

Call for papers CIB55/65 Workshop MISBE conference June 2011 Amsterdam

Workshop: Selecting partners & organizing collaboration

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General theme description:

In many countries, there is a trend towards an increased use of models for collaborative contracting, both in the private and the public sectors. Several forces drive this development: a general dissatisfaction with current construction costs and quality, increased technical complexity and uncertainty in projects, higher demands for sustainability and lifecycle performance of buildings, and the development of new information technology affecting design of project organizations and communication systems. This multifaceted background indicates that the trend towards integrated contracting should be taken seriously by both practitioners and researchers and that we need to understand the implications for procuring and managing construction projects.

Many early examples of partnering relationships in construction have been limited in scope, primarily involving management levels of clients and main contractors. As industry experience grows, however, collaborative initiatives increasingly include also consultants, users, subcontractors and workers. This workshop invites contributions addressing contemporary practice in organizing inter-organizational collaboration in the construction industry. We welcome papers that describe and discuss micro level organizational phenomena relating to communication, relationship building and decision-making in various stages of the process, but also papers assessing macro-level developments. Topics include, but are not limited to, the following areas:

a) Selection processes

Selecting partners is an essential step in setting up a collaborative relation, and clients generally wish to employ some type of quality based selection model that also includes personal qualities and abilities of individuals involved. However, public clients have to comply with procurement regulations and also in private projects clients often aim for a transparent and reliable partner selection process. Still, there is little research on how tendering documents are formulated and how collaborative competence and past performance of design professionals and contractors are assessed, as well as on how the seller side responds to this new practice. How are the ambitions and expectations of the contracting authority interpreted and addressed in the tenders? And how are decision processes organized and which criteria tend to become decisive?

b) Contracts and incentives

The perennial debate about the role of formal contracts and incentives in collaborative business relationships has highlighted how complex and dynamic these issues can be. Trust and contractual control mechanisms are found to be both complementary and

contradictory. A contract includes explicit performance specifications, but there are also more implicit expectations regarding project outcomes and collaboration processes. In the workshop we would like to discuss how formal contracts in collaborative relations are designed in practice and which the experiences are. How are decisions about contracts made and on what basis? Which aspects of the relationship are formalized and which are left open? Which are the contractual implications of BIM-related collaboration requirements?

c) Organizing multiparty collaboration

Organizing collaboration between numerous specialists implies making tradeoffs between various goals. In particular, there is a need to balance involvement and process efficiency. Large groups do not allow for innovative and efficient collaboration, and collaborative relationships entail individual expectations of influence and respect. How is the dual challenge of knowledge integration and participation manifested and handled in projects? Further, which aspects tend to be managed, and in what way? How do roles and power relations change and how are these changes handled?

d) Management learning

Establishing, organizing and leading a collaborative relationship between many participants is a sophisticated task, and many construction practitioners have experienced a learning process where they have developed their ability to manage or participate in collaborative contexts. To assess the viability and future development of the partnering trend in construction, it is important to understand how learning in this area takes place: How do leaders and project participants interpret concepts and goals of collaborative contracting and how do they develop their understanding over time? And how do developments take place on an industry level?

Format

The workshop will give a platform to a maximum of 10 high-quality papers that are related to the questions mentioned above. We consider selecting 3 to 5 of the most on-topic and enticing papers for a 15 minute presentation each. Depending on the number and kinds of the submitted papers the authors of the other papers will then be invited to present the main issues arising from their papers in 5 minute poster or powerpoint presentations. The workshop programme will provide ample opportunity for discussion for all authors and other participants.

Application

The workshop leaders are in principle responsible for the review procedure of their own workshop stream and are members of the scientific committee of the conference. We invited five peers for the scientific committee to assist us in the review procedure. The submitted papers will be assigned to the reviewers of the specific workshop theme by the conference organization. All approved papers will be published in the conference proceedings (after receipt of the conference fees), but not all papers have to or will be presented during the workshops. All correspondence between the organization and the participants will run through the conference website. This includes the submission and review process of the papers.