



**Interreg
North Sea**



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FREIIA



Høgskolen i Østfold

INTER - ISLAND

PRODUCT AND BRAND DEVELOPMENT

WORKATION

WP4.3; ØSTFOLD UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

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INTER-ISLANDS PRODUCT AND BRAND DEVELOPMENT

The Inter-Island Product and Brand Proposals presented in this report have been developed within the framework of the FREIIA project (Facilitating Resilience Embracing Islands Innovation Approaches), part of the EU Interreg North Sea Region Programme.

The initiative aims to strengthen the innovation capacity and long-term resilience of small European island communities by connecting research-based understanding with the everyday realities, knowledge, and aspirations of local people.

Each proposal is rooted in fieldwork and dialogue, offering a grounded response to real challenges identified by island residents themselves. The work addresses shared concerns such as seasonal economic dependence, youth outmigration, limited housing opportunities, and the need for sustainable value creation that respects local identity and community life. Guided by design thinking and co-creation principles, the proposals combine analysis, creativity, and collaboration to generate practical, transferable solutions that emerge from, and belong to the communities they serve.

A defining strength of these proposals is their inter-island character. Instead of treating each island as an isolated case, they build on shared experiences, common challenges, and complementary strengths within the FREIIA network. This collaboration enables the exchange of ideas, models, and practices between islands such as Hvaler (Norway), Schiermonnikoog (Netherlands), Bornholm (Denmark), Koster (Sweden), Groix, and Ouessant (France). Together, these islands form a living laboratory for sustainable innovation, a space where local insight and experimentation contribute to regional learning and collective growth.

Taken together, the proposals illustrate how locally grounded innovation can advance broader European goals of resilience, inclusion, and circular transition. Each follows a shared framework outlining the target group, identified challenges and opportunities, proposed solutions, implementation needs, and expected impacts. Collectively, they embody FREIIA's core ambition: to empower islands to learn from one another, to innovate with and for their communities, and to show that genuine sustainability begins with cooperation, creativity, and care for place and people.

Among these inter-island initiatives, the Workation concept focuses on education and community sustainability. It proposes a shared teacher rotation system connecting small island schools across the FREIIA network. By pooling educational resources and strengthening collaboration between islands, the model ensures equal access to quality teaching while helping maintain vibrant, year-round communities.

INTER ISLAND PRODUCT / BRAND: WORKATION

INTER ISLAND - PRODUCT AND BRAND DEVELOPMENT 1.0



ISLAND & IDEA TITLE

HVALER, KOSTER, GROIX,
SCHEIRMONNIKOOG
WORKATION



TARGET GROUP

SMALL ISLANDS WITH 5-20 STUDENTS
STRUGLES TO MAINTAIN SCHOOLS
TEACHERS WHO WANT FLEXIBLE AND
SHORT TERM ASSEIGNMENTS



PROBLEM AND OPPORTUNITY

SCHOOLS CLOSING, NO TEACHER, HIGH
STAFFING CAUST
PRESERVE EDUCATION QUALITY, REDUCE
COSTS, AND ATTRACT/RETAIN FAMILIES.



SOLUTION

INTRODUCE A WEEKLY TEACHER ROTATION
SYSTEM.
THIS ENSURES HIGH-QUALITY TEACHING
WITHOUT FULL-TIME RELOCATION



WHAT ALREADY EXISTS?

LOCAL SCHOOLS AND BASIC TRANSPORT
INFRASTRUCTURE (FERRIES, BOATS, SMALL
PLANES
MUNICIPAL AND REGIONAL EDUCATION
NETWORKS



WHAT IS NEEDED?

COORDINATION SYSTEM FOR SCHEDULING ROTATIONS
FUNDING FOR TEACHER TRAVEL AND
ACCOMMODATION
LOCAL SUPPORT STAFF AND ASSISTANTS
DIGITAL TOOLS FOR LEARNING CONTINUITY



WHO IMPLEMENTS IT?

KOSTER: STRÖMSTAD KOMMUN
HVALER: HVALER KOMMUNE
GROIX: ACADÉMIE DE RENNES
SCHIERMONNIKOOG: GEMEENTE SCHIERMONNIKOOG



WHEN IS IT FEASIBLE?

PILOT PHASE: 1-2 ISLANDS, 1-2 YEARS TIMELINE
SCALE-UP: AFTER PILOT EVALUATION AND
STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK



EXPECTED IMPACTS

BETTER EDUCATION
SOCIAL
PROFESSIONAL
ECONOMIC



RISK FACTORS AND MITIGATION

STRATEGIES

TRANSPORT DISRUPTIONS → BACKUP DIGITAL
TEACHING AND FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING
TEACHER RECRUITMENT CHALLENGES → INCENTIVES:
TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT, RECOGNITION PROGRAMS
PARENTAL SKEPTICISM → EARLY INVOLVEMENT OF
PARENTS IN PLANNING AND COMMUNICATION



POSSIBLE FUNDING OR BUSINESS

MODEL

REGIONAL SCHOOL BUDGETS AND NATIONAL
EDUCATION FUNDS
EU RURAL EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT
GRANTS
PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS FOR DIGITAL
PLATFORMS



SUGGESTED NEXT

STEPS

DENTIFY PILOT ISLANDS AND POTENTIAL ROTATION SUBJECTS
DESIGN ROTATION CALENDAR AND RECRUIT 3-4 TEACHERS
SECURE FUNDING FOR TRAVEL/ACCOMMODATION
EVALUATE PILOT RESULTS AFTER FIRST SCHOOL YEAR



1. Target group

The initiative primarily targets small island schools with between 5 and 20 students, as well as municipalities struggling to maintain education services due to limited resources. It also appeals to teachers who are interested in flexible, short-term assignments rather than permanent relocation.

2. Problem and opportunity

Many small islands are at risk of losing their schools due to declining student numbers, difficulties recruiting qualified teachers, and high staffing costs. School closures not only reduce access to education but also threaten community sustainability by driving families away. A rotation-based teaching model can help maintain educational quality, reduce costs, and make island life more attractive for families considering relocation.

3. Your solution

The proposed solution is a weekly teacher rotation system inspired by the model used on Ouessant Island in France. Subject specialists, such as teachers in mathematics, science, or the arts, rotate weekly between islands. Local teaching assistants provide continuity and follow-up for students between visits, while digital learning platforms support communication and assignment management. This system ensures high-quality teaching without requiring full-time relocation, while keeping costs manageable and strengthening local education.

4. What already exists?

Similar initiatives already exist in parts of France, where island schools cooperate on shared education services. The North Sea Islands already possess the basic infrastructure needed for implementation, such as local schools, ferry or small-plane connections, and municipal and regional education networks that could support coordination.

5. What is needed?

To make the rotation model feasible, a scheduling and coordination system would be needed, along with funding to cover teacher travel and accommodation. Local assistants and digital learning tools would play a key role in maintaining learning continuity and ensuring that students receive consistent follow-up throughout the school year.

6. Who implements it?

The model would be implemented through cooperation between municipalities and regional education authorities, in collaboration with local schools and parent associations. Teachers would be recruited into a shared rotation pool and assigned according to subjects and availability.

7. When is it feasible?

A pilot project could begin on one or two islands within a 1–2-year timeline. Following evaluation and stakeholder feedback, the model could be scaled up to include additional islands.

8. Expected impacts

Educationally, the model ensures equal access to qualified subject specialists for small island schools. Socially, it helps preserve local schools and attract young families. Professionally, it offers teachers new opportunities for development and flexible work arrangements. Economically, it provides cost savings compared to full-time employment of specialized staff.

9. Risk factors and mitigation

Potential risks include transport disruptions, which can be mitigated through flexible scheduling and backup digital teaching solutions. Challenges in teacher recruitment can be addressed through incentives such as travel reimbursement and recognition programs. Early involvement of parents is also key to reducing skepticism and fostering community support.

10. Possible funding or business model

Funding could be sourced from regional school budgets and national education programs, as well as EU rural education and development grants. Public-private partnerships may also be explored, particularly for digital learning platforms.

11. Suggested next steps

The next steps include identifying pilot islands and potential rotation subjects, designing a rotation calendar, and recruiting three to four teachers. Funding for travel and accommodation should be secured before launch. After the first school year, the pilot should be evaluated to assess impact and scalability.

STAKEHOLDER MAP

KOSTER

Education Authority Strömstad Kommun
Local School Koster School
Local Transport Torghatten AB
Local Committee Koster Samhällingsförening
Local Development Koster Fremtid AB

HVALER

Education Authority Hvaler Kommune
Local School Kirkøy Skole
Local School Viker Skole
Local Transport Hvaler Fjordcruise
Local Transport Hvalerferga
Local Accommodation Hvaler Gjestgiveri
Local Accommodation Nedgården Overnatting
Local Accommodation Hvaler Cabin Rental
Local Accommodation Hvaler Camping AS
Local Accommodation Villa Solbakke

GROIX

Education Authority Mairie de Groix
Regional Education Authority Académie de Rennes
Local School Public School De La Trinité
Local School Primary School Saint-Tudy
Local School Middle School Saint Tudy
Local School Middle School Des Iles Du Pontant Groix
Local Accommodation Hotel La Marine Groix
Local Accommodation Hotel Ty Mad
Local Accommodation The Parenthesis Island
Local Transport Compagnie Océane

SCHIERMONNIKOOG

Education Authority Gemeente Schiermonnikoog
Local School Basisschool in de Mandé (Primary)
Local School Inspecteur Boelensschool (Secondary)
Local Accommodation Strandhotel Om de Nord
Local Accommodation Beachclub Norderstraun
Regional Education Network Onderwijsgroep Fricolore

ROLE DEFINITIONS

- **Education Authority** - The primary administrative and financial authority for the Koster Islands. They would be responsible for securing the regional school budget funds needed for the program's operation and teacher salaries.
- **Educational Institution** - Can potentially provide the specialized teachers needed for secondary school rotations or act as a coordinating partner for students/alumni seeking short-term teaching roles.
- **Schools** - The location receiving the specialized teaching staff, ensuring local children have access to a full curriculum and preventing school closure.
- **Transport** - Essential for ensuring the rotating teachers can travel between their accommodation and the remote local schools.
- **Committee** - Their early involvement is key to reducing skepticism and fostering community support for the new rotation model, which is necessary for its long-term success.
- **Development** - Represents the local population and has a vested interest in community development and the survival of the school.
- **Accommodation** - Can offer affordable, temporary lodging for rotating teachers, especially during the non-tourist season, fulfilling the accommodation requirement of the "Workation".
- **Regional Education Network** - The overarching educational body that oversees the schools and can help recruit and credential specialized teachers from the mainland for the rotation.



INTER ISLANDS