

Clean City Linköping: Co-designing innovative solutions with young people

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Organisation: City of Linköping

Country:

Level of government: Local government

Sector: Environmental protection

Type: Communication, Public Service

Launched in: 2009

Overall development time: 1 year(s)

Link to the innovation's website

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Description

The co-production initiative Clean City aims at bringing about behaviour change of young people by co-designing campaigns and improvement actions with them to eliminate littering and graffiti in Linköping.

Why the innovation was developed

- In the Swedish University City of Linköping (about 150,000 inhabitants) the city centre was hit again and again by outbreaks of littering and graffiti.
 - These environmental problems mainly occurred during evenings and week-ends, when groups of young people gathered in the city centre and typically dropped packaging materials and food leftovers in the streets.
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Objectives

Develop staff capacity, Improve effectiveness, Increase citizen engagement

- The project aims at reducing litter and graffiti in the city centre through awareness-raising and behaviour change of young people in Linköping.
 - A number of campaigns and projects to convince people to keep the city centre clean had previously been launched in the city but to little effect.
 - Evaluations revealed that the groups which were mainly responsible for causing the environmental problems in the city centre were young people aged 16-22, so Clean City was specifically targeted at this age group.
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Main beneficiaries

Civil Society, General population, Government staff, Young people

- Residents of Linköping
- Young people

Results

Effectiveness

- According to Mr. Hans Salomonsson, head of the public safety department of the local authority of Linköping the work with young people which started in 2009 has paid off as there is much less graffiti in the city centre of Linköping and much less litter in the park. However, behaviour change among local jack daws is proving more difficult to achieve!
- The environmental services of the City of Linköping continue to engage with student representatives of the local university to ensure a 'clean campus'. As Lise-Lotte Johansson, the City Gardener, states: "Most students are very cooperative and ensure that there is no litter in parks or other public spaces after parties and other student events".

Development

Design

At an early stage of the project design a young person in the target group aged 16 to 22 was engaged as a co-worker to provide insights into the situation of young people and to help the project team of Linköping City understand ways of thinking, talking and behaving which were common amongst different groups of young people. The team consisted of a youth liaison officer and an external consultant who jointly with the young person designed the strategy of the Clean City project.

The innovative idea the team came up with was to offer young people a very well-paid job during one summer month to drive behaviour change among them. The job involved not just cleaning the streets in the city centre but also, for about 50 percent of the working time, producing a daily blog with photos and film clips illustrating what it looks like in the city centre and what young people could do to improve the quality of the public spaces.

Implementation

Tools used:

- The Clean City Project was launched in summer 2009 when the City of Linköping advertised these new jobs in a press advert on four different dates, announcing the intention to employ four young people in total. The recruitment and selection process were highly innovative: Candidates had to introduce themselves on a public website with citizens assessing the suitability of the candidate and voting for their preferred candidate. This meant that the Clean City vision had already been widely discussed in public before the young people took up their job as city cleaners.
- In order to qualify as a candidate young people not only have to provide a CV but also take part in an interview with the project team and other representatives of the local authority and answer a number of questions related to bin collections, recycling and street cleaning. After a pre-selection process by the local authority, information on the shortlisted candidates was published on the website of the City of Linköping for a week, so that the local community could have a vote on who they thought were the most qualified candidates.
- The project was coordinated by a youth liaison officer who also made sure that the website was kept up-to-date and appealed to the young target group. During the summer months the website grew considerably as young people input their blogs, experiences and other information.

Resources used:

- Since the start of the 'Clean City' Programme the cost of removing graffiti has diminished in Linköping.
- In 2014, the costs for the local authority, including utility companies, were about SEK 3 million (about GBP 257 000) lower than in 2009 when the programme started.

Lessons Learned

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- In order to make the Clean City initiative work, it was essential to co-design the project with a young person, in order to understand the behaviours, needs and interests of young people. Only with this point of departure it was possible to create compelling incentives for young people that got the message across.
 - The key success factor of this peer group approach were the incentives. A well-paid summer job for a month is very attractive to young people. The terms of employment also included a number of benefits such as access to a laptop computer with free broadband access, personal mobile phone with a subscription, free lunches and coffee breaks, free ice cream, a free bus card as well as being able to arrange convenient working hours.
 - All this and a generous wage of SEK 30 000 per month, paid for by the local association of businesses and property owners.
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Other information

*The program described in this innovation case study has been discontinued and is no longer in operation.