

**DYSLEXIA INTERNATIONAL e-CAMPUS (CYBER CAMPUS)
PROJECT 2010 – 2015**

draft

by DYSLEXIA INTERNATIONAL (D.I.) asbl

a non-governmental organization in operational relations with UNESCO

1. The need
2. The e-Campus
 - 2.1 Principles
 - 2.2 Strategy
3. Staffing
4. Analysis
5. Action plan and timetable
6. Financial indicators

Appendix 1: Track record of Dyslexia International

Appendix 2: Previous and current sponsorships

SUMMARY

Dyslexia International will produce an *e-Campus* that will offer ministries and education authorities free, quality training courses, films, talks, links and other specifically recommended materials on awareness, identification and teaching - a one-stop resource for how best to teach children and adults with dyslexia.

Dyslexia International will pursue its strategy of involving three key players at all stages from initial consultation through planning, development to piloting and evaluation:

- local education authorities
- academics and
- parent, teachers and other professionals networks.

This plan lays out Dyslexia International's goals and financial indicators. Sponsoring for `structural` or `backbone` funding is needed besides sponsors for targeted actions. The organisation, in operational relations with UNESCO, is ready to merge, unite or collaborate closely with any other body that shares its vision, principles and strategies.

1. THE NEED

Knowledge about dyslexia and associated learning difficulties is patchy – even in countries where `word-blindness` was recognized over 100 years ago and even where the 1930`s Orton Gillingham interventions were first trialed.

Even in some Western or `advantaged` countries, as many as 40 % or more of children still fall short of the literacy levels sufficient to take them into secondary education.

Dyslexia is a `**hidden**` handicap which is often not recognized until irretrievable personal damage has resulted. Children are abused as `stupid` by teachers, parents and others who are ignorant of dyslexia and fail to understand how its impacts on the individual despite the fact that it is known to feature to some degree in up to 10 % of the population, regardless of age, sex, ethnic origin or language.

With loss of self-esteem and motivation to learn, drop-out from school and anti-social behaviour can easily result. Governments across the world are paying a high price for the failure to address the educational needs of this section of their population who fail to integrate, fail to become literate and subsequently fail to pass exams or find work.

2. THE E-CAMPUS

At the World Dyslexia Forum at UNESCO Paris 3, 4, and 5 February 2010, soundings will be taken from delegates from over 190 countries invited to attend. A steering committee will be set up to put in place a five-year project to agree on design and a time-line for putting up the e-Campus that will that will address the UNESCO policies of *Education for All*, *Inclusion* and *Quality Education*, and make free, quality, science-driven resources readily available.

2.1 Principles

Dyslexia International's objectives are based on the following principles:

- to make free and fair education available to all
- to ensure equal opportunities for people who struggle with reading and writing
- to lobby for the rights of people with recurrent and persistent difficulties in their ability to read, write, memorise, or organize themselves

- to share knowledge of best practice in support teaching for learners with difficulties that also benefits all learners.

Dyslexia International does not promote any particular product and in no way endorses expensive private treatments or any type of 'therapy' not based on peer-reviewed published research.

2.2 Strategy

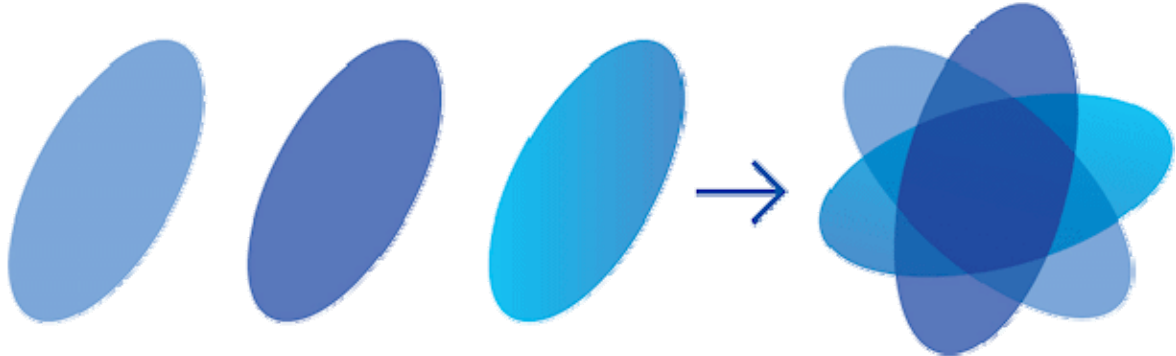
With leading experts, colleagues and associates in all parts of the world, Dyslexia International:

- opens up channels for communications between researchers, education authorities, and local support groups;
- creates and promotes free online learning programmes and open education resources so that people with dyslexia can become literate, develop their talents, and integrate into society.

Ministries...

Academics ...

Local communities ...



2.3 Rationale

An e-Campus ensures benefits from the Internet which promotes a vibrant, global 'democracy', where concerned people can see what can be done, what other countries are doing, and what is not being done in their own countries.

The Internet and associated facilities such as video conferencing allow savings in the costs of office maintenance, postage of physical items, travel and accommodation. The concept is eco-friendly, efficient, flexible and fast in implementation.

Dyslexia International has experience in online learning materials delivered to teacher and trainee teachers in Europe, and with online conferencing linking to

countries in different parts of the world - judged favourably by the academics involved who saved travel time and costs.

Materials can be downloaded and printed locally in line with specific local needs, avoiding excessive costs although the need will remain for some published materials and CD/DVDs for less advantaged countries. The publishing and postage costs for such materials will require a separate budget depending on local demand.

2.4 Content

In an initial phase and right from its start-up, the e-Campus will offer and then expand training resources **a priori to ministries of education, teacher trainers and teachers:**

- Online learning courses in English and French, regularly updated (**an academy** of courses for education authorities/trainers/teachers)
- Access to videos and guides, including the new film currently being edited, *Dyslexia – On the right lines* (**a film library**)
- A portal with links to Ministries and local associations (**a map/directory** – Country-by-Country listing - expanded from the original version now available at www.dyslexia-international.org)
- An **arena**/ focal point for global video conferences, whose proceedings and records can be streamed from the site, providing permanent access
- A **library** of recommended reading in three sections: what dyslexia is; how to recognize it; and appropriate teaching responses (**a reading library**)
- Latest research (**a press room**)

A secondary phase will include:

- The online course in other languages, developed in collaboration with qualified, committed colleagues at local level in the respective regions - adapted to local linguistic and cultural needs

Note: *Certification or recognition of teachers who have completed the online learning courses would not be free of right but would be organized in partnership with local ministries, centres, and authorities administering the course at local level.*

- More lecture materials and demonstrations of teaching

At a still further stage, the Dyslexia International e-Campus could provide a focal point for reliable, free, quality resources, and a virtual meeting space for professionals.

3. STAFFING

To date Dyslexia International has consulted with a panel of internationally recognised scientists, psychologists, educators and other experts, forming an online consultancy team headed by a Scientific Advisory Committee of leading experts.

In developing the e-Campus, a highly qualified consultant in the teaching of reading and writing is needed. The person appointed should be qualified in reading and writing development in monolingual and bilingual children, second and foreign language education, with a specialisation in dyslexia, both diagnosis and teaching methods.

This person, with the backing of a team of selected experts, will:

- review and update the French and English version of the online course; advise on testing and certification
- advise on or prepare printed and similar materials
- work in an advisory capacity with educational ministries at local level wanting to share expertise in developing teacher training with suitable linguistic and cultural adaptations.

A web master and a designer are required at market rates, and administrative back-up to oversee the customary volunteer help.

The D.I. management committee would ensure that the project is well supported with a network of 'regional ambassadors' and highly motivated and concerned supporters already identified.

4. CLASSIC ANALYSIS

Strengths:

Dyslexia International's commitment and sense of purpose that has resulted in a productive track-record over a short period of time: experience, knowledge, and firm foundations based on best practice

Weaknesses:

Demands on our financial capacity in view of our principle of providing facilities and training free and of right.

Indifference and ignorance in certain quarters as to existence of dyslexia although in some countries ministries are slowly becoming aware of dyslexia and its implications and also the pressing needs for early

recognition and assistive education in place that benefits all beginner readers.

Opportunities:

We are in the UN Decade of Literacy (2003 – 2012); as an NGO 'in operational relations' with UNESCO, education authorities from over 190 countries can come together share their expertise in best practice in teaching reading and writing on the global platform UNESCO provides in the first instance as the World Dyslexia Forum.

Threats:

People selling `cures` or expensive courses that preclude general access and inhibit progress in making free quality training and other scientifically proven resources readily available to all.

5. ACTION PLAN AND TIMETABLE

Dyslexia International aims to set **sustainable** development in train through a 5-year plan starting from mid-February 2010.

Building on soundings and suggestions put forward via a questionnaire to be given out to all delegates attending the World Dyslexia Forum and/or their UNESCO Paris official delegations, a Steering Committee would be set up.

A timetable of one year is envisaged to meet the targets of the initial phase as set out above.

A further four years is considered sufficient to fulfill the secondary aims and to take into account the future development of the campus.

6. FINANCE

Dyslexia International in developing its projects depends on private donations and sponsorships.

The World Dyslexia Forum expenses will be met by registration fees and some sponsorship.

Although free **end-delivery** (to the teachers) will be a condition for working with Dyslexia International, in no way does this exclude looking for financial support from Ministries who take up the courses. Wherever feasible, ministries would be

encouraged to share the costs of servers and to pay the costs of experts in their languages.

APPENDIX 1: TRACK RECORD OF DYSLEXIA INTERNATIONAL

Founded in 2000

- Produced in different language versions and distributed a film *Language Shock – Dyslexia across Cultures* in association with the BBC
- Granted the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Margaretha of Liechtenstein
- Organised symposia at the European Parliament with leading academics
- Gave a presentation at the Education Committee of the European Council of Ministers (2004)
- Created a software programme incorporating Tintin to help dyslexic learners to determine how best they learn
- Produced a pilot Online learning course for the Belgian Francophone Ministry of Education
- Granted status as a non-governmental organization in operational relations with United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and invited to make a first short introductory speech on dyslexia at UNESCO (with interpretation into the six official languages of UNESCO)
- Organised a successful online conference in November 2008, linking three centres in Europe with leading professors in reading acquisition

APPENDIX 2: PAST AND PRESENT SPONSORSHIP

Dyslexia International now seeks core funding for 5 years ensure safe development of the e-Campus. Fund-raising is an essential activity.

Levi Strauss Advised Fund at Charities Aid Foundation, Cable & Wireless, Hergé Foundation, Hewlett Packard and Microsoft and the King Baudouin Foundation Belgium have all provided invaluable support which have enabled our projects to flourish. The Belgian Ministry and numerous other benefactors, named and anonymous, have given their financial backing. In 2009 the Oak Foundation generously supported our efforts.