



Challenge support cycle 2021 – City of Gelsenkirchen, Germany.

Climate Forum Gelsenkirchen: Engaging with local businesses to combat climate change.

Located at the heart of Germany's Ruhr area, Gelsenkirchen is a city undergoing a transformation towards a cleaner future. Once Europe's largest mining city, Gelsenkirchen has a rich industrial heritage, including sites and infrastructure with great potential to reduce greenhouse gasses (GHG) emissions, improve air quality, and create sustainable public spaces.

Through its [2030/2050 climate action plan](#), Gelsenkirchen is now committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve adaptation to climate change. Aware that this ambitious task requires the support of the private sector, the city is working closely with the [Science Park](#), an innovative hub located in Gelsenkirchen with historical capabilities to connect and work with local stakeholders. The partners are developing the Climate Forum initiative, aiming to establish a network that connects local companies in knowledge exchanging and seeking cooperation opportunities in the development of climate change projects. The initiative is expected to leverage online platforms and tools to enable sharing of regional, national and global best-practices on GHG emissions reduction and climate change adaptation, as well as developing an own website to publish and promote the efforts and advancement of the initiative itself.

During the first phase of the project, the Science Park Gelsenkirchen has identified five key stakeholders: energy utility companies, transportation companies, housing corporations, big-size businesses, and associations representing smaller sectors of the local economy. This will be followed by the choice and implementation of the best methodology in the areas of stakeholder connection, use of digital tools to facilitate networking, and true stakeholders' engagement on climate change issues.

Urban Transitions Alliance Support

The Urban Transitions Alliance will support Gelsenkirchen in refining the Climate Forum's strategy through its experience, best practices, and lessons learned related to digital platforms for networking, as well as different approaches to engage stakeholders in developing and implementing climate change projects. The Alliance aims to help Gelsenkirchen to inspire a sense of shared responsibility among local stakeholders towards climate action, for example through clear GHG emissions reduction goals, actionable plans for the city's sustainable development, and an overall improvement of its livability.

Gelsenkirchen is not alone in this ambitious journey: Several Alliance cities with an industrial heritage have already worked together with the private sector to support their transition to sustainability. Peer-learning and cross-regional exchange on similar experiences will provide unique insights and an overall better understanding of this challenge, enabling Gelsenkirchen to successfully take the Climate Forum to the second phase: initiative launching and web portal presentation.

Key Questions

- How to most efficiently connect the stakeholders
- How to speed up the communication and cooperation of the Forum members through digital tools and platforms
- How to engage stakeholders in reliable commitments to climate action

Expected Outcomes

- Stakeholders' engagement strategy based on best practices and experiences.
- Collection of digital platforms experiences and examples of web portals for creating climate action networks based on and involving local businesses.
- Recommendations for planning the second phase of the Climate Forum project.