

Exploring Resources on Learning Cities—A Beginning ¹

(Gathered by the Coalition of Lifelong Learning Organizations [COLLO], July 2020)

Lifewide Education <https://www.lifewideeducation.uk/>



According to its website (<https://www.lifewideeducation.uk/about.html>), this not for profit company's aim is "to contribute to the development of people by promoting the concept of lifewide learning and education and providing encouragement and practical help to individuals and organisations who want to adopt, adapt and implement the idea." It deems itself "an inclusive global community that works for and with its members," encourages participation, and sends out a newsletter.

One tab on its Home page leads to information on **Lifewide Education**, another labeled **More....**, to information on learning cities, blogs, resources, etc.

The article on learning cities, "Learning Cities: ecosystems for lifewide-lifelong learning" (<https://www.lifewideeducation.uk/learning-cities.html>) provides many resources. Authors point out that a majority of the world's population already lives in cities and that by 2030, the proportion is likely to exceed sixty per cent. They view the city as an *ecosystem* containing vast opportunities, resources and potential for enabling people to learn and develop themselves in ways that meet their needs, interests and ambitions. They contend lifewide education and learning have an important role to play in the practical development of learning cities. Descriptions and reports/articles provided here address:

- History of Learning Cities & Cities of Learning (UK Learning Cities Network, UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities, American Cities of Learning, UK Cities of Learning)
- UNESCO Learning Cities and UNESCO Learning City Award
- 'Cities of Learning' (Chicago example: Chicago Summer of Learning)
- LRNG (learning) initiative in America
- European vision of learning in 2030

UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities <https://uil.unesco.org/lifelong-learning/learning-cities>



The UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities is "an international policy-oriented network providing inspiration, know-how and best practice about learning cities." To support and improve the practice of lifelong learning it promotes policy dialogue and peer learning among member cities; forging links; fostering partnerships; providing capacity development; and developing instruments to encourage and recognize progress made in building learning cities."

According to the UNESCO GNLC, "Lifelong learning lays the foundation for sustainable social, economic and environmental development." GNLC reports, "Studies have shown that lifelong learners – citizens who acquire new knowledge, skills and attitudes in a wide range of contexts – are better equipped to adapt to changes in their environments. Lifelong learning and the learning society therefore have a vital role to play in empowering citizens and effecting a transition to sustainable societies." It calls for a learning society to be built "province by province, city by city, and community by community."

¹ **Please Note:** This is a preliminary list of resources on the concept and implementation of *learning cities*. Please send information on resources you consider useful/valuable to be added to Linda Morris @ lmorris@vt.edu

Further,

A learning city promotes lifelong learning for all. UNESCO defines a learning city as a city that:

- effectively mobilizes its resources in every sector to promote inclusive learning from basic to higher education;
- revitalizes learning in families and communities;
- facilitates learning for and in the workplace;
- extends the use of modern learning technologies;
- enhances quality and excellence in learning; and
- fosters a culture of learning throughout life.

In doing so, the city enhances individual empowerment and social inclusion, economic development and cultural prosperity, and sustainable development.

On the Website find:

- UNESCO GNLC Guiding documents, policy and research and conference reports (and videos).
- [Guidelines for Building Learning Cities](#) and a set of seven video tutorials made to support policy-makers, stakeholders, urban planners and lifelong learning practitioners in building learning cities, based on the following themes: planning, involvement, celebration, accessibility, monitoring and evaluation and funding
- A webinar series “Learning Cities’ COVID-19 recovery: from research to practice,” with monthly sessions from June through November 2020 (<https://uil.unesco.org/event/new-webinar-series-learning-cities-covid-19-recovery-research-practice>)
- Video interview series on UNESCO Learning Cities Response to COVID-19 (<https://uil.unesco.org/unesco-learning-cities-response-covid-19>)