



TELEMARK
COUNTY COUNCIL



MIDWEST USA 2013-2015 Strategy and Action Program

Focus areas for strategy and action in respect of “Midwest USA 2013–2015” will centre upon:

Business development

Mobilise, follow up and develop potential networks vis-à-vis business environments in the USA/Midwest. Main branches: Health/MedTech, environmental technology, ICT, and oil/gas

Arrange delegation visits with business seminars – “*Telemark/Midwest/USA Week*” – events.

Cultural heritage/Museum and attractions development

Mobilize relevant participants in Telemark and further develop contact networks connected with relevant American museums and travel operators. Participate with a stand at Norsk Høstfest, and strengthen work on Sondre Norheim vis-à-vis the American market. Work with Telemark skiing and Olympic Games backing, plus further develop the website “Telemark Heritage”.

Norwegian Skiing Adventure/West Telemark Museum has intensified the work with a network between schools in Minot, Skien and Kviteseid to preserve the history of Sondre Norheim and Telemark.

In addition, we wish to achieve a closer collaboration between Dyrsku’n and North Dakota State Fair in Minot, which has over 300,000 visitors. Representatives from Dyrsku’n participated in a delegation visit in autumn 2012.

Education

Increase student exchange visits between USA and Telemark at High School and College levels. Further develop and strengthen contact vis-à-vis current contact network in the Midwest for relevant schools. Increase participation in national/international projects. Proceed with stipendiary arrangements vis-à-vis Minot State University in North Dakota etc. Prepare the groundwork for school collaborations at college level.



Cooperation partners in the Midwest:

North Dakota Governor's Office, Norway House, The Norwegian Honorary Consulate in Minneapolis, Minot Area Development Corporation, Norwegian American Chamber of Commerce Upper Midwest Region in Minneapolis, Tysvar, Telemark University cooperation colleges/universities (Minot State University, SD School of Mines & Technology, Augustana College, St. Olaf College, MN State University, Concordia College, Luther College, Franklin College), Minneapolis High Schools, Concordia Language Villages, Sons of Norway, Minot High Schools, Norsk Høstfest, North Dakota Heritage Museum, Vesterheim Museum, Telлагet of America, North Dakota State Fair, Tour operators and etc.

Cooperation partners in Telemark:

Telemark County Council, Innovation Norway, Telemark Offshore, IKT Grenland, Green Business Norway, Health Technology Telemark, Notodden Development, Skien Municipality, American Chamber of Commerce Oslo, Telemark University College, Porsgrunn High School, Søve High School, West Telemark Museum, Norsk Skieventyr, Skien Municipality, Dyrsku'n and etc.

Telemark's Mayor explaining about Telemark's skiing history to American children.

	Business Development	Cultural Heritage/Museums and development of attractions	Education
2013	<p>There will be a separate project description for the action section – business development.</p> <p>March – Participation in American Chamber of Commerce in Oslo, General Assembly.</p> <p>June – Delegation visit by the Governor of North Dakota to Telemark.</p> <p>June – Meeting with Minnesota Governor’s delegation in Oslo.</p> <p>June – “Telemark – Midwest USA event – Telemark”.</p> <p>Further network building with: American Chamber of Commerce, Norway, Tysvar (Minneapolis), University of ND Innovation Centre, etc.</p> <p>Preparation for 2014 events.</p>	<p>There will be a separate project description for the action section – cultural heritage.</p> <p>June – Juven Tours to visit with 30 Americans.</p> <p>Sept – Participation at Norsk Høstfest.</p> <p>Visit from Vesterheim Museum – Iowa – 2 trips to Telemark: War History/Rjukan and traditional culture/Sauherad.</p> <p>Further development of website Telemark Heritage.</p> <p>Create networks between producers and products of traditional crafts and “Telemark Food”.</p> <p>Further development of the web-based education program.</p>	<p>There will be a separate project description for the action section – education.</p> <p>HiT – Follow up of collaboration agreements with colleges/universities in the Midwest. Student exchanges.</p> <p>High Schools – actions: Establish pilot projects: – (subject development/combined subject courses) between education establishments in the Midwest and Telemark.</p> <p>– for student exchanges from high school students to partners in the Midwest.</p>

	Business Development	Cultural Heritage/Museums and development of attractions	Education
2014	<p>“Telemark – Midwest USA event – in Minneapolis”.</p> <p>Further network building with: American Chamber of Commerce, Norway, Tysvar (Minneapolis), University of ND Innovation Centre, etc.</p> <p>Preparation for 2015 event.</p>	<p>July – Dyrsku’n and participation at North Dakota State Fair in Minot.</p> <p>Sept. – Participation at Norsk Høstfest.</p> <p>Visit Vesterheim Museum – Iowa.</p> <p>Further development of the website Telemark Heritage.</p> <p>Further development of the web-based education program.</p>	<p>HiT – Follow up of collaboration agreements with colleges/universities in the Midwest. Student exchanges.</p> <p>High Schools – actions: Establish pilot projects: – (subject development/combined subject courses) between education establishments in the Midwest and Telemark. – for student exchanges from high school students to partners in the Midwest.</p>
2015	<p>Telemark – Midwest USA event – in Telemark”.</p>	<p>Sept. – Participation in Norsk Høstfest.</p> <p>Sept. – North Dakota State Fair participation at Dyrsku’n.</p> <p>Create networks between producers and products of traditional crafts and “Telemark Food”.</p> <p>World Championship in Telemark skiing in Colorado.</p> <p>Further development of the web-based education program.</p>	<p>HiT – Follow up of collaboration agreements with colleges/universities in the Midwest. Student exchanges.</p> <p>High Schools – actions: Establish pilot projects: – (subject development/joint subject courses) between education establishments in the Midwest and Telemark. – for student exchanges from high school students to partners in the Midwest.</p>

AREAS OF COOPERATION: **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

MAIN AIMS 2013–2015

For each area – business development/cultural heritage/education, a separate project description will be made in accordance with the project management template, which will ensure an even stronger basis for each subject.

- Develop contact networks in USA/Midwest in the private and public sectors, at the same time mobilizing companies to participate in relevant events.
 - Develop the collaboration with American Chamber of Commerce in Norway and in Minneapolis, plus contact with University of North Dakota Innovation Centre, Governor’s Offices in North Dakota and Minnesota, Minnesota Trade Office and Tysvar in Minneapolis etc.
 - Increase the number of companies and company collaborations, that will make use of the established platform vis-à-vis Midwest/USA (aim for 10 new companies per year in the period 2013–2015).
- Arrange “USA/Midwest – Telemark Week in Telemark 2013” in connection with the delegation visit from e.g. Governor in North Dakota – June 2013. This will be a return visit following the delegation trip to North Dakota and Minnesota in September 2012, led by Telemark Mayor Terje Riis Johansen.
 - Participate in the business seminar with the American Chamber of Commerce – Norway in connection with the visit on 17th June 2013 from the Governor of Minnesota and his business delegation.
 - Arrange “USA/Midwest – Telemark Week in Minneapolis 2014”.
 - Arrange “USA/Midwest – Telemark Week in Telemark 2015”.





Business meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 2012

In 2013, we plan to make an application for Telemark County Council – via the work with the USA/Telemark programme – to become a member of the American Chamber of Commerce in Norway (AmCham). It is important to put aside the necessary time/resources to develop this work/collaboration further. AmCham has a network of member companies in Norway, which are not only important for Telemark County Council, but especially for Telemark companies and businesses who wish to connect with the American market.

Innovation Norway Telemark suggest that the project be directed at companies who wish to increase their marketing knowledge of the USA. This can be accomplished by arranging joint meetings in combination with more specific arrangements directed at the relevant company/sector. Telemark County Council and IN Telemark are very experienced in this type of joint process from previous international joint projects.

AREAS OF COOPERATION: CULTURAL HERITAGE/ MUSEUMS & DEVELOPMENT OF ATTRACTIONS

MAIN AIMS 2013–2015

For each area – business development/cultural heritage/education, a separate project description will be made in accordance with the project management template, which will ensure an even stronger basis for each subject.

- Emigration and ancestral research are becoming increasingly popular subjects. New TV series regularly prove this point. Several museums at home and abroad have had great success in this field. We wish to look at the possibilities of working on an Interreg project with relevant partners in Europe. (The Emigration museum in Bremerhaven was acclaimed Europe's best museum in 2007, and Telemark County Council has a close relationship with Bremerhaven! The Business & Commerce committee plan to visit there in autumn 2013).
- Several American tour operators have trips to Norway, which include Telemark as a destination. The “host role” shall and should be further developed in Telemark, together with the museums and Telemarkreiser etc.
- In cooperation with Norway's Skiing Association, Telemark County Council has started a project with the ambition of putting Telemark skiing on the Olympic Games Map. We will search for partners among the American network (Sons of Norway, The Norwegian Honorary Consulate in Minneapolis, The Canadian and American skiing associations etc.)
- The Domain titles “heritage-telemark.com”, “telemark-heritage.com” and “telemarkheritage.com” have been purchased by West-Telemark Museum. WTM will be responsible for running the website and Facebook page in the future. Due to an out of date technical platform, a new page must be established. Much of the old text can be recycled, but the photographic material and user friendly interface must be developed further.

- The Heritage Telemark page has been used to assist people in finding their roots and ancestors in their home country, Norway. This will continue to be the main activity on the page, but it could be better connected commercially. Suggestions for travel destinations based on cultural heritage, marketing/sale of traditional food and handicrafts are an obvious menu choice that could be added to the page.
- Firm up and develop participation at Norsk Høstfest in respect of traditional products (i.e. handicrafts and food). At least 5 companies each year to participate in 2013–2015, in addition to public representatives. This to be done in cooperation with e.g. Telemark University College, Rauland department.
- Contribute to the establishment of 2 pilot projects in connection with emigration/Sondre Norheim, e.g. in collaboration with Vesterheim Norwegian-American museum in Decorah, Iowa.
- Establish the ceremonial side of things regarding the burial place of Sondre Norheim in North Dakota.
- Work to increase tourism from the Midwest/USA to Telemark. Firm up and establish a solid visiting system for American tour operators to Telemark.
- This is also in collaboration with work on the project: “Cruise to Telemark” in close dialogue with e.g. Telemarkreiser.
- Develop niche markets in cooperation with local tour operators in Telemark and in the Midwest, i.e. Juven, Brekke and Vesterheim etc.
- Prepare the groundwork for contact and collaboration between Dyrsku’n and North Dakota State Fair in Minot.



AREAS OF COOPERATION: HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

MAIN AIMS 2013–2015

For each area – business development/cultural heritage/education, a separate project description will be made in accordance with the project management template, which will ensure an even stronger basis for each subject.

- Establish 3 pilot projects (subject development/joint subject courses) between educational establishments in the Midwest and Telemark.
- Carry out a revision and modernization of Telemark University College's (HiT) current subject course "Scandinavian Studies in Telemark".
- Increase student exchanges from HiT students to partners in the Midwest to 13 per year (2 per term for 3 partners with greatest potential and 1 per year for 3 others).

- Establish a programme for a guest speaker-stipendium, to send and receive 2 guest speakers from /to HiT per year.
- Arrange two permanent programmes for "Service Learning" in collaboration with the voluntary sector in Telemark.
- Arrange 2 possible practice related exchanges per year from HiT to partners in the Midwest in 2 different subject areas.
- Arrange 2 possible research/VRI-projects relevant to Midwest/Telemark.



AREAS OF COOPERATION: EXCHANGE VISITS AND COOPERATION (FURTHER EDUCATION)

MAIN AIMS 2013–2015

For each area – business development/cultural heritage/education, a separate project description will be made in accordance with the project management template, which will ensure an even stronger basis for each subject.

- Establish 3 pilot projects (subject development/joint subject courses) between education establishments in Midwest and Telemark.
- Establish 3 pilot projects for student exchanges from high school students to partners in the Midwest.

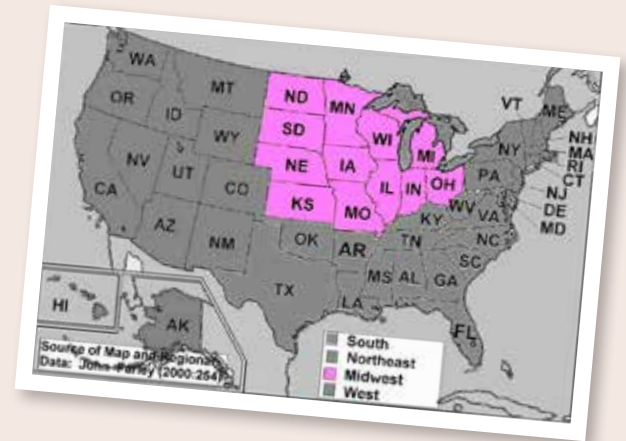


A Telemark delegation visited representatives from Minot State University in North Dakota in Sept. 2012.

The project is financed by the following Telemark partners:



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Midwest, USA Telemark, Norway
BRIDGING THE ATLANTIC



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The Norsk Høstfest in Minot, North Dakota is North America's largest Scandinavian festival with over 80,000 visitors from all over the world.

