

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT USING C@ribNET

- **Network of Excellence for Tourism and Hospitality, Training and Education – NETHTE**

CKLN was approached early this year by a Caribbean team (contracted by the European Union) regarding the use of C@ribNET to facilitate Knowledge generation and exchange to realise a number of objectives of the NETHTE. Comprising nine partner institutions from the respective OECS Member States, the NETHTE will link trainers, institutions and potential trainees (students, industry workers) in OECS Member States, and facilitate training on the basis of the assessed comparative advantage of Member States in respective areas of competence (e.g. Resort Management, Culinary Arts, Marine Tourism, Spa and Wellness etc.)

NETHTE purpose is the harmonization and enhancement of the OECS' Tourism and Hospitality Sector through improved knowledge management and human resources development.

In addition to developing content, and developing a Scholarship Foundation, the consultants are required to design the layout, structure and specifications of the NETHTE infrastructure, develop the technical specifications and draft the tender documents for the procurement of equipment, software, etc. required for the operational efficiency of the NETHTE.

With most of the Hospitality Departments based within Community and/or State Colleges in the OECS Member States which are currently connected to C@ribNET (currently connected to C@ribNET), it would be a travesty to a) disregard an existing network and b) use EU funds to develop an *additional* network and related infrastructure on top of what they have already provided through CARICOM.

These Hospitality Departments and other related institutions (hotels, guest houses etc.) will be part of the NETHTE, paying for last mile connection, and bringing a significant number of new users to the network.

C@ribNET is the clear choice for such an initiative, even if the technical management at the NETHTE level is undertaken from within the OECS.

- **SickKids-Caribbean Initiative** - The Initiative that has been running for two years is a twinning between SickKids and seven (7) sites (primarily with the UWI) in six (6) countries— Jamaica Bahamas, Barbados, Trinidad & Tobago, St. Vincent & the Grenadines and St. Lucia.

The focus is to build capacity with the organisations in terms of paediatric cancer and blood disorders. There are three main areas they focus on:

1. **Telemedicine Case Consultation** - monthly case reviews, consultations (second opinions), diagnosis, and discussions on treatment. The centres are used by the institutions for local clinics etc. when not used for telemedicine with SickKids

2. **Professional Training Programme** – conducted with all 7 sites, delivering patient care education, theories for doctors, nurses, physiotherapists and the sessions are interactive
3. **General project Training** – virtual meetings to discuss other collaborative projects etc that can prevent air travel but still have the sense of a face-to-face meeting

Having faced challenges of connectivity, clarity of images and bridging, use of R&E networks provide the ideal solution. The Canadian REN, CANARIE, along with the Toronto-based NREN, ORION and C@ribNET are proposing a pilot, to demonstrate to the SickKids–Caribbean initiative the soundness and robustness of the R&E Networks which are designed for their needs.

With 7 sites and the existing user base, the possibilities are enormous for much greater utilisation of the telemedicine centres.

- **Security - Regional Police Academy Training**

CKLN is currently facilitating the connection of the Police Academies around the region to C@ribNET. Under an initiative by the US State Department, thousands of police and other law-enforcement personnel will participate in interactive Regional training, aimed at increasing law enforcement collaboration throughout the region, and providing a secure environment for sharing information, among other objectives.

Currently six (6) countries are connected to the network and have installed videoconferencing equipment. In Antigua, Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts, St Vincent, two academies in Barbados and Trinidad & Tobago currently being configured. The training and other possibilities for the Police Academies provides a huge boost to security in the Region.

- **CARICOM Agency – Caribbean Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology, CIMH**

The CIMH produces, retrieves and analyses large data in real time, which requires large bandwidth. With data records dating back to about 1970, the CIMH maintains an archive of meteorological and hydrological data from member countries and their archive consists of hourly synoptic and daily climatological data collected at airport stations operated by the meteorological services; daily climatological data from independent climatological/agrometeorological stations; daily and monthly rainfall, stream flow, and stage data from hydrological services and water agencies. With this wide range of countries, and the constant need for immediacy, the R&E network is ideal for their usage and other related sectors that create and retrieve large data.