

## Developing and disseminating excellent mobility management measures for young people (CONNECT)

Case study contact	JMP Consulting
Programme	Intelligent Energy Europe (STEER) - 2006 Call
Total Budget	€2,876,448
EC Contribution	€1,438,224
Consortium	9 partners from 9 Member States with Belgian coordinator
Project duration	36 months

The project, which won a Sustainable Energy Europe Award in 2009, aims to inform children, students and parents of the benefits of travelling to and from school using sustainable modes such as walking, cycling, public transport, school bus transport or carpooling; to teach children how to travel safely to school; and to encourage children, pupils and parents to travel to school using sustainable modes.



The expected and/or achieved results are:

- Campaign concepts for both primary schools (Traffic Snake) and secondary schools (Eco-Trip) that are transferable to all European countries;
- A selection of best practices of sustainable school travel for young people in Europe;
- Educational material and manuals for teachers in several languages; and
- Dissemination and the creation of a network via [www.Schoolway.net](http://www.Schoolway.net).

Local stakeholders and other key actors were involved in the implementation and demonstration phases of the CONNECT project from the start. They acted as promoters and champions of sustainable school travel behaviour through their role of monitoring the local implementation as well as champions for other communities and authorities, hence ensuring long term follow-up and replication.

### The coordinator and UK partner

The CONNECT project is coordinated by Mobiel 21, a Belgian social profit organisation. Mobiel 21 (see <http://www.mobiel21.be/>) is a centre for knowledge development, education and behavioural change in the field of sustainable and safe transport and mobility.

JMP Consulting is a transport, planning and engineering consultancy with 11 offices located throughout England and Scotland. Although CONNECT was JMP's first IEE project, they have participated in other European projects in the Framework Programme.

## UK partners role in project

JMP is a partner in the project and leads one of the work packages (evaluation and monitoring). A Work Package leader does not have to deal with the Commission or the Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation (EACI) but has to exercise similar leadership and organisational skills in relation to the partners in the Work Package as the Project Coordinator has to show over the entire project.

## Proposal preparation

JMP became involved in the CONNECT project through previous knowledge of some of the partners, notably Mobiel 21 the Project Coordinator. For other projects, they have used partner searches on CORDIS etc but have not found these to be ideal. In JMP's view, it is far better to join with a partner that you know and in whom you are confident. Previous experience with Mobiel 21 provided assurance that the project would be high quality and well managed. It is clearly more difficult to obtain full assurance of quality when participating as a partner than when leading as a coordinator, but the fact that one has less scope for selectivity should not mean that one joins a consortium without any careful consideration.

Although JMP was not leading the project, they still needed to put quite a lot of effort into the preparation of the proposal. It is important that partners play an active part, rather than take a passive role since they should maintain a degree of control over what they will be asked to do during the project. Although it may be tempting to let others do all the work, this may cause problems further down the line.

## Project implementation

On this project, JMP did not experience any major problems or face unexpected situations with the result that the amount of work they had budgeted for was about right. However some other partners did overrun because tasks took longer than foreseen. It is prudent to be aware of this possibility; even if the partner's own tasks run to time and budget, difficulties faced by others in the consortium can have an impact.

JMP consider that they have been very fortunate to work with a good coordinator and a good project officer in the EACI. JMP have experienced difficulties with the sometimes subtle differences in rules between IEE and the Framework Programme, and would have welcomed an 'idiot's guide' to the financial reporting requirements. However, the coordinator was very competent and made clear exactly what was required, and when. The coordinator was also very good at feeding messages and queries to and from the EACI.

Regular meetings of the consortium were organised (about every six months) and the group was in constant email communication, on an almost daily basis. JMP believe that the establishment and maintenance of such good lines of communication between the partners has been a major contribution to the success of the project. Problems could be dealt with as they arose, and the strong relationships that have been built up in the project have proved useful in other areas.

Experience in the CONNECT project has encouraged JMP to participate in other IEE proposals.

## Key benefits

JMP have been very pleased with the output from the project. They received the co-financing for their participation from Transport for London (TfL), and the CONNECT project has given TfL considerable gearing on its investment. For its part, JMP has found the interaction with the partners to be very positive. Their network of contacts has been considerably expanded (only 2 of the 9 partners were previously known to them). This has brought unforeseen benefits, especially in Eastern Europe, since they now have partners they can call on in other projects where native speakers are required. JMP have also learnt how Austria, The Netherlands and Belgium deliver their 'walk to school' programmes, and have been able to apply the lessons in a UK context.

## Advice for anyone submitting a proposal and delivering a project

- Use your contacts and networks to find out what proposals are under consideration, and who is leading them.
- Speak to others operating in your field and get advice and guidance from them on possible sources of funding – some may not be immediately obvious.
- Ensure you have found the matching funding required before you put in the proposal.
- Only work on a project of direct interest to your organisation.
- Seek to join a consortium where you know, and trust, at least one of the partners, preferably the coordinator.
- Even if you are not the coordinator, you should still be prepared to spend a lot of time on the preparation of the proposal. Do not take a passive role.
- Be ready to work hard establishing and maintaining links with partners you did not previously know.
- Try to be really creative with your ideas – competition for funding is fierce and your project needs to stand out.
- Make sure that your project is transferable, i.e. it has application in as much of Europe as possible not just a limited number of countries or specific regions.

## Key summary points

- Try to join a consortium where you know at least some of the partners, preferably the coordinator, so that you have some assurance about the quality of the grouping.
- Influence the proposal as much as possible – it will be down to you to deliver what is proposed, so don't sit back and let others decide what work you should do.
- Make sure you have your part of the project funding secure.

For more information about the CONNECT project, go to

<http://www.schoolway.net/>

For more about JMP Consultants Ltd, go to <http://www.jmp.co.uk/>

*This case study was produced in conjunction with JMP Consulting and focuses on their experience of preparing a proposal and participating in an IEE funded project. The views are those of the participant and not the Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation nor the Energie Helpline UK. If you have queries on the IEE Programme please contact the Helpline.*