

IBM's Smarter Cities Challenge

Dortmund

Summary report

Dortmund, Germany was one of the 33 cities selected to receive a Smarter Cities Challenge grant from IBM in 2012 as part of IBM's citizenship efforts to build a Smarter Planet. Since the program's inception in 2010, more than 30 cities have received Smarter Cities Challenge grants, and many of these have already made great progress on the road to becoming more instrumented, interconnected, and intelligent (additional information available at www.smartercitieschallenge.org).

During three weeks in May and June 2012, a team of six IBM experts worked to deliver recommendations on a key challenge identified by Lord Mayor Ullrich Sierau and his senior leadership team: *how can Dortmund more effectively collect, connect, coordinate, communicate and cultivate its strengths and successes so its citizens can discover their talents and achieve their potential?*

As the region's coal, steel and beer industries collapsed in recent decades, Dortmund is leading the region's transformation to a modern service and knowledge-based economy focused on technology and logistics. The city has undergone a number of demographic changes including a large and growing immigrant population that needs additional support to master the German language, succeed in school and develop job skills for the Dortmund job market to participate in this new economy.

A robust social welfare system provides the services necessary for residents to receive the support they need to develop individually. While many organizations and individuals work passionately on all aspects of talent – the complex ecosystem of funding organizations and providers limits the City's ability to scale its services and address citizens' needs in a comprehensive manner.

The Challenge

As a first step, the City established the Dortmund Talent Initiative (IDT) in October 2011 “to develop the talents and potential of all Dortmund's citizens regardless of gender, nationality, religion or education and the income of their parents, and to enable them to live on a self-determined, socially independent basis in our city¹.”

Highlights:

- Dortmund has the essential ingredients to lead in a global economy – engaged citizens and a tradition of success.
 - A new way of collaboration and coordination across organizational boundaries is needed to optimize resources and cultivate talents among its citizens.
 - A talent framework — a shared, holistic view of talent — will drive clarity and help orchestrate programs that support talent development.
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The IBM Smarter Cities® Challenge team met with leaders of the City, community, business, education, religion, social welfare organizations, sport and culture, uncovering a number of challenges the City needs to address to achieve its goals. While some challenges are specific to talent, others go beyond and shape the direction for talent development:

- **Image:** Dortmund's vision of itself as a center of technology and culture is inconsistent with the way it is perceived externally, and its persistent image as a coal, steel and beer town. This creates the risk that citizens will fail to see their place within the city, leading to the brightest individuals leaving for more attractive opportunities elsewhere and limiting the City's ability to attract new business.
- **Inspiration:** Although many citizens have achieved success both locally and internationally, their stories are not broadly shared to inspire others. As the population becomes increasingly diverse, people need role models who reflect how others have overcome the challenges they share.
- **Meaning of talent:** The City and its citizens are unable to recognize where potential exists, how talent is manifested throughout an individual's life and the myriad of activities in which they engage that can help build these talents.
- **Collaboration:** People and organizations tend to collaborate when they happen to know about one another and if their goals align, rather by design. As a result, service coverage is fragmented across the city, and many citizens do not have access to, or are unable to identify, essential programs and services.
- **Program coordination:** Until the IDT, there has been no single coordination point across talent programs, limiting their ability to reach more citizens and leaving best practices undiscovered.
- **Portfolio optimization:** A mechanism is needed to evaluate overall effectiveness of stakeholders' independently managed resources against shared goals and take appropriate action to achieve greater results.

Recommendations

The team's recommendations focus on bringing together the wealth of energy across the city under a shared vision of service to individuals and their talents. Dortmund will achieve the best results if the recommendations are taken together to mutually reinforce each other, leading to longer-term, strategic improvements in areas like unemployment, integration of multicultural residents and establishing Dortmund as an incubator for technology startups. These recommendations include:

- **Brand image:** The City should develop a unifying vision for Dortmund and use it as a beacon for progress. The process is an inclusive one that engages the diversity of the community to shape this common view.

- **Champions and local heroes:** The City claims many internationally recognized figures who, as "champions," can help promote Dortmund to the world. Within the city, they are to be complemented by Dortmunders who lead outstanding organizations or programs and can serve as "local heroes" and be celebrated to inspire others.
- **Talent framework:** A shared, holistic view of talent, this framework helps individuals explore their own talent, helps the community achieve an integrated view of talent, and orchestrates the programs that support talent development.
- **Social collaboration:** A structure is needed to connect programs and people with the goal of fostering innovation, sharing best practices and leveraging resources.
- **Program office:** The City should expand on the current IDT foundation by clarifying roles and responsibilities and examining opportunities to align IDT with other initiatives to better leverage City resources.
- **Portfolio management:** A management system is needed to understand the performance of programs across the talent dimensions of the framework and aid investment decisions based on results across programs and a shared strategy.

Conclusion

Dortmund, Germany, has the potential to become a city that embodies innovation, celebrates cultural integration and provides an environment where its residents are able to identify and cultivate their talents. The City must operate in an integrated manner to ensure cooperation, collaboration and the effective use of the city's talent resources, while emphasizing talent as a critical element of strategic planning.

For more information

To learn more, send an email to ccca@us.ibm.com or visit smartercitieschallenge.org

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Produced in the US – October 2012

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