

# Would you like to be a **Co-ordinator and Facilitator for pub/cafe/bar discussions** on *philosophy, politics, scientific and cultural issues* this autumn?

Here's a summary on background and plans for development.

The idea goes back to Socrates - asking big questions, discussing them with others, and learning together in an informal way. 'Education for its own sake' but also, given the nature of the questions and enquiries, 'education for social purpose'.

Adult Education in the C20 had some modest public funding to run courses of this kind, mainly through WEA, University extra-mural and residential college provision. In the last decade that public funding has been stopped. There is still a market, for those who can pay the full fees, but the number of institutions and courses has diminished dramatically for obvious reasons.

Formal AE has in many areas been replaced by a variety of informal voluntary activities notably, the U3A, but central to our plans, community philosophy discussions were pioneered by **Philosophy in Pubs** (PiPs) on Merseyside. PiPs is now national. Meanwhile a number of similar projects started, quite independently, and recently residential courses organised by the **Raymond Williams Foundation** (RWF) have helped consolidate the network.

The rationale and the detail on all this can be found on [www.raymondwilliamsfoundation.org.uk](http://www.raymondwilliamsfoundation.org.uk) following the link, especially, to PiPs and 'discussion circles'. Basic to any of the projects and developments below are principles of respect for others and their opinions, with each group 'following the argument wherever it leads', open, non-party and unsectarian.

So, with your help we want to extend the groups and circles this autumn, 2014, in the following ways:

- Start up new groups anywhere, anytime and on whatever topics or themes (a huge bank of ideas on these can be visited on the above websites) and we can offer **practical and RWF financial** assistance if appropriate. WEA colleagues in the Eastern Region and South Wales are working on similar new initiatives from September 2014.
- We will, however, be focussing on two cities, Stoke-on-Trent and Manchester, with potential to prioritise those experiencing social and democratic challenges.
- RWF's residential course in November 2014 linked to the OU/openDemocracy 'Participation Now' on-line education initiative will be a focus for follow-through, as will other residential and one-day options organised by any of the partners.

If you would like to be a **Co-ordinator/Facilitator** or would like further information please contact:

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Each of the above can help with any questions or queries on the project.

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