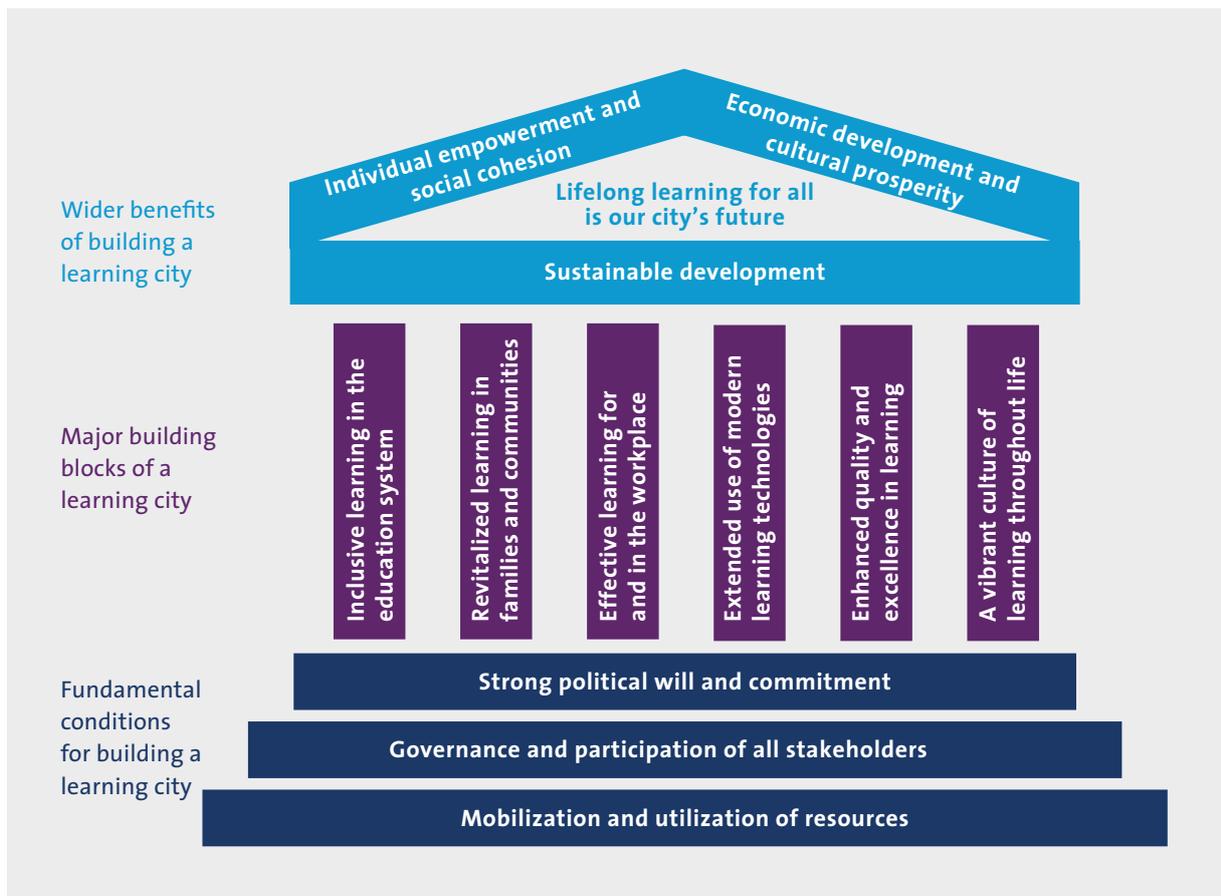
The Pediment – three areas of focus reflect the wider benefits of building a modern learning city, broadly defined as:

- (1) Individual empowerment and social cohesion;
- (2) Economic development and cultural prosperity; and
- (3) Sustainable development.

The Columns – six areas of focus reflect the major building blocks of a learning city:

- (1) Inclusive learning in the education system;
- (2) Revitalized learning in families and communities;
- (3) Effective learning for and in the workplace;
- (4) Extended use of modern learning technologies;
- (5) Enhanced quality in learning; and
- (6) A vibrant culture of learning throughout life.

**Figure 1: The Framework of the Key Features of Learning Cities**



The Foundational Steps – three areas of focus reflect the fundamental conditions for building a learning city:

- (1) Strong political will and commitment;
- (2) Governance and participation of all stakeholders; and
- (3) Mobilization and utilization of resources.

A total of 42 features are included in the Key Features of Learning Cities. Most of the features are quantitative, and related statistics can be provided by the responsible city authorities. As for qualitative features, some can be measured by the results of a survey conducted by independent professional agencies such as Gallop, while others can be measured through expert review of reports provided by the responsible city authorities.

The objective is not to make distinctions between cities. Each city is different and its progress towards a learning city can only be measured within the context of its own cultural, economic and social history and traditions.

### How to use the Key Features of Learning Cities

Formally endorsed by mayors and city education executives of learning cities as well as experts participating in the International Conference on Learning Cities, the Key Features can serve as a comprehensive checklist of action points to help municipal governments and other stakeholders of cities in their efforts to build learning cities that promote lifelong learning for all.

Furthermore, as the members of a global network of learning cities need to be recommended by UNESCO Member States, the national authorities of the Member States can use the Key Features to select and recommend cities to join the network.

More generally, the Key Features can also be used as a reference document for international organizations and national authorities in promoting the development of learning nations, regions, cities and communities.

## 2. List of key features and measurement

Area of focus	Key features	Possible measurements	Source of data	Statistical data in 2012 or survey/review results
<b>1. Wider benefits of building a learning city</b>				
<b>1.1 Empowering individuals and promoting social cohesion</b>	1.1.1 Ensuring that every citizen has the opportunity to become literate and obtain basic skills	<b>Adult literacy rate:</b> Total number of literate persons aged 15 and above, expressed as a percentage of the total population of that age group	Official data provided by city authorities	Male % Female % Total %
	1.1.2 Encouraging and enabling individuals to actively participate in the public life of their city	<b>Participation rate in election:</b> Participation rate of population of eligible age in the most recent major election in the city	Official data provided by city authorities	% (Year)
		<b>Participation in volunteering and community activities:</b> Percentage of citizens involved in unpaid volunteering and community activities in the 12 months preceding the survey	Survey results	%
	1.1.3 Guaranteeing gender equality	<b>Gender equality in politics:</b> Percentage of seats held by women in city council/congress	Official data provided by city authorities	%
		<b>Gender equality in business management:</b> Percentage of seats held by women in boards of top 10 enterprises	Survey results	%
	1.1.4 Creating a safe, harmonious and inclusive community	<b>Crime level:</b> Number of recorded crimes per 100,000 inhabitants	Official data provided by city authorities	
		<b>Social mobility:</b> Percentage of citizens with disadvantaged social background who believe that their children will enjoy higher social status than themselves	Survey results	%
	<b>1.2 Enhancing economic development and cultural prosperity</b>	1.2.1 Stimulating inclusive and sustainable economic growth	<b>Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita:</b> Total value produced (adjusted for purchasing power parity in US\$) within a city divided by the total number of inhabitants	Official data provided by city authorities
<b>Urban poverty:</b> Percentage of citizens living below US \$1.25 a day (PPP) at 2005 international prices			Official data provided by city authorities	%
1.2.2 Creating employment opportunities for all citizens		<b>Unemployment rate:</b> Unemployed working age population (15 years or older) as a percentage of the total labour force	Official data provided by city authorities	Male % Female % Total %
1.2.3 Actively supporting science, technology and innovation		<b>Human resources in science and technology (HRST):</b> Professionals working in a science and technology occupation as a percentage of total employment	Official data provided by city authorities	%
		<b>Patent filing:</b> Number of new patents per 100,000 inhabitants	Official data provided by city authorities	

Area of focus	Key features	Possible measurements	Source of data	Statistical data in 2012 or survey/review results				
<b>1. Wider benefits of building a learning city</b>								
	1.2.4 Ensuring access to diverse cultural activities	<b>Participation in cultural activities:</b> Number of visits to museums, theatres, cinemas, concert halls and sporting events per inhabitant per month	Official data provided by city authorities or survey results			No. of visits		
	1.2.5 Encouraging participation in leisure and physical recreation	<b>Participation in physical exercise and sports:</b> Percentage of population participating in physical exercise or sports no less than five times a week	Survey results			%		
<b>1.3 Promoting sustainable development</b>	1.3.1 Reducing the negative impacts of economic and other human activities on the natural environment	<b>CO2 emissions:</b> Total CO2 emissions, in tonnes per capita	Official data provided by city authorities			No. of tonnes		
		<b>Waste management:</b> Total annual domestic waste collected and processed, in kg per capita per year	Official data provided by city authorities			Kg per capita		
	1.3.2 Enhancing the liveability of cities	<b>Living condition:</b> Percentage of population living in slums	Official data provided by city authorities			%		
		<b>Public transportation:</b> Citizens' satisfaction with the public transportation system	Survey results	5 Excellent	4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor
	1.3.3 Promoting sustainable development through active learning in all settings	<b>Education for sustainable development:</b> Effective measures for promoting sustainable development at all levels of education	Experts' review	5 Excellent	4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor
		<b>Environmental stewardship:</b> Citizens' perception of their own behaviours in terms of environmental responsibility	Survey results	5 Excellent	4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor
<b>2. Major building blocks of a learning city</b>								
<b>2.1 Promoting inclusive learning in the education system</b>	2.1.1 Expanding access to early childhood care and education	<b>Enrolment in pre-primary education:</b> Net enrolment rate in pre-primary education (ISCED o)	Official data provided by city authorities	Gender	Boys	%		
					Girls	%		
					Total	%		
	2.1.2 Expanding access to education from primary to tertiary level	<b>Mean years of schooling:</b> Average number of years of formal schooling received by people aged 25 and older	Official data provided by city authorities	Gender	Male	years		
					Female	years		
					Total	years		
2.1.3 Expanding access to and participation in adult education and technical and vocational education and training	<b>Participation in adult learning and education:</b> Percentage of citizens aged 25–64 that reported receiving education/training in the 12 months preceding the survey	Survey results			%			

Area of focus	Key features	Possible measurements	Source of data	Statistical data in 2012 or survey/review results	
<b>2. Major building blocks of a learning city</b>					
	2.1.4 Providing support for marginalized groups, including migrant families, to ensure access to education	<b>Support for disadvantaged groups:</b> Measures adopted by the city authorities to support learners from linguistic/ethnic minorities and disadvantaged backgrounds  <b>Support for senior citizens:</b> Measures adopted by the city authorities to support senior-citizen learners (aged 65 years and older)	Experts' review  Experts' review	5 4 3 2 1 Excellent Very good Good Fair Poor  5 4 3 2 1 Excellent Very good Good Fair Poor	
<b>2.2 Revitalizing learning in families and communities</b>	2.2.1 Establishing community-based learning spaces and providing resources for learning in families and communities	<b>Infrastructure:</b> Number of functional community-based learning spaces (including community learning centres, cultural houses and public libraries) per 100,000 inhabitants	Official data provided by city authorities		
		<b>Policy initiative for supporting learning in families:</b> Availability of policy to support learning in families	Experts' review	5 4 3 2 1 Excellent Very good Good Fair Poor	
	2.2.2 Motivating people to participate in family and community learning	<b>Participation in community learning:</b> Percentage of citizens participating in community learning activities on a regular basis (not less than 2 hours per week)	Official data provided by city authorities		%
		<b>Participation in family learning:</b> Percentage of citizens engaging in learning activities in their families in the 12 months preceding the survey	Survey results		%
	2.2.3 Recognizing community history and culture, and indigenous ways of knowing and learning as unique and precious resources	<b>Development of learning resources through indigenous knowledge:</b> Number of learning programmes based on community history, culture and indigenous knowledge developed by the city authorities	Official data provided by city authorities		
<b>2.3 Facilitating learning for and in the workplace</b>	2.3.1 Ensuring that all members of the workforce, including migrant workers, have access to a broad array of learning opportunities	<b>Employees' participation in education and training:</b> Employed people's participation rate in job-related education and training	Official data provided by city authorities or survey results		%
		<b>Migrant workers' participation in education and training:</b> Existence of initiatives or strategies adopted by city to support migrant workers' participation in education and training	Experts' review	5 4 3 2 1 Excellent Very good Good Fair Poor	

Area of focus	Key features	Possible measurements	Source of data	Statistical data in 2012 or survey/review results
<b>2. Major building blocks of a learning city</b>				
	2.3.2 Helping public and private organizations to become learning organizations	<b>Learning organizations:</b> Existence of initiatives or strategies to develop learning organizations that encourage employees' participation in learning	Experts' review	5 Excellent    4 Very good    3 Good    2 Fair    1 Poor
	2.3.3 Encouraging employers and trade unions to support workplace learning	<b>Employers' financial commitment to skill development:</b> Total investment in employees' education and training as a percentage of the employees' payroll in both the public and private sectors	Official data provided by city authorities	Public sector    % Private sector    %
	2.3.4 Providing appropriate learning opportunities for unemployed youth and adults	<b>Youth involvement in education and employment:</b> Total number of youth (aged 15–24) not in education, employment or training as a percentage of the total youth population	Official data provided by city authorities	%
		<b>Training for the unemployed:</b> Percentage of the unemployed enrolled in various employment training programmes offered in the city	Official data provided by city authorities	%
<b>2.4 Extending the use of modern learning technologies</b>	2.4.1 Training administrators, teachers and educators to use technologies that enhance learning	<b>ICT Training for administrators, teachers and educators:</b> Percentage of teachers/educators who have received ICT training in the 12 months preceding the survey	Survey results	Schools    % Community learning spaces    %
		<b>Use of ICT for class activities:</b> Percentage of teachers/educators who use ICT on a regular basis for class activities in schools and community learning spaces	Survey results	Schools    % Community learning spaces    %
	<b>Mobile penetration rate:</b> Total number of people with mobile phone connections as a percentage of the total population	Official data provided by city authorities	%	
	<b>Internet usage:</b> Percentage of citizens with household or shared access to the internet	Survey results	%	
	<b>Participation in learning through the internet:</b> Average number of hours per week that citizens use the internet for learning purposes	Survey results	hours	
<b>2.5 Enhancing quality in learning</b>	2.5.1 Promoting a paradigm shift in education and learning	<b>Paradigm shift in education and learning:</b> Education policy to promote a paradigm shift from teaching to learning, and from the mere acquisition of information to the development of creativity and learning skills	Experts' review	5 Excellent    4 Very good    3 Good    2 Fair    1 Poor

Area of focus	Key features	Possible measurements	Source of data	Statistical data in 2012 or survey/review results
<b>2. Major building blocks of a learning city</b>				
	2.5.2 Raising awareness of shared moral, ethical and cultural values, and promoting tolerance of differences	<b>Learning to live together:</b> Percentage of citizens who socialized with people from other cultures on a regular basis	Survey results	%
	2.5.3 Employing appropriately trained administrators, teachers and educators	<b>Availability of appropriately trained teachers/educators:</b> Ratio of students/learners to teachers/educators in pre-primary, primary, secondary, and adult and continuing education	Official data provided by city authorities	Pre-primary education Primary education Secondary education Adult and continuing education
	2.5.4 Fostering a learner-friendly environment	<b>Learner-friendly environment:</b> Percentage of learners satisfied with their learning environment	Survey results	Schools % Community learning spaces %
<b>2.6 Fostering a culture of learning throughout life</b>	2.6.1 Organizing and supporting public events that encourage and celebrate learning	<b>Advocacy for learning:</b> Existence of public activities (adult learning week and learning festivals) and use of all media to promote and celebrate learning	Experts' review	5 4 3 2 1 Excellent Very good Good Fair Poor
	2.6.2 Providing adequate information, guidance and support to all citizens, and stimulating them to learn through diverse pathways	<b>Information and services:</b> Percentage of learners satisfied with the provision of information and counselling to learners	Survey results	
	2.6.3 Developing systems that recognize and reward all forms of learning	<b>Recognition and reward of learning outcomes:</b> Availability of policy and practice of recognizing, validating and accrediting all learning outcomes	Experts' review	5 4 3 2 1 Excellent Very good Good Fair Poor
<b>3. Fundamental conditions for building a learning city</b>				
<b>3.1 Strengthening political will and commitment</b>	3.1.1 Demonstrating strong political leadership and making a steadfast commitment to turning our cities into learning cities	<b>Leadership:</b> The strength and commitment of leadership demonstrated in developing and implementing the learning city strategy	Experts' review	5 4 3 2 1 Excellent Very good Good Fair Poor

Area of focus	Key features	Possible measurements	Source of data	Statistical data in 2012 or survey/review results				
<b>3. Fundamental conditions for building a learning city</b>								
	3.1.2 Developing and implementing well grounded and participatory strategies for promoting lifelong learning for all	<b>Public policy and strategy:</b> Legislation, public policy and strategy for promoting 'lifelong learning for all' adopted by the city council	Experts' review	5 Excellent	4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor
	3.1.3 Monitoring progress towards becoming a learning city	<b>Measures to monitor progress:</b> Measures adopted by the city authorities to monitor progress in developing and implementing the learning city strategy	Experts' review	5 Excellent	4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor
<b>3.2 Improving governance and participation of all stakeholders</b>	3.2.1 Establishing inter-sectoral coordination mechanisms to involve governmental and non-governmental organizations and the private sector	<b>Mechanisms for stakeholder coordination:</b> The effectiveness of measures to encourage stakeholder mobilization and coordination in developing learning cities	Experts' review	5 Excellent	4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor
	3.2.2 Encouraging all stakeholders to provide quality learning opportunities and to make their own unique contribution to building a learning city	<b>Stakeholders' participation:</b> Stakeholders' commitment, plans and actions to develop better and more accessible learning opportunities within their areas of responsibility	Experts' review	5 Excellent	4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor
		<b>Private sectors' commitment:</b> The existence of partnerships and cooperation between the city and the private sectors to support the learning city strategy	Experts' review	5 Excellent	4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor
<b>3.3 Boosting resource mobilization and utilization</b>	3.3.1 Encouraging greater financial investment in lifelong learning by government	<b>Financial investment in education and learning:</b> Public expenditure on education and learning as a percentage of the total city budget	Official data provided by city authorities					%
		<b>Distribution of public education expenditure:</b> Percentage of public education expenditure spent at different levels/types of education	Official data provided by city authorities	Basic education (ISCED 0-3)				%
	3.3.2 Making effective use of the learning resources of all stakeholders to support lifelong learning for all	<b>Effective use of resources:</b> Innovative ways of mapping and utilizing human, financial, cultural and other resources available to city to facilitate learning in the city	Experts' review	5 Excellent	4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor

Area of focus	Key features	Possible measurements	Source of data	Statistical data in 2012 or survey/review results
<b>3. Fundamental conditions for building a learning city</b>				
	3-3-3 Adopting pro-poor funding policies and providing various types of support to disadvantaged groups	<b>Subsidies to disadvantaged groups:</b> The allocation and effective use of funds to support the participation of disadvantaged groups in learning	Experts' review	5      4      3      2      1 Excellent   Very good   Good   Fair   Poor
	3-3-4 Encouraging citizens and residents to contribute their talents, skills, knowledge and experience on a voluntary basis	<b>Citizens' contribution to helping other citizens learn:</b> Percentage of citizens who contribute their skills, knowledge and experience to help other citizens learn at least once a month in the 12 months preceding the survey	Survey results	%
	3-3-5 Encouraging the exchange of ideas, experiences and best practice between different cities	<b>International partnership:</b> Progress in facilitating and utilizing opportunities for international partnerships and exchanges with other learning cities	Experts' review	5      4      3      2      1 Excellent   Very good   Good   Fair   Poor

# The UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities in a Nutshell

**Vision:** Lifelong learning for all is our city's future.

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**Mission:** To support and accelerate the practice of lifelong learning by promoting policy dialogue and peer learning among member cities; forging links; fostering partnerships; providing capacity development; and developing instruments to encourage and recognize progress made in building learning cities.

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**Guiding Documents:**

- The *Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities* outlines the role of lifelong learning in promoting inclusion, prosperity and sustainability in cities and affirms commitments to twelve actions for developing learning cities.
- The *Key Features of Learning Cities* provides an overall framework of key features of learning cities and a comprehensive checklist of action points to enhance and measure the progress of learning cities.

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**Learning city:** The Guiding Documents define a 'learning city' as a city that effectively mobilizes its resources in every sector to promote inclusive learning from basic to higher education; revitalizes learning in families and communities; facilitates learning for and in the workplace; extends the use of modern learning technologies; enhances quality and excellence in learning; and fosters a culture of learning throughout life. In doing so, it will enhance individual empowerment, social cohesion, economic and cultural prosperity, and sustainable development.

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**Network:** Membership of the UNESCO GNLC comprises learning cities at various stages of development. Partners and the Secretariat of the UNESCO GNLC also make essential contributions to the network.

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**Secretariat:** The Secretariat of the UNESCO GNLC coordinates the network. The Secretariat is based in the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), the only organizational unit in the UN family that holds a global mandate for lifelong learning.





*'Lifelong learning for all is our city's future'*

For more information on the UNESCO  
GNLC's work and joining the network,  
please visit

[learningcities.uil.unesco.org](http://learningcities.uil.unesco.org)

or contact us directly:

[learningcities@unesco.org](mailto:learningcities@unesco.org)

UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities

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United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



UNESCO Institute  
for Lifelong Learning



## UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC)

### Membership application

#### Part 1 (to be filled in by the city)

#### Your city

Name of city: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Country: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Official city website: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

City's Facebook page: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

City's Twitter page: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

#### Mayor

Ms    Mr

First name: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Surname: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Exact official title: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

City hall postal address: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Postcode: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Email address: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

#### Contact person for the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities

Ms    Mr

First name: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Surname: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Exact official title: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Organization (if other than municipality): [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)



Postal address: Click or tap here to enter text.

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Postcode: Click or tap here to enter text.

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Telephone number (including country code): Click or tap here to enter text.

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Fax number (including country code): Click or tap here to enter text.

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Email address: Click or tap here to enter text.

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Language of communication:  English  French  Spanish

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### **Your city profile**

Please note that the information you provide will be displayed on the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities website (<http://uil.unesco.org/learning-cities>) once your city's application has been processed by the UNESCO GNLC Coordination Team. Examples of member cities' profiles already uploaded could give you an idea of the kind of information you might provide in the sections below.

	Data	Year
Population of your city	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Area of your city (in square kilometres)	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
GDP per capita in your city (in US dollars), if available	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
GDP per capita in your country (in US dollars)	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Average number of years of schooling in your city (formal schooling received, on average, by adults over age 25)	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Mayor's quote (max. 30 words)  <i>This should be a short statement reflecting the direction your city is moving in on the strength of its lifelong learning concept</i>	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

## **Building a learning city**

	Data
<p>Please provide an introductory sentence for your city (20–30 words)</p> <p><i>A good introduction sentence provides an attention grabber and a catchy description of your city. You can include an interesting fact, numbers or symbolic/historical information</i></p>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<p>Please describe your city's socio-economic and cultural contexts (max. 200 words)</p>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<p>Slogan of your city's lifelong learning vision (~5 words)</p> <p><i>If your city does not have a slogan, please provide a few key words which define your city's lifelong learning vision</i></p>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Planning to build a learning city</b>	
<p>What is your city's vision and motivation for adopting the learning city concept? (max. 100 words)</p> <p><i>Here you need to express what/how the city aspires to be in a few years' time, or in the future. It often reflects a new direction, although not necessarily. Please think about the following questions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Where is the city trying to go? (your city's vision)</i></li> <li>• <i>Why has the city decided to adopt the learning city concept? (your city's motivation)</i></li> <li>• <i>How is the city going to go about it? (your city's values)</i></li> </ul>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<p>Please give an introduction to your city's main actions in terms of being a learning city and provide links to available reports or additional information (max. 200 words)</p>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<p>How does your city implement or plan to implement the learning city concept? (max. 200 words)</p> <p><i>Here you need to express what the city wants to achieve by building a learning city and how the city plans to implement it. It does not need to be complex and may be as simple as expanding current projects already under implementation or finding ways so the project can be completed in a specific time.</i></p>	Click or tap here to enter text.

<p>Please outline some bullet points, listing your city's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• main goals, objectives or targets with the learning city project. What does your city plan to achieve?</li> <li>• main tasks and actions to be taken to build a learning city. What will your city do?</li> <li>• timescale of main tasks and actions. When will your city's main tasks and actions be implemented?</li> </ul>	
<b>Creating a coordinated structure (e.g. committees) involving all stakeholders</b>	
<p>Who are the key stakeholders in your city who could be involved in promoting the learning city concept? (max. 50 words)</p> <p><i>Examples are civil society organizations, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, museums, art galleries, research institutes.</i></p>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<p>How will you involve the key stakeholders in your city in building the learning city? (max. 100 words)</p> <p><i>Here you need to outline the roles and responsibilities that will be assigned to key stakeholders and whether you are planning to establish a learning city core team, committees and forums, and/or join networks or alliances with other cities.</i></p>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Mobilising and utilising resources</b>	
<p>How does your city plan to mobilize and utilize monetary and non-monetary resources to provide lifelong learning for all? (max. 200 words)</p> <p><i>Monetary resources include local authorities' budgets, regional or national government funds, multi-stakeholder funding partnerships, cost-sharing mechanisms involving multiple stakeholders, sponsorships, philanthropic or private-sector partners. Non-monetary resources can be public spaces, community centres, volunteer organizations, cultural venues, and local expertise that promote lifelong learning for all.</i></p>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Ensuring that learning is accessible to all citizens</b>	
<p>How will your city ensure that learning is accessible to all citizens? (max. 200 words)</p> <p>Please think about the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will your city improve access to lifelong</li> </ul>	Click or tap here to enter text.

<p><i>learning?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will your city respond to the learning needs of various groups, especially marginalized and underprivileged groups?</li> <li>• How will your city address local barriers to participate in learning?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Organising celebratory events</b></p>	
<p>What celebratory events will your city develop to promote and maintain the process of building a learning city? (max. 200 words)</p> <p><i>Examples are festivals, conferences, story-telling, performance arts, literature competition, art workshops.</i></p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p><b>Monitoring and evaluating the development of the learning city</b></p>	
<p>How will your city monitor and evaluate the progress of becoming a learning city? (max. 200 words)</p> <p><i>Examples include setting up evaluation teams, qualitative reporting, quantitative reporting, indicators, targets, consultative meetings, external evaluation.</i></p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>

## Your city's challenges and interests

### What challenges does your city want to resolve through lifelong learning?

Please rate the degree of the challenges your city faces and wants to resolve through lifelong learning on a scale from 1–5, where 1 = no challenge and 5 = substantial challenge	1	2	3	4	5
Individual empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Social cohesion	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Economic development	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Cultural prosperity	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Gender equality	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Literacy	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Education for sustainable development	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Global citizenship education	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Health and well-being	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Immigration	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Others (please specify): <a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

**In which areas do you consider that your lifelong learning policies need further improvement?  
In which areas have you made particular achievements?**

	<b>Need further improvements</b>	<b>Particular achievements</b>
Inclusive learning in the education system	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning in families and communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning in the workplace	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extensive use of modern learning technologies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-formal and informal learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creation of a widespread culture of learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improvement of governance and participation of all stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Boosting of resource mobilization and utilization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality in learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lifelong learning policy and planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring and evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Others (please specify): <a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### **Your city's expectations from the UNESCO GNLC**

**What are your city's expectations from the UNESCO GNLC?**

Guidance and capacity-building (e.g. technical expertise)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support in networking with other member cities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visibility of your city's activities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Others (please specify): <a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## **Your city's contribution to UNESCO GNLC**

**How could your city support the learning city network?**

<b>Please specify (yes/no) which of the following you would be able to contribute</b>	<b>yes</b>	<b>no</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Host UNESCO GNLC training workshops	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organize domestic training workshops for other cities and stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disseminate the learning city concept	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Share documents and news on the activities of your learning city	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Send secondees to the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide peer-learning through inter-city cooperation and collaboration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contribute to UNESCO GNLC's research activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Others (please specify): <a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

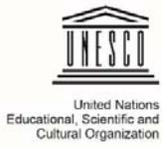
## **Your city's pictures**

Please send **three to four high-resolution photos** (original, uncompressed and not resized) along with your city's application. The photos should be **city pictures** and **pictures related to lifelong learning best practices**. The picture recommendations are the following: horizontal, 300 dpi, around 2,000 pixels' width. **Each photo must be accompanied by a short description as well as copyright information**. Kindly note that the photos you provide might be displayed on the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities website (<http://uil.unesco.org/learning-cities>) if your city's application has been accepted by the UNESCO GNLC Coordination Team.

The city of [Click or tap here to enter text.](#) hereby applies to join the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities. With this application, the city pledges to support the objectives and activities of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities as per the membership regulations and by adopting its guiding documents, the [Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities](#) and the [Key Features of Learning Cities](#).

**Date:**

**Mayor's signature:**



## Part 2 (to be filled in by the National Commission for UNESCO)

The National Commission for UNESCO in [Click or tap here to enter text.](#) hereby endorses the application of the city of [Click or tap here to enter text.](#) to become a member of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities.

**Name of the representative of the National Commission for UNESCO:**

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

**Signature and date:**

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

**Thank you for your application.**

**Please note:**

1. Please be sure to **check in detail the UNESCO GNLC membership regulations** before submitting the application. The regulations are outlined in the membership concept note: <http://uil.unesco.org/lifelong-learning/learning-cities/become-member>.
2. Once your city has completed Part 1 of this form, please email it to the **National Commission for UNESCO in your country, copying in the Coordination Team of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities at UIL** ([learningcities@unesco.org](mailto:learningcities@unesco.org)). For the National Commissions' contact information, please visit the [Database of National Commissions for UNESCO](#).
3. Once the **National Commission for UNESCO** has endorsed your membership by signing the application (Part 2), it will forward the complete application to the Coordination Team of the UNESCO GNLC at UIL ([learningcities@unesco.org](mailto:learningcities@unesco.org)) and send a copy to you. Alternatively, your city can submit the final application directly to the UNESCO GNLC Coordination Team, copying in the National Commission for UNESCO after its endorsement (Part 2).
4. **Development of online city profile:** once accepted into the network, member cities are requested to develop an online city profile to be uploaded to the UIL website, using the template provided by the UNESCO GNLC Coordination Team, in case the information provided in the application form is not sufficient.

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## UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC)

### Membership Concept Note

(Updated and effective as of 1 October 2018)

#### 1. BACKGROUND

The number of city dwellers around the world has been growing more rapidly than ever in recent years: more than half of the world's population lives in cities today, and this is expected to rise to 60% by 2030. Cities have played an increasingly influential role in national and world affairs as they have expanded. However, this expansion is also presenting municipal governments with multiple challenges relating to social cohesion, economic development and sustainability. A growing number of municipalities see the implementation of a lifelong learning strategy for inclusive, sustainable urban development as key to tackling these challenges. This is why they are taking action towards becoming 'learning cities'. In order to support local governments develop concrete strategies for building learning cities, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) has initiated the establishment of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC).

UNESCO GNLC is an international policy-oriented network providing inspiration, know-how and best practice. UNESCO GNLC's mission is to support and accelerate the practice of lifelong learning in the world's communities by promoting policy dialogue and peer learning among member cities, forging links, fostering partnerships, building capacities and developing instruments to encourage and recognise progress in building learning cities.

The network is based on the *Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities* and the *Key Features of Learning Cities*. These two documents were adopted at the 1st International Conference on Learning Cities in 2013. Important additional documents include *Learning Cities and the SDGs: A Guide to Action* and the *Guidelines for Building Learning Cities*.

UNESCO GNLC opened for membership in 2015, and since then the number of member cities in the network has increased to more than 200 cities from all five UNESCO regions. UNESCO GNLC members are engaged in building learning cities and believe that lifelong learning for all is crucial for their cities' future. In applying to become a member of UNESCO GNLC, each city acknowledges its commitment to continue developing into a learning city, sharing experience and best practices, developing partnerships and strengthening its policy and implementation of lifelong learning for all.

UNESCO GNLC's members are cities, represented by mayors or other formally endorsed city representatives. For the purpose of this membership concept, a city is normally understood as an administrative unit governed by a city council or another form of elected body, and recognised as a city by the national government of the country it is located in. A learning city

can therefore be a learning municipality, a learning village, a learning town or a learning community.

## 2. BENEFITS OF BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE UNESCO GNLC

The key benefits of becoming a member of UNESCO GNLC are:

1. Receiving guidance and support during the journey towards building a learning city
  - a. Accessing tools and strategies for developing learning cities (e.g. training modules and video tutorials on how to build a learning city)
  - b. Getting insights into best practice from the latest research and practice reports
  - c. Receiving news updates on learning city developments around the world from the UNESCO GNLC Coordination Team
2. Being part of a dynamic network and strengthening your own partnerships and networks
  - a. Receiving support when hosting international conferences and regional meetings
  - b. Connecting with other learning cities with common interests, tackling similar issues and envisioning similar development agendas
  - c. Communicating with a network of experts and professionals specialising in the field of lifelong learning for sustainable development
  - d. Getting technical support from member cities
3. Receiving recognition for your efforts and showcasing the actions of your city
  - a. Sharing your milestones and progress through the communication channels of UNESCO GNLC
  - b. Participating in the learning city case studies to showcase your city and its actions, innovative measures, best practices and lessons learned
  - c. Being eligible for the UNESCO Learning City Award

Based on UNESCO's inclusive approach and open-source policy, all publications and documents are published on the UNESCO GNLC website and are freely accessible to all.

## 3. MEMBERSHIP REGULATIONS

### Who can apply?

Key players and/or authorities from a city located in a UNESCO Member State that wishes to adopt the learning city concept may apply for membership. An application may only be submitted once it has been formally endorsed by the city's mayor.

### Who is the member?

The member is the city itself, represented by the mayor and/or the person who has been formally endorsed as a representative of the city. All endorsed representatives act as delegates of the city.

### What are the requirements for becoming a member?

In order to join the network, the municipality should pursue the vision of providing lifelong learning and becoming a learning city. The strategies set out in the key documents, the *Beijing Declaration on Building Learning Cities* and the *Key Features of Learning Cities*, must be adopted by the mayor of the city, who needs to endorse the membership application. The city needs to complete the membership application form and submit it to its National Commission for UNESCO for endorsement. In addition to this, members are required to submit a Progress Report on their learning city project every two years to the UNESCO GNLC Coordination Team.

### Application procedure

1. Applicants must complete an application form, which is available on the UNESCO GNLC website (<http://uil.unesco.org/learning-cities>). The form must be filled in electronically and must include the mayor's signature.
2. The application form should be sent by the applicant by e-mail to the responsible National Commission for UNESCO for endorsement, copying the UNESCO GNLC Coordination Team at the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) ([learningcities@unesco.org](mailto:learningcities@unesco.org)). For the National Commissions' contact information, please visit the [Database of National Commissions for UNESCO](#). Please note that National Commissions have the right to request additional documents and records from the city if necessary in order to endorse the application.
3. The relevant National Commission for UNESCO will endorse the application by signing it before submitting the completed application, copying the city, to the UNESCO GNLC Coordination Team at the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL; [learningcities@unesco.org](mailto:learningcities@unesco.org)). Alternatively, the city can submit the final application directly to UNESCO GNLC, copying the National Commission for UNESCO after its endorsement. Please note that UIL has the right to request additional documents and records from the city if necessary in order to finally accept the application.

### How many cities can be designated as members per year?

The National Commission for UNESCO can endorse applications from up to **three cities** per country per year to join UNESCO GNLC.

### When can an application be submitted?

There is one open call for applications per year, **from 1 March to 30 April**, during which time cities may submit their membership applications to their National Commission for UNESCO. After this application period has ended, the National Commission for UNESCO **has up to one month** to send the endorsed applications to the UNESCO GNLC Coordination Team.

### Membership fee

UNESCO GNLC does not ask for a membership fee. To support the development of the network and its services, however, the UNESCO GNLC Coordination Team welcomes voluntary financial and non-financial contributions from its members.

### Who administers membership?

It is important to note that membership is not granted, but rather administered by the UNESCO GNLC Coordination Team at the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning. As UNESCO GNLC is an open, voluntary and flexible network, any city wishing to be part of the network can join as per the requirements outlined above.

### Communication with the UNESCO GNLC Coordination Team

Member cities are expected to communicate to the UNESCO GNLC Coordination Team by e-mail any new information on their city (e.g. new mayor, new contact person, new learning city plan, events organised within the scope of the network etc.) in order to keep the Coordination Team informed and their online profiles up-to-date.

### Submission of Learning City Progress Report

Member cities are requested to submit a Progress Report detailing how they are implementing their learning city project. The collection of submitted reports serves to support the monitoring of the concrete achievements of member cities by underlining effective policies, strategies, measures, partnerships and progress. These Progress Reports should be submitted every two years by e-mail to [learningcities@unesco.org](mailto:learningcities@unesco.org), using the Progress Report template provided by the UNESCO GNLC Coordination Team on the dedicated website (<http://uil.unesco.org/learning-cities>). Submission deadlines are as follows:

**Current members:** deadline for Progress Report submission 31 March 2019, and subsequently 31 March of every other year

**Cities joining after 1 October 2018:** deadline for Progress Report submission 31 March of every other year

## Evaluation of Progress Reports and withdrawal from the network

The UNESCO GNLC Coordination Team will assess member cities' Progress Reports based on the network's guiding documents and regulations. If a member city (1) submits an incomplete Progress Report, (2) does not show progress in building a learning city, and/or (3) does not submit its biennial Progress Report, the city's membership will not be renewed. Cities whose membership is not renewed can apply to re-join the network as per the application periods outlined above. Please note that cities whose membership is not renewed will be notified of the fact by UNESCO GNLC.

## Learning City Award

The UNESCO Learning City Award is a biennial award given to member cities which have achieved outstanding progress in building a learning city. A maximum of one city per country can be awarded per cycle.

## How to apply for the Learning City award?

Member cities should apply for the award through their National Commission for UNESCO. The National Commission will be requested to nominate a maximum of two cities per country for the biennial award. For the National Commissions' contact information, please visit the [Database of National Commissions for UNESCO](#). More information about the Learning City Award can be found at the following link: <http://uil.unesco.org/lifelong-learning/learning-cities/unesco-learning-city-award>.

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