

28. March 2022

Fire and rescue station

State of NRW honors German-Dutch fire department project "CrossFire"

Ministry for Home Affairs, Municipal Affairs, Construction and Equality awards "State Prize for Innovative Intermunicipal Cooperation" // Special prize in "Crisis Management" category

The state of North Rhine-Westphalia promotes cooperation between municipalities. Five particularly innovative projects worthy of emulation have now been honored in Düsseldorf from among 75 applications. The city of Bocholt is also among the award winners.

The Bocholt project "CrossFire," which involves, among other things, the construction of a German-Dutch fire station together with the municipality of Aalten (Netherlands) and thus strengthening cross-border fire protection, received the special prize in the category "Intermunicipal Cooperation in Crisis Management.

Bocholt's mayor, Thomas Kerkhoff, and the head of the Bocholt fire department, Thomas Deckers, accepted the prize of 10,000 euros in person from State Secretary Dr. Jan Heinisch. Also present: Aalten's mayor Anton Stapelkamp and the Dutch coordinator Jan van Veldhuizen as well as Frederik Schütte from the accompanying engineering office antwortING. "Bocholt and Aalten are pleased about the appreciation of this good, cross-border project", Kerkhoff and Stapelkamp commented in unison. The prize is endowed with 10,000 euros.

Earlier, the special representative for inter-municipal cooperation, Thomas Hunsteger-Petermann OB a.D., praised the Bocholt-Aalten contribution in his speech. "CrossFire" is based on an inter-municipal, cross-border cooperation between the cities of Bocholt and Aalten (NL) - consolidated by a public-law agreement on cross-border cooperation, which has been practiced since 2004.

In 2018, the project initiative "CrossFire" was initiated by the fire department of Bocholt. This involves examining the feasibility of establishing a joint inter-municipal and international fire station. The two fire stations Suderwick and Dinxperlo are only 2.3 km driving distance from each other. Together with a working group with members of the cities of Bocholt and Aalten, the fire department of Bocholt, the security region Noord- en Oost Gelderland and the engineering office antwortING, the project was further developed. Not only the project consortium, but also many other stakeholders see a joint location of the fire department and the Brandweer as an innovative solution to create significant safety benefits for the border region and at the same time to promote the European idea. Various working groups and a steering committee are currently continuing to work on this project with the aim of realizing it.

"I am very happy about this special award, which at the same time also means an appreciation of our joint work over many years. The project "CrossFire" finally connects not only the intercommunal but at the same time also the European thought to the outside. We will now actively take the next steps", says Bocholt's fire chief Thomas Deckers. On April 9, the fire department units from Suderwick and Dinxperlo will meet to summarize and discuss the current results from the working groups once again. Deckers: "After that, it is planned to continue the work in the groups. Furthermore, we will also deal with the location issue in the near future."

3 out of 5 prizes go to Münsterland

Prizes were awarded in a total of 5 categories. In addition to the Bocholt-Aalten joint project, two other initiatives from the Münsterland region received awards. One of them is the district-wide "Training Night" in the district of Borken. This is a joint project of all 17 municipalities in the district of Borken and the business development agency for the district of Borken. The district of Coesfeld received an award for the project with the title

"Coesfeld 12.0". Behind this is an inter-municipal digitization strategy for the district of Coesfeld.

"This shows: In the Münsterland region, solution-oriented and networked thinking between the municipalities is very pronounced," Bocholt Mayor Thomas Kerkhoff is pleased to say.

A total of 75 projects were submitted. "They reflect a whole wealth of creative ideas that make up intermunicipal cooperation. Togetherness makes for strength. This principle also applies to the awarding of the state prize for innovative inter-municipal cooperation in North Rhine-Westphalia. Because when several partners are in agreement, projects can be implemented quickly, easily and cost-effectively," emphasizes Ina Scharrenbach, the Minister responsible for Home Affairs, Municipal Affairs, Construction and Equality.

The state prize for innovative inter-municipal cooperation in North Rhine-Westphalia is awarded exclusively to projects involving at least two municipal cooperation partners.

More information about the other award winners in the [state's press release dated March 28, 2022](#).



Die Bocholter und Aaltener Delegationen freuen sich über die Auszeichnung des Landes für das grenzüberschreitende Projekt "CrossFire". Staatssekretär Dr. Jan Heinisch (l.) nahm die Auszeichnung vor.

© Stadt Bocholt



3 von 5 Auszeichnungen gingen in das Münsterland. Neben Bocholt erhielten die Kreise Borken und Coesfeld Preise.

© Stadt Bocholt



LANDESPREIS FÜR INNOVATIVE INTERKOMMUNALE ZUSAMMENARBEIT



Stadt Bocholt

Ausgezeichnet in der Kategorie
Krisenbewältigung
mit dem Projekt

**CrossFire - Errichtung eines interkommunalen,
grenzüberschreitenden Feuerwehrhauses**

in Düsseldorf am 28. März 2022.

Wir sprechen Ihnen unsere herzlichen Glückwünsche aus.

Ina Scharrenbach
Ministerin für Heimat, Kommunales,
Bau und Gleichstellung
des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen

Ministerium für Heimat, Kommunales,
Bau und Gleichstellung
des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen



Bocholt und Aalten wurden mit einer Urkunde und 10.000 Euro für ihre Zusammenarbeit bei "CrossFire" vom Land NRW gewürdigt.

© Stadt Bocholt