

NVL – Distans network

One of NVLs networks – Distans – has been charged with supporting the use of distance learning methods in adult education in the Nordic countries. The network was launched in December 2005. The following year was used to determine the networks goals and first projects.

In keeping with NVLs goals, Distans aims to enhance the use of technology supported tools and methods in adult education in the Nordic countries, through the exchange of experience, work with trend setters in each country, lobbying, public relations and by inviting decision makers to events organized by the network. The network decided the best way it could reach these goals would be through inviting people working in the field to meet others both in person and online to get acquainted and share experience.

In Mai 2006 Distance held it's first conference. The network decided to team up with some of it's contacts: Another Nordic network called NordFlex, FLUID – the Danish partner association. 150 people participated in a two day conference on Workplace learning. The result was an interesting meeting point and exchange of experience and ideas between people working in the training field both from within companies as well as from adult education institutions as well as universities. The conference was a technical playground; GSM technologies were used to support networking and to give participants possibilities to express themselves. In this way participants for example evaluated the conference with their mobile phones before going home. Presentations were distributed online simultaneously, so people could sit in one presentation, while being able to follow a presentation going on next door through their laptop. Participants could also log in from all over the world to view or even participate through the Internet. Video recordings from many of the presentations are available online on the networks Wiki-web <http://distans.wetpaint.com> where presenters also uploaded slides and other presentation related files. For the next year the network decided to hold a series of relatively small local symposia: where people from each participating country are invited to present projects, best practice depictions from their practice at adult education institutions and businesses. The first such symposium was held in Härnösand in Sweden (28.11.2007) with the theme „Elements of Online Pedagogy“.

Upcoming symposia are:

- 4. March 2008: How to use Web 2.0 tools in distance and blended teaching at Telenor Expo, Fornebu, Norway.
- 22. – 23. Mai 2008: Symposium in Copenhagen - Organisation of learning in adult education.
- 22. September 2008 there will be a symposium in Finland – Looking into the future.
- In December 2008 in Iceland.

To these symposia Distans invites leading practitioners who have practical experience to share. Invite participants to meet in person or online and discuss various aspects of each theme. The symposia are streamed on the internet and recordings of the presentations are consequently made available on the Distans Wiki-web together with slides and more material from the presenters. The idea behind using a wiki is to invite and enable practitioners in the Nordic countries to collect and share ideas and information that will be useful for their practice.

Distans's participants:

Danmark: Jørgen Grubbe, FLUID, grubbe@monnet-gruppen.dk

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