

Second call for papers for international workshop on regional development policies

Regional Development Agencies: The Next Generation Networking, Knowledge and Regional Change

Location: Volterra, Tuscany

Time: 17-19 November 2010 (beginning and ending around noon)

Organisers: Nicola Bellini, IRPET, Florence, and Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna, Pisa, Italy; Mike Danson, University of the West of Scotland, Paisley, Scotland; Henrik Halkier, Aalborg University, Denmark. Supported by the *Regional Studies Association*.

Across Europe, regional development agencies (RDAs) have become a central feature of regional policy, both as innovative policy-makers and as the implementers of programmes and initiatives originating from the national or European level. In short, without well-functioning RDAs it would be difficult to imagine public policies that could make a difference for regional development in European regions.

Since the first generation of RDAs were established in the 1970s and 80s, major changes have swept through the policy arena:

- regional policy has become part of a wider system of multi-level governance so that, although the focus of RDA initiatives are still their own region, their geographical horizon has expanded in terms of sponsors and collaborators;
- globalisation has increased the competitive pressure and moved the position of regions in the international division of labour to the forefront of regional strategy making;
- the digital revolution and the EU Lisbon agenda have highlighted the importance of production and access to knowledge as key factors in regional competitiveness;
- issues of governance and accountability of RDAs has been one of the drivers to devolution of powers to governments and bodies below the level of the nation state, raising questions over their status and distance from political control.

The aim of the conference is to explore responses of RDAs to these changes in order to establish current challenges and future opportunities. Papers are invited on central aspects of RDA and bottom-up regional policies, including

- strategies and strategy-making
 - the new role of knowledge
 - metropolitan versus peripheral regions
 - inclusive strategy-making
 - the role of foresight and academic expertise
 - changing priorities and agenda
- governance of regional economic policies
 - relationship to regional sponsors
 - place branding and regional politics
 - collaboration in national and European networks

- interaction with other policy areas: RIS & learning regions in practice
- working in multi-level policy systems
- changing profiles of regional development bodies
 - structures: towards smaller and more flexible organisations?
 - functions: from comprehensive regeneration programmes towards interactive knowledge brokerage?
 - theories of RDAs: how different is the current generation of organisations, and how does it fit into wider theories of change in socio-economic geography and governance?
- organisation of policy delivery
 - the role of private-sector and other intermediate bodies
 - involvement in national and European programmes
 - challenges from partnership working
- effects and evaluation
 - economic impacts
 - political survival
 - difficulties of measurement and attribution in complex systems

An abstract of no longer than 400 words must be submitted to Nicola Bellini no later than September 15th by sending an e-mail to nbellini@sssup.it.

Registration for the workshop takes place at the conference website: <http://www.siafvolterra.it/>

The workshop will be held in Volterra, within easy reach of Pisa International airport. Transport will be organised to/from the airport. Read more about the learning village Volterra on <http://www.siafvolterra.it/>

Selected papers will be reviewed for inclusion in an edited volume which will be submitted for publication within the *Regions and Cities* book series published by Routledge in collaboration with the Regional Studies Association. We are approaching the editors of *Regional Studies* and other journals to discuss the possibility of special editions of their publications based on the papers.

Bursaries are available for students, early career delegates, and participants with difficult financial circumstances. Please apply to e-mail to nbellini@sssup.it when submitting your abstract.