

## IFA Wins Lifelong Learning Award 2012

On December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012, the Lifelong Learning Award for outstanding achievement for mobility promoting projects was awarded for the fifth time at Vienna's Palais Ferstel. Three ambitious projects from the *Leonardo da Vinci* program were nominated.

The award went to the project **"AUPRAX 2010 – Schulwesen"** from the Association for International Young Workers Exchange (IFA – Internationaler Fachkräfteaustausch), which is devoted to promoting the mobility of apprentices, professionals and trainers on behalf of the Austrian Economic Chambers and Austrian companies.

The project won over the international jury with its high degree of innovative content, professional project management and sustainable results. Federal Minister Dr. Karlheinz Töchterle and Department Head Mag. Theodor Siegl recognized the contribution of the project towards strengthening and promoting innovation in vocational training in Austria and ceremoniously presented the award to CEO Susanne Klimmer and project officer Carina Flandorfer.



Fotos: Ludwig Schedl

Within the framework of the EU Lifelong Learning Programme, the Leonardo da Vinci program promotes mobility and innovation projects in vocational education and training. During the 2010/11 academic year, the "AUPRAX 2010 – Schulwesen" project made it possible for 33 experts in vocational education and training to travel to Germany, Spain and the UK where they were able to exchange experiences with other experts.

The participants were able to visit the ministries responsible for vocational education, as well as the training institutions and companies and the national certification bodies where they could gain insight into other European vocational training systems and participate in an intense exchange of experiences and ideas on key issues such as curriculum design, design of educational standards, education and training of teachers, cooperation between schools and companies and international comparability and certification of qualifications.

Back in Austria, with the new insights they have gained, they take on the role of important multipliers for design and change processes in their own professional environment and thus contribute significantly to the development of Austrian vocational education and training in terms of the BMUKK quality initiative QIBB.

*"This project succeeded in bringing all the participants together to work towards a common goal, namely to further develop and increase the quality of vocational schools in Austria. Through their efforts they are also making a major contribution to the internationalization of the Austrian vocational education system."*

Susanne Klimmer, CEO of IFA.

The award winning project initiated a sustainable exchange of ideas and experiences with experts from the countries visited. The goal is to work together to engage in a continuous process of increased quality and attractiveness of vocational education in Austria.

*"We congratulate the IFA Association on this award. It is a special acknowledgement of their long-standing commitment to international exchange in the field of education," emphasizes Michael Landertshammer, Head of the Department for Education Policy from the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKO).*

Since the project started in 2007, a total of 180 experts from every field of vocational education in Austria have participated in this European-wide exchange of experiences. The project will continue in 2013 with some 40 other Austrian experts.