

### How to find the right fellow members?



### Coordination of the garden project?



### How to find a property and what should it consist of?



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### What "rules" are helpful?



### What is the role of dealing with the public?



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## 1. How to find the right fellow members?



From the start, involve people who want to do gardening. Intercultural gardens are participation projects and should be planned not only for but with the future gardeners.

So, appeal early to migration and refugee associations, churches, etc. Organizations that are involved with and for people with immigrant backgrounds, as well as neighborhood initiatives, Local Agenda 21 or open-minded local politicians. Personal contact is important and timely networking facilitates the subsequent search for (further) cooperation partners and funding sources. Introduce the idea and organize joint information sessions. Experience shows that notices and flyers will be noticed only by a few. Therefore ask everyone to make the idea known and to speak to potentially interested people.

If the idea is more concrete, or if there is even a district in which the garden is to be established, inform the neighborhood at an early point. Invite the neighbors and residents to take part. An intercultural garden is a meeting place for immigrants and Germans

## 2. Coordination of the Garden Project



The coordination of an intercultural garden is a very important task. Someone (or a team) must be the driving force, recruiting and contacting people, someone has to give impetus, conceive ideas, provide a group framework, invite to meetings, make inquiries, encourage. Tasks wait to be shared, but not all can and want to contribute to the same extent and not all have confidence in their abilities. It is a matter of communicating both inwardly and outwardly.

As a rule, intercultural gardens are projects of voluntary engagement. Nevertheless in special cases, one succeeds in creating mini-jobs, honorary positions or part-time jobs.

### 3. How to find a property and what should it consist of?



In many cases, city / municipality (building, green space environmental department, district planning) or local church congregations lease low cost properties. But there are also home building societies and housing associations, socio-cultural and environmental education facilities with green areas, farmers, schools, allotment associations and private owners to be considered. Some garden projects have originated in parks. Do not be discouraged if the land search takes a while.

You can make use of the time, for example, in finding more fellow members.

If you have found a property, tell the owner exactly about your project, but especially with regards to any structures (garden sheds, compost toilet) and ask for conditions (e.g. landscape and nature conservation).

Make sure to find out about possible soil contamination. Best of all examine the ground, especially if it is an industrial wasteland. If the ground is completely or partly unsuitable for horticultural use you can - if there is no alternative space - garden in raised beds. Should there be a well on the grounds, it is recommended to determine the water quality. Not all wells have potable water.

#### Location

Plants need sun. A very shady place is not suitable. The garden should ideally be easily accessible on foot or at least by public transport. The proximity to home and easy accessibility are important. The nearness to home makes it easier to get to the garden and also to participate in projects and activities.

Moreover, not all gardeners have a bike and for some, even the cost of a bus ticket is prohibitive.

Experience shows that women feel especially uncomfortable and even unsafe if the garden is in an otherwise uninhabited and thus isolated location.

For the development of intercultural gardens an opening to the neighborhood is important. Intercultural gardens that are actively integrated into a neighborhood / district facilitate for some gardeners possible steps into society. The garden projects can also help to shape a neighborhood. This would enable adjacent facilities, e.g. schools or daycare centers, senior citizens and environmental organizations and local residents to cultivate a flower bed and be present at public events and celebrations, if the garden project is located in their vicinity. It is also important to look at the site and the immediate environment with respect to possible sources of danger for children (e.g., pond, stream, highway).

## Garden and Area Design



If the piece of land allows it, the plots should be created where the most sunlight reaches them. Basically there is no optimum size for an intercultural garden area. There exist both (a few) very small and very large projects and all intermediate sizes are found in the Intercultural Gardens network. The design and layout of the garden area depends not only on the condition of the land and the soil and existing circumstances but crucially on the ideas, desires and capacities for the reclamation and cultivation by the garden

group.

Besides individual and possibly shared communal beds for growing vegetables, herbs, flowers and shrubs, there should be a (not too small) area of communication, for example, with seating, a children's play area, baking and grilling areas, a gazebo and garden shed could be provided. If one can't construct any buildings on the surface, the tools can also be housed in tool boxes and to protect against sun and rain tents can be erected.

## Reclamation



Depending on the condition of the land, reclamation can be associated with considerable effort. It makes sense to negotiate with the property owners to receive some support in this area, as well as to appeal to endowments. The reclamation can be more protracted than one thinks e.g. with heavy, compacted, clayey and rocky soils. At the same time, however, such impediments can also have important team-building effects.

The following work may be necessary:

1. Cleaning, earthmoving, fencing, terracing
2. Tillage, soil improvement, natural fertilizers
3. Draining water ditches and laying water-pipes
4. Construction of sheds, gates and entrance ways, procurement and construction of garden furniture
5. Planting fruit trees and shrubs
6. Creating sandboxes and installation of playground equipment for children
7. Building protective structures for toilets.

## Parcel Size and Assignment



The plot size should be decided by the garden group. It is sensible to ask the gardeners themselves what size they can manage and to clarify with each of them how much support they have. Do members of the family help? Are there elderly or ill gardeners who will need help with digging? Who maintains the communal area? Often there are several large parcels in the intercultural gardens. Plots between 15 sq.m. and 30 sq.m. are often large enough. In the intercultural gardens, the parcels vary from a few

to more than 100 square meters. Large plots can still be divided.

If possible there should be enough space between the plots to comfortably get by with a wheelbarrow.

It has been proven best not to give out all parcels immediately, but to keep some clear. Thus a communal patch can develop and there is also room for potential participants from the neighborhood, such as kindergartens, schools and seniors groups.

An important issue that needs to be clarified with the garden community: Should the cost of using the parcel vary by parcel size? Or should all pay the same fee?

## What to do if the property has no water supply?



Check if a pump can be installed or drilled for. Get in touch with organizations in the neighborhood (e.g. associations, local office). Maybe you can use their water resources and share costs.

Intercultural gardens with often take water from public hydrants – using a stand pipe. In some cases, small streams nearby are used to gather water. In any case, it is advisable to collect rain water.

**What to do if there are no toilets on the property?**

Here too it is necessary to determine whether a neighborhood facility will grant access to toilets. The construction of a composting toilet can be considered. Experiences are available in the Intercultural Gardens network. One can also set up a chemical toilet (rent varies by location, model and vendor).

#### 4. What financial resources are needed?



The expenses can, amongst others things, depend on the size of the property. A significant portion of these expenses can be saved through the purchase of used equipment, or through sponsorship deals or reductions and savings at local hardware stores and garden markets.

Running costs come from:

- Lease
- Water and perhaps electric consumption
- Insurance
- Public Relations (Information Sheet, Telephone)

## 5. What are the financing options?



It is helpful if you create a financial plan (list of income and expenditures). If you have questions about the financial plan, you can feel free to contact the Intercultural Foundation. Remember to include requests for donations. For garden tools, or top soil, for example take into consideration local horticultural businesses and DIY stores for building materials and as sponsors.

## 6. What "rules" are helpful?



Many intercultural gardens have had good experiences with joint discussion and adoption of "garden rules" for regulating cooperation in the garden, maintaining the flower beds and common areas.

In order to guarantee the cross-cultural composition, in some gardens "nationality guidelines" have proven effective. A common guiding principle (such as "respect diversity" for example) as a basis for communication can influence the team building process very

positively. Regular meetings are important (even in winter) in order to inform each other, make joint decisions and agreements and to prepare any projects or events. Different channels of communication are suitable as well (e-mail lists, phone sponsors for those who do not have e-mail, bulletin boards in the garden, etc.).

## 7. What is the role /importance of dealing with the public?



It is advisable to open the garden with a party. Friends, acquaintances, neighbors, media, local politicians and sponsors can be invited. A good relationship with the neighborhood is very important. You should really be making invitations not only to parties but also for gardening. Regular activities such as open days, harvest festivals, but also projects such as for children, women or seniors, are a good way to develop potential funding sources and draw attention.

### Public relations

Public relations are important. Provide attractive and informative material, such as



information leaflets, posters and an internet presence. Create an archive of quality photos. (Caution: Observe copyright and privacy rights). The most important thing: Maintain contacts with the press from the beginning. Inform the local stations, the free newspapers in your neighborhood, the local editors of the daily press and the church newspapers. Call on them when you have some news and submit your information by writing.

**Important:** Ask all media contacts for links and copies or recordings - no matter whether it is radio, television, online and print media. You can use this material and links very good for your public relations – and of course for grant applications. And you have the opportunity to correct the situation, if something was rendered incorrectly or distorted.

### Lobbying

For the success of a project political support can be very important. Lobbying is the everyday work of a project. It should be addressed at all levels of policy making. These are municipal, urban and rural councils and members of committees (e.g. for integration), integration and immigration officers and councils. Send them a letter with information (also press articles), speak of inviting them to ask for support for your project. Maintain these contacts. Continuously lobby but remain neutral and speak to as many groups as possible.

## Contact



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