

LEARNING FROM DOING TOGETHER

FRANCE - SOUTH AFRICA CULTURAL EXCHANGE 2017-2019
AT LANGA HIGH SCHOOL, CAPE TOWN

Motivation
November 2016

With increasing Global tension due to uncertain politics, the refugee and other migrant incidences world wide, building human relationships and trust is now more important than ever.

This collaboration aim to build hard and soft skills which will assist those who participate to cope better with the challenges. Cultural diversity can be a meaningful and powerful condition, if correctly handled. It can also be a powerful weapon if not addressed.

CS Studio Architects has worked in Langa since 1986 and have involved with numerous projects and programmes to help build the social fabric of this community. CS Studio Architects is also actively involved in the pedagogical challenges appropriate for architectural education at a tertiary level. The founder Carin Smuts works extensively with Schools of Architecture all over the world. It is through this that a strong relationship has been built with universities in France in particular. Christophe Hutin in Bordeaux, Odile Decq Lyon Confluence, SAGA from Nantes, Robert director of Montpellier and others.

Combining these two aspects has lead to a proposal to work with the Langa High School as it was identified by Nomtha Dilima, a community leader, as an institution that requires «a breath of fresh air». The school last year had very bad results and a high dropout rate.

The involvement will be at two levels:

1. Teaming up with Lycée Nelson Mandela from Nantes in France. This high school was looking for a partner school in South Africa. This collaboration will be managed by the principal and teachers.
2. An architectural intervention in the form of two 2-week workshops per year for three years to improve the school premises. This will be done in an interactive manner involving students of architecture and the learners of the school.

The aim is to build leadership among the learners and students while upgrading the school environment. There will be creative planning sessions, training in skills like painting, bricklaying and mosaic work. Further involving business sector to donate materials, expertise and time will also promote the business environment to the learners and students. CS Studio Architects is organising a gathering with 80 members of Hydrotis in April 2017, an association comprising business people from the building industry in France.

There is a core of ten grade 10 learners from Langa High School who are driving the project with two teachers from the school. The principal Nontobeko Mjali is also actively involved. For the first intervention 20 students from France from three different universities will participate. 30 to 40 additional learners from the school will also be involved.



The Consulate of France in Cape Town are directly involved and Marine Bernabeu, attaché for Political - Economic Affairs and Communication, and Olivier Buchbinder, attaché for Cooperation and Cultural Affairs, are assisting from the Consulate side.

The one aspect that really requires funding is for the professional fees for the architects and engineers who will be involved in the overall co-ordination and setting up and project managing the 6 events over the three years. There will also be local skilled trainers from the community involved in for example the mosaic work. They also need to be paid. For this we really need a committed sponsor. We estimate the time and effort for each event to be R 60 000.00 to R 70 000.00 that is about 4000 € per workshop. This means R 3000 000.00 over 3 years that is about €20 000, allowing for the intensity to decrease. There will be full time supervision on site with 5 qualified architects being involved, two with experience and three young French Architects.

We hereby approach your organisation for any financial or other assistance with the exciting initiative LEARNING FROM DOING TOGETHER (LFDT). The overall budget is attached and contribution to any component will be much appreciated.

We sincerely hope that your organisation will consider being a partner in this exciting venture. Please give us any advice and any other contacts who might assist in this exciting venture.



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