

NALA Learner Days

Organization's name	<i>National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)</i>
Information	<p>Address: Sandford Lodge Sandford Close Ranelagh Dublin 6</p> <p>Pays : IRELAND</p> <p>Tel/Fax : +353 412 7900 +353 497 6038</p> <p>Web Site: www.nala.ie</p>
Organization's description	<p>The National Adult Literacy Agency is an independent membership organization set up by volunteers.</p> <p>It has been the leading campaigning and lobbying force for adults with since it was set up in 1980. It is committed to making sure that people with literacy and numeracy difficulties can fully take part in society and have access to learning opportunities that meet their needs.</p>
Contact person(s) (Name and e-mail)	Denise McBride dmcbride@nala.ie

Another Irish good practice, what is it about?

'NALA Learner Days 2011'

This day is totally prepared and organized by learners. In the trainings proposed by NALA, there are many learners who are trained with a tutorship, individually, either directly with a tutor or with an online tutor.

For all learners, but also for those who are trained in small groups throughout Ireland, everyone is in his training and there are few situations where learners meet. The learner day comes from the desire of meeting; because the learners say: 'It's good to know that there are people like me'. Learners think that it's very important that those who start their training could hear and meet learners who explain where they are, how did they started their training and what do they -as learners- expect to do with NALA at national level.

How is the Learner Days organized?

These 'NALA Learner Days 2011' were held in partnership with Waterford Institute of Technology. This year was innovative, because learners rose to the privilege to be hosting an event in a university and they could discuss together European issues in the context of the Eur-Alpha project. The fact that the day was held in the university facilities was a message for learners who became aware of the fact that they could build knowledge concerning to issues where they are involved in.

NALA has a national learner sub committee composed of volunteer learners. It's through the committee that learners make their voices and opinions heard with policy makers but also with literacy practitioners.

Every year the NALA learner committee organise two learner days in Dublin and Cork, and in these days there are more than 200 learners who participate in different workshops but above all, who talk to each other and meet.

In Waterford, the committee members lead the day. They explained different workshop from a chart. The participants could choose to participate at the workshop they chose. It was at the university where learners could think about 'Working with New Technologies', but they also could face to questions related to nowadays education.

The learner days in Waterford

The learner days in Waterford were an important step. In fact, the learners took advantage of the day to inform all learners of a new situation they have to face to in relation to the literacy training. This new situation concerns the FAS (the Irish training and employment agency) and in the VECs (Vocational Education Committees) where most learners do their classes.

The learner committee explained to over 180 learners in Waterford that they had consulted with and advised the Minister for Training and Skills on their actions to inform the Irish learners' networks so that learners could have a free and easy access. They also attracted the attention to the fact that actions at national level could have benefits at local level and this is why it's important to listen to what the learners say in relation to the information access.

In this day, the committee members said that they hoped that their participation with the Minister would have an impact to improve that learners would be more taken into account at the organization and setting up of literacy training.

The learner committee think about the future

Each year, the learner committee take on more and more responsibility at the organization of learner days.

In Waterford it was the learners who prepared the days. This is why they undertook confident communication and facilitation skills training in order to clearly explain themselves, to speak and to be able to explain in plenary what happened at the workshops.

This year, the learners also wrote a compendium to save what was said at the workshops.

NALA notices that learners are increasingly registering at 'learner days'. Therefore, the objective is to continue organizing them, so they are setting up two for next year, although it will be subject to funding.



Lifelong Learning Programme



Education and Culture DG

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.

This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.