

Paul Boutsen

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I have 35 years of experience in supervising growth trajectories, developing visions and creating practical applications for them. A constant in my career is policy preparation, local or regional development and the establishment of change management processes. Furthermore, 'production assignments', in which the challenge lay in refining a rough idea, finding the resources and people and elaborating a working structure. Often, these have been assignments or private initiatives concerning the regeneration of the mining region in Limburg, Belgium. I operate effectively in teams as well as solo assignments. I am not intimidated by large measures of responsibility. My strengths are: networking, communication, clear analyses and engaged strategies. And my passion is change and development in mining regions.

Career

Recent

- Since 2000: manager for 'ADACT bv', consultancy firm.
- Since 1991: founder and director of 'Het Vervolg', a project centre of the Limburg Mining Region, independent not-for-profit development agency with a portfolio in culture, media, tourism and heritage projects. More info: www.hetvervolg.org.
- Since 2012: founder and director of 'transit_LAB', a cooperative company for change projects and reconversion initiatives aimed toward sustainability. More info: www.transitlab.be.
- Since 2019: manager and co-owner of 'IPAS nv –urban mining-, engineering company promoting WASTE REFINERY as sustainable solution for municipal waste, recovering materials and energy with a technology derived from the coalmining technologies. More info: www.ipas.world.

Executed impact - assignments

- 2018 – 2019: development of a long term vision on development of the mining settlement ZOLDER (B)**
- Advisor to the municipality.
 - Creating and writing of the long term strategy-paper.
- 2016: development of masterplan for the coalmine Marcasse in the Borinage (B)**
- Strategy advise for a local initiative.
 - Writing the content of the development-plan.

- 2015 – present: manager visitors centre ZLDR Luchtfabriek**
- Organising and coordinating a group of volunteers for the daily reception of a visitor centre dedicated to mining history in Limburg, Belgium.
- 2013 – 2014: advisor and executor in Interreg project SHIFT-X for STEBO vzw**
- Advisor in international network with partners in Central and Eastern Europe within the theme of valorisation for industrial heritage.
 - Producer of the Cultural Heritage Container: reconstructing a shipping container into a mobile art gallery. More info: www.container001.com.
- 2008 – 2012: project officer Cleantech Campus Houthalen-Helchteren for Autonomous Municipal Company Masterplan and the town of Houthalen-Helchteren**
- Elaboration of the vision on Cleantech development for Limburg.
 - Assistance in the realization of GREENVILLE, incubator for Cleantech companies.
 - Elaboration of a concept for the visitor centre Cleantech.
 - Supervision of various Cleantech trajectories and the municipal core team for Cleantech development.
 - Establishment of Cleantech acquisition for Houthalen and Limburg.
 - International projects and involvement in conventions and prospects.
- 2006 – 2007: director vzw Het Vervolg**
- Business and personnel management.
 - Expansion of the project 'Mining & More': tourism disclosure of the mining heritage based on oral history. Rocco & Marina tour, Mining Region Tours, Key Figures, i.a. More info: www.miningandmore.be.
 - Organisation of the 'Kolenspoorfestival' (coaltrack festival).
 - Expansion of COALFACE: art gallery and photography projects. More info: www.coalface.be.
 - Various cultural productions (theatre, music, multi-disciplinary)
- 2004 – 2005: project officer tourism development of the mining heritage for the city of Genk**
- Concept elaboration for Visitor Centre coal mine Winterslag, now C-Mine expedition.
 - Concept elaboration for recreational destination slag heap Winterslag.
 - Tourism arrangements elaboration multiculturalism Genk.
 - Interim management tourism office.
- 2004: advisor for Provincial Government Limburg concerning the vision and development of a plan for the mining museum in Beringen**
- 2003: project officer tourism plan mining heritage for the Limburg regional tourism authority**
Creating and mediating a feasible plan in cooperation with the mining communities and provincial authorities.
- 2001 – 2002: project officer Mining patrimony for the Flemish Government, department of Monuments and Sites**
Advisor / networker added to the Director-General of the department of Monuments and Sites, assigned to accelerate the redevelopment of the mining patrimony.
- 1999 – 2000: director nv Ecowatt (construction of hydropower plants)**
- Daily management.
 - Restructuring and professionalisation of the company.
 - Development of human resources management.
 - Positioning of the company within the political environment.

- General troubleshooting at construction sites.
- Director for nv Ecowatt and nv 'Wind- en Waterkracht Vlaanderen' (investment firm)

1995 – 1999: staff member Regional Platform Mining Area Limburg, collaboration between 6 municipal authorities (regional development agency)

- General feasibility research concerning the platform and development of a central and people-mobilizing project
- Managing the themes mining heritage, tourism and master planning for the Mining Region.
- Communicator and promoter for the framework project Kolenspoor / Coaltrack as structuring project for the region and for the Coaltrack-festival 1998.

1990 – 1994: coordinator vzw STEBO (Steunpunt Buurtopbouwwerk Limburg)

- Daily management of the organisation.
- Final responsibility for team planning and management.
- Positioning of the community work in the Limburg reconversion and development of innovative projects concerning the renovation of mining garden cities, district development and management.
- Preparatory trajectory and political mediation for the foundation of RIMO Limburg.

1989 – 1990: community worker Zwartberg for vzw STEBO

- Start-up social economic project Open Buurtatelier: fabricating wooden play equipment.
- Extension of community centre as basic facility in the neighbourhood.
- Projects for road safety.
- General assistance in the neighbourhood.

1984 – 1989: community worker 'De Keeting' in Mechelen and vzw PRISO-Antwerp

- Urban renewal in "Klein Begijnhof" Heembeemd: participation guidance.
- Welfare planning at district level in cooperation with OCMW (social welfare office).
- Improvement of housing situation for Moroccan migrants.
- Development of community centre for single men.
- Development of neighbourhood renewal in the Adegemstraat.

Additional assignments

- Consulting assignments for engineering offices, mostly related to assignments in mining regions in Belgium, Kazakhstan, Ukraine,...
- Structural consulting assignments based on the analysis methods of Robert Fritz:
 - Reprofitting STEBO.
 - Reprofitting Social Support Services Heusden-Zolder
 - Various ad hoc company assignments.
- Funfair Paradiso: Renting of nostalgic funfair attractions to events and festivals.

International experience

- EURACOM, network of local governments from mining regions in Europe, Belgian representative.
- PROSPECTS, Interreg project with 10 partners from Mining Regions. Exchange of best practices sustainable regional development.
- SHIFT-X, Interreg project in Central Europe. Exchange of best practices cultural heritage as developmental factor.
- OVSE / OSCE, symposium concerning the reconversion of mining regions, Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine.

- Ukraine, preliminary study concerning the restructuring of coal mines and prospection concerning options for rapeseed cultivation.
- WASTE REFINERY & GENCOAL, new technological approach to the issues of Municipal Solid Waste. Czech Republic, Poland, Ukraine, Belgium, Italy, West-Africa, Emirates.

Training

- Social work (Geel) 1984, department Social Cultural Work, specialisation community development.
- Structural Consulting with Robert Fritz in Newfane (USA) 2000 – 2003.

Additional

- Dutch, English: excellent (oral and written)
- French, German: basic to good (oral)
- Spanish, Greek: notions (mainly understanding)
- Driving licence: B and C (lorry)