



Call for Participation for Municipal Experts

Startups and Innovation: Labour Market Opportunities and Prospects for Young People

Invitation to a Dialogue Event in Bremen, June 30 – July 2, 2026

Connective Cities invites two experts from your municipality to participate in the international exchange of expertise in Bremen and the subsequent learning process

Deadline:
April 26, 2026

Do you support the **startup scene** in your municipality? What opportunities do you offer **young people** in the job market? What challenges do you face in your work? The City of Bremen is already well-connected on this topic—including internationally. Now, in cooperation with Connective Cities, the city invites you to join **five other German** and **six international municipalities** in **Bremen** to exchange expertise on **startup initiatives** and **incubators**, as well as **municipal incentives and support programs for startups and new businesses**.



[Connective Cities](#) – the **International Community of Practice for Sustainable Municipal Development** supports international exchange of expertise among municipal actors. Through peer-to-peer consultation, municipal experts from Germany and the Global South mutually strengthen one another in addressing challenges related to sustainable development. To this end, **one-year learning processes** on topics relevant to development policy are initiated. The learning processes consist of an **international dialogue event** followed by subsequent activities, such as expert delegation visits and virtual exchange formats.

The Service Agency Communities in One World (SKEW) of Engagement Global, as one of the implementing organizations of Connective Cities, facilitates learning processes in Germany together with selected host municipalities. **The Service Agency (SKEW) covers the event and travel costs** for the German and international participants.

- Two experts from your municipality will benefit from an expanded network of contacts in Germany and countries of the Global South.
- Through interactive exchange formats, you will experience good practices from other municipalities, gain ideas for solutions to your local challenges, and take away valuable insights for your work.
- As part of the learning process, additional Connective Cities activities are available to you, such as topic-specific online exchanges and expert delegation visits abroad.

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What is the background of the dialogue event?

Opening new perspectives and promoting skills development are equally important for young people in Germany and the Global South; the opportunity to enter the labour market is essential. In Bremen and Bremerhaven, the number of startups is high by national standards. The startup scene is vibrant, innovative, and well-connected. In addition, there are strong stakeholders with the necessary expertise, such as Bremen's StartHaus. The Bremen Senate Chancellery also already has valuable international contacts: its partner cities Windhoek (Namibia) and Durban (South Africa) contribute experience with their own startup centres and instruments for startup support. As part of the Connective Cities dialogue event this summer, a lively technical exchange is planned with other German and international municipalities, which will be able to take advantage of further Connective Cities activities during the subsequent one-year learning process.

What are the goals of the dialogue event?

The goals of this dialogue event are to learn together by sharing good practices at the local level, to discuss challenges through peer consultations, to develop solutions to the challenges identified, and to foster networking among participants.

What are the key topics we will address?

- 1) Municipal startup initiatives and business incubators
- 2) Incentives and support services offered by local governments for startups and new businesses

Who is this call for participation aimed at?

We look forward to the participation of two experts from your municipality, particularly from the fields of economic development, labour and social affairs, or youth work. We will cover all costs, including travel expenses, associated with your participation in the event. All participants are expected to actively engage in the international exchange of expertise.



What should your informal application include?

If you would like to participate in the dialogue event, please send us a brief expression of interest via email with

- details about your municipality or organization (including universities or NGOs),
- details on your position, and
- a brief description of a project from your municipality that you would like to present to the other participants as a good practice. You are also welcome to mention a local challenge you are currently facing and would like to discuss with the other municipal experts.



Next steps and deadlines:

Please send us your informal application with the above information by **April 26, 2026**. We will then contact you to let you know if you have been accepted. As part of the preparation process, we will later ask you to provide a project description. **If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us:** Marcella Sobisch, Project Coordinator, Connective Cities (marcella.sobisch@engagement-global.de); +49 (0)228 20717 2658 and connective-cities@engagement-global.de .

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