



2014-1-HU01-KA203-002367

## INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL INNOVATION COMPETITION

**Project title or  
name of the social enterprise:**

Melting Pot

Keywords (max. 5) describing  
your social business idea:

non-profit

catering company

asylum seekers

empowerment

intercultural exchange

**Name of the  
team representative:**

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**Team members:**

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**Represented country:**

Belgium



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PROJECT

### MELTING POT

#### Motivation to develop Melting Pot

The name of our project, Melting Pot, stands for our goal to support respect and open interaction between the different people, cultures and ethnicities. Through bridging - connecting people from socially heterogeneous groups - this project aims to strengthen social cohesion. With kitchen utilities as our tools, we share our love for international cooking with each other and with the community.

#### Social need of Melting Pot

Asylum seekers in Belgium aren't allowed to work in the first four months after they submitted their application. So, in these months, their talents remain unused. Through voluntary work which is - in contrast to paid work - allowed, Melting Pot provides a meaningful daytime activity whereby asylum seekers prepare dishes from their home country, improve their cooking skills and learn from other cultures and traditions. By being responsible for preparing the meals which includes buying their ingredients, asylum seekers get to know the neighbourhood and the local language in an informal way. A surplus value of Melting Pot is our peerlearning-approach. Peerlearning between asylum seekers contributes to a positive self-esteem and self-empowerment.

#### Who and how will benefit from Melting Pot

Melting Pot targets two different groups. (1) On the one hand a social target group: the asylum seekers. (2) On the other hand an economic target group: individuals and organisations who order meals from our catering company. For the latter, we will focus mainly on socially responsible enterprises.

(1) Melting Pot offers a wide range of advantages for asylum seekers. They will improve their knowledge about the languages and culture(s) in Belgium. They will form a positive self-esteem, will be given responsibilities and will learn to work in and as a team while getting familiar with the labour market. It will be a meaningful life experience.

(2) The individuals and organisations get the opportunity to taste international food and be introduced to the diversity of our society. Furthermore, they can contribute to a local and social project.

#### How we plan to address our stakeholders and customers

##### Stakeholders: asylum seekers

Melting Pot organises every month a food market in the asylum center, allowing the asylum seekers to get to know our project in an informal way. The food markets create an environment where people can cook together and where local and personal food traditions can be shared and where face-to-face contact is a key factor. As a result, new ideas and new recipes can be formed, which Melting Pot will later offer to the customers. Besides the food markets, flyers will be hung in the asylum center.



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### Customers: individuals and companies

As a start-up, we will promote Melting Pot by distributing flyers and posters on relevant locations, such as corporate events, food festivals, local shops and public places. Information can also be found on the website and social media, on which meal orders can be placed as well. Besides orders from individuals, Melting Pot caters all sorts of events, such as corporate events, neighbourhood parties, receptions, barbecues, weddings, festivals etc.

### Resources Melting Pot needs to meet the social need

#### Human

Melting Pot has a number of partners in mind. The cooperation can lead to win-win situations for both parties. Melting Pot aims fruitful and targeted partnerships. Possible partners are „Rode Kruis” (an organisation that shelters asylum seekers), „Velt” (ecological food company), „groep Intro” (an organisation that devotes itself to developing the talents of socially deprived groups) and „’t Werkhuys” (rental of areas, rooms and a kitchen for social and creative projects).

#### Tangible

The profit will be reinvested into Melting Pot. New materials, a van for the delivery of the meals, more specific ingredients, expanded kitchen equipment will be purchased with the profit. Also Melting Pot wants to pay the professional staff.

### Guarantee of financial sustainability

Because of financial reasons, Melting Pot will prepare orders only once a week in the first six months of the project. We see it as a test phase in which we want to find out if there is enough interest in the project. Later, we will extend the working days. An important source of revenues is provided through funding. We have three potential partners in mind:

#### Socrowd

Socrowd is a crowdfunding platform for social business initiatives. If the business plan of Melting Pot is approved by Socrowd, investors can donate money. The amount invested in our project will be tripled by Socrowd and the total sum will be lent to us. That way, Melting Pot is supported by an interest-free loan from Socrowd. If Melting Pot is profitable, both the private investors as well as Socrowd will be restituted.

#### Cera

We submit an application for financial backing by Cera. Melting Pot association meets the conditions proposed by Cera for community projects. More specific, this project includes involvement of volunteers and awareness for sustainability development. If our project is approved by Cera, we will receive financial backing amounting up to € 2000.



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## The city of Antwerp

We submit an application to the city of Antwerp for funding with regard to staff and operational resources. Melting Pot meets the requirements for projects, namely, an improvement of the quality of life in the city such as environmental care, welfare and participation of the citizens to society. For this application, we can receive financial backing amounting up to € 10 000.

## Feasibility of Melting Pot

### Strengths

Benefits for asylum seekers: (1) use of talents, (2) improvement of self-esteem, (3) daytime activity, (4) introduction to language and culture, (5) lifelong learning, (6) introduction to labour market.

Benefits for customers: (1) intercultural exchange, (2) supporting a new and innovative project, (3) taste dishes from different countries.

### Weaknesses

(1) Limited experience with business and (2) with the social target group.

### Opportunities

(1) Answer to the current asylum crisis, (2) voluntary work for asylum seekers in the months after the submission of their application, (3) Antwerp is a melting pot with a large potential of multicultural interest.

### Threats

(1) Asylum seekers can be a difficult and critical group because of possible fear, anger, stress and other feelings concerning the acculturation process. (2) The commitment of the asylum seekers can be influenced by the lack of legal, paid employment opportunities. (3) Melting Pot may experience pressure from other (international) restaurants and catering companies. (4) A sufficient amount of interest from potential consumers is necessary

## Melting Pot, an innovative social enterprise

Given the rising amount of asylum applicants in Belgium and in Europe, services and assistance are restricted to the primary necessities of life such as “bed, bath and bread”. The labour market is not adjusted to the large influx of asylum seekers. More specific, asylum seekers are not allowed to work in the first four months of their arrival in Belgium. This situation demands innovative solutions like Melting Pot.