

Trustmaking

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Edited by the Trustmaking Collective

*A guidebook
on youth
empowerment
in urban
transformation*



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This guidebook on Trustmaking and youth empowerment in urban transformation is a collective work. It is the result of extensive collaboration within and between four Urban Living Labs in Oslo, Panevėžys, Rotterdam and Vienna, and it documents the insights gained through these labs.

We would therefore like to acknowledge the members of the Trustmaking Collective, listed below, as the authors of this guidebook: Žemartas Budrys, Paulina Budryte, Brigitte Felderer, Veronika Hackl, Sebastian Hafner, Elina Kränzle, Dahae Lee, Judith M. Lehner, Marcel W. Musch, Francesca Ranalli, Thomas Romm, Kamran Surizehi, Eglė Vitkutė, Kim Weger and Noor Zaat.



*Young
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for the New Green
Transition*

Trust has emerged as a pivotal element in contemporary societal debates, shaping the way communities, organizations, and individuals navigate the complex contemporary challenges and crises. As we confront pressing global issues, like the green transition, fostering trust becomes an essential foundation for meaningful collaboration and democratic participation. In contrast, the COVID-19 pandemic dramatically reshaped the lives across the globe by disrupting participation in public life and collective enjoyment of leisure activities. Lockdown measures, while saving lives of vulnerable groups, disproportionately affected youth mental and physical well-being due to widespread isolation.¹ Crucially, youth lost trust in vital social infrastructures – schools, parks, playgrounds, and recreational facilities – as safe spaces for connection and personal development.² Additionally, to the restricted access to these spaces, societal mistrust towards youth was fuelled. Public narratives often portrayed young people as irresponsible disregarding health measures, despite evidence of rule compliance and meaningful contributions through volunteerism and advocacy,³ marginalizing their civic engagement and agency of change. In strategic spatial planning, youth, despite having the right to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives, are often excluded from meaningful engagement. Concurrently, young people around the globe initiated powerful movements to demand urgent responses⁴ from responsible politicians and policy makers for a green transition in the face of the climate crisis.⁵ Ageist depictions on these claim-based

actions and process of politization by politicians, newspaper journalists and in other media coverage showed the scepticism and mistrust towards the youth climate movements.⁶

Such dynamics underscore a critical need to reflect on the matter of trust – both for and with young people – to prepare communities for ongoing and future uncertainties. Amid intersecting global crises, the erosion of trust disproportionately impacts youth, challenging their ability to work as agents of change. Although the observation of declining trust is not new – Robert Putnam identified the erosion of social trust in the early 2000s as a threat to civic society and democracy⁷ – the contemporary debate has shifted. In the late twentieth century, critical theory focused on the effects of globalization and late capitalism on communities, emphasizing the loss of social capital. Today, with increasing polarization and dissatisfaction, trust has taken centre stage as a critical area for research and intervention. Trust serves as a fundamental catalyst for the establishment of shared meaning, enabling common understandings.⁸ Its formation relies on capabilities such as the ability to interact, creating shared realities and mutual perceptions, forming partnerships as a link between interactions and reciprocity, and organizing interactions in form of dialogues.

Trust as inherently relational and deeply embedded in cultural, social, and institutional contexts, influences notions of accountability, safety, transparency, and engagement.⁹ It is also

essential for developing relationships of authority and fostering collaboration.¹⁰ Governments and organizations increasingly recognize that strengthening relations and cooperation with citizens is key to counteracting societal distrust. Government authorities, alongside civil society organizations, are dedicating more effort to participatory processes and co-creation strategies, despite institutional barriers and a persisting knowledge gap by professionals of how to actively involve youth in designing and implementing measures.¹¹ Public spaces as well as green and social infrastructures such as schools, parks, playgrounds, and recreational facilities are pivotal places for such strategies of intervention. Interest in approaches such as placemaking as the creation of meaningful (public) places through active community involvement has grown, reflecting a shared commitment to fostering collaborative urban spaces and rebuilding trust.¹² These strategies provide a foundation for addressing distrust, for reconnecting different groups of inhabitants across age and fostering their agency in transformation processes. As noted by the OECD, young people can serve as the ‘connective tissue’¹³ between short-term strategies and long-term societal goals, fostering just and more resilient planning outcomes and urban transitions; a foundation upon which the concept of trustmaking builds.

Hands-on Trustmaking in Four European Cities

The idea of trustmaking was developed in the framework of the EU-project funding call ERA-NET Cofund Urban Transformation Capacities (ENUTC), which encouraged researchers, urban government authorities (including cities and municipalities), businesses, civil society and other stakeholders to increase knowledge of, and develop approaches for, transformation capacities towards urban sustainability, resilience and liveability. The successfully funded project *Trustmaking. Young Creators and Responsibilities for the New Green Transition (2022–2025)* brought together a diverse group of stakeholders from academic institutions, city or municipal administrations, businesses, youth organisations, and civil society organisations in order to develop actionable strategies for trust through youth-centred approaches. In four Urban Living Lab¹⁴ settings in Oslo (Norway), Panevėžys (Lithuania), Rotterdam (Netherlands) and Vienna (Austria), the project focused on developing tools for youth co-creation through placemaking tools and artistic strategies. Cross-section collaboration mechanisms were initiated and designed to enhance learning through workshops, co-design activities and in summer and winter schools. By situating youth as co-creators of their environments and connecting responsibilities of city administrations in urban planning to a youth perspective, *Trustmaking* demonstrated

the transformative potential of youth agency in shaping more inclusive, responsive urban spaces. Amongst the results of this project is the present book, which features trustmaking principles for youth co-design and capacity building in public service for integrating youth perspectives in the green transition. The trustmaking principles align closely with strategies such as placemaking – hands-on approaches to improving neighbourhoods – and arts-based activities that empower youth to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces. By incorporating intergenerational collaboration and cross-sector engagement, *Trustmaking* becomes a model for fostering trust and co-creating urban relations. Recognizing the diverse perceptions of trust across local contexts such as in Oslo, Panevėžys, Rotterdam and Vienna, the project advocated for processes of co-creation as collaborative efforts to build trust through shared experiences and social relations.

The first phase of *Trustmaking* centred on co-research *on and with* youth to uncover root causes of low trust and civic disengagement. Recognizing that youth engagement needs to remain flexible, emergent, and responsive to their needs, the project applied diverse research methods, including ethnographic studies, socio-spatial analysis, and arts-based approaches. These methods were often developed collaboratively with students from institutions such as the Social Design Studio at the University of Applied Arts Vienna, the TU Delft, the Rotterdam Academy of Architecture and

Urban Design, Hersleb Upper Secondary School in Oslo and Kaunas University of Technology. This approach facilitated peer-to-peer learning and ensured that research processes were inclusive and meaningful to participants. Key activities included focus groups, research walks, community mapping, and hands-on workshops. Findings from the co-research phase informed the second phase as creation of artistic interventions and co-creation workshops that empowered youth to articulate their visions for green, inclusive urban spaces. Designed in partnership with schools, youth organizations, and youth centres, these activities offered young people opportunities to experience public spaces through the lens of their needs and aspirations, re-appropriate urban spaces for play and leisure, and temporarily transform and re-design free spaces based on their ideas. These workshops and interventions showcased the importance of understanding urban spaces from a youth perspective while demonstrating tangible design opportunities. Each activity emphasized creative, hands-on engagement, highlighting the capacity of youth to contribute meaningfully to urban transformation when given the tools, space, and trust to do so.

Trustmaking, as explored in this project, moved beyond traditional frameworks to present actionable strategies for trust through youth-centred approaches. Instead of streamlining opinions in pre-set participation formats or taking for granted tool boxes for empowering inhabitants,

the project questioned attributed roles of power and agency, transgressed static definitions of youth, invited collective learning across disciplines and institutional silos, and included different notions of city dwellers across past, present and future. The definition of young people as a group is complex, in our project (and throughout this book) the term youth and young people is used interchangeably in accordance with the United Nation Secretariat.¹⁵ While the UN sets the chronological age definition between 15 and 24 year-olds, the *Trustmaking* approach sees youth as a ‘social category’, in continuous redefinition and inherently bound to the young person’s specific life circumstances and surrounding societal context.¹⁶ Across the four Urban Living Labs, project members therefore worked with different groups and age-cohorts, spanning from school classes via youth club participants to university students. Crucially, the project advocated for taking the perspective of youth rather than imposing external viewpoints on youth in urban transformation. This shift in perspective highlights the significant yet often overlooked dimension of co-creation: trust. Co-creation, as a collective creative process involving numerous actors and generating knowledge by multiple partners¹⁷, necessitates preceding trust and capacity building measures. The co-creation processes developed and applied in *Trustmaking* specifically focused on the aspect of trust as a prerequisite for proactive and meaningful collective engagement to transcend conventional planning practices of consultation. In this sense, careful attention

needed to be given to the interactions, particularly regarding power relations and agency of involved persons, to facilitate the exchange of mutual perceptions and ultimately establish contact zones for dialogues across youth and urban government authorities. To advance in the co-creation process, mutual learning practices were essential to bring different actors together, leveraging their diverse knowledge, their professional and everyday life experiences and expertise. The aspect of learning was therefore considered even before the project start, reserving time and resources for cross-learning at winter and summer schools in the four different cities. The winter and summer schools not only aimed at creating an exchange network to promote a rapid uptake of strategies and innovations emerging from the Urban Living Labs, but also to create shared meanings and to enabling common understandings.

Even though the idea of *Trustmaking* emerged as a proactive, applied response to creating shared meanings and enabling common understandings to act on the challenges that surfaced during the pandemic, the importance of its approach in the context of climate and democracy crises extends into our collective future. As an approach, trustmaking offers not just a reflection on the challenges youth faces but also a call to action for all, especially urban government authorities, civil society organizations and planning professionals to invest in trust building strategies. Empowering youth to become changemakers opens pathways to

envision and create just, inclusive cities that extend beyond current imaginations. It underscores the need to foster youth agency and collaboration in urban transformation processes, presenting a more necessary than ever hopeful vision for cities shaped by and for future generations.

A Book for Collaborative Action

This book introduces trustmaking as an approach to co-creation, grounded in principles that transcend conventional urban planning paradigms. By reflecting on the outcomes of transdisciplinary research and co-creation activities conducted through the Urban Living Labs in the framework of the ENUTC-project, this book serves as a resource for urban planners, policymakers, entrepreneurs, youth workers, and other practitioners interested in co-creation approaches for transformation capacities of the green transition. By offering a range of co-creation methods – from placemaking to arts-based strategies – this book invites readers to explore creative, beyond-routine approaches that amplify youth voices and contributions. These approaches provide a foundation for bridging the expertise of urban planners, participation specialists, and youth advocates, fostering collaborative action that integrates diverse perspectives and facilitates meaningful collective engagement.

The book is comprised of three sections, with the first section ‘Perspectives on Trustmaking and Beyond’ introducing the reader to seven contributions by guest authors on a diverse range of topics related to the *Trustmaking* project. Jekaterina Lavrinec’s contribution highlights the challenges and opportunities of integrating young people into participatory urban planning by contrasting grassroots initiatives that empower youth with institutional approaches and advocating for re-examining youth spatial experiences and inclusivity in urban design. In their contribution, Roland Krebs and Hans Karssenberg explore placemaking in urban planning to foster inclusive, sustainable public spaces and to address social, economic, and environmental challenges in cities. Paulina Budryté elaborates on the concept of Urban Living Labs and the criteria to consider when establishing them as public forums to cultivate trust. Céline Janssen, Joris Hoekstra and Martina Gentili explore in their contribution participatory spatial planning using Armarta Sen’s Capability Approach to define meaningful ends and means. The contribution of Christian Reutlinger examines how young people use and transform urban spaces into socio-spatial formats like corners, stages, and niches, reflecting their diverse needs for visibility, retreat, and interaction, emphasizing the role of structural conditions, youth engagement, and public space interpretations in shaping their spatial practices. Loïs Schenk emphasizes in her contribution on the role of social capital, offering valuable insights for planners, policymakers, and

youth workers to foster environments where all young people can actively participate in shaping their communities. In the contribution of Ed Wall, different forms of cross-learning in summer and winter schools – an essential part of *Trustmaking* – is taken up by describing the example of the *un/der/represented* summer school as a means of celebrating learning as a collective form and questioning the hierarchical, and often siloed nature of institutions and disciplines.

The second section, ‘Trustmaking: From Principles to a Practical Approach’, elaborated by *Trustmaking* project members provides readers with a comprehensive understanding of trust as a multifaceted concept and its application in the context of urban transformation. It begins with a conceptual framework to unpack the complexity of trust, exploring the dynamics of basic trust and social trust and its relevance in fostering collaboration and inclusivity. The section then outlines the core principles of trustmaking, synthesized out of the experiences of the ENUTC-project. The principles outlined aim to ensure the longevity of co-created projects and inspire further policy development that acknowledges and empowers youth agency. Following the principles, ‘A Practical Approach to Trustmaking’ transitions to a practical perspective, detailing processes and methodologies for implementation and a catalogue as a set of methods, approaches and artistic strategies offering actionable tools for practitioners, blending theory with hands-on

strategies for building meaningful relationships and enhancing capabilities. While this section seeks to facilitate taking on the experiences and results of the *Trustmaking* project, it is not meant as a strict guideline to be replicated, but rather an inspiration to further develop and enrich these first steps of a trustmaking approach.

The third section then presents the four Urban Living Labs, in Oslo, Panevėžys, Rotterdam, and Vienna as inspiring examples of trustmaking. After a general description of the local contexts and their specific urban challenges, the sites and settings of the four Urban Living Labs are each portrayed. Additionally, each subsection of Urban Living Lab features a detailed description of activities carried out in the respective sites as part of the co-research and co-creation phase of the project, ranging from urban exploratory bike tours in Panevėžys, via climate gardening with terra preta in Vienna and film making as a means of communication in Rotterdam to a youth job programme in Oslo and an intergenerational cross-country-hockey game. The four subsections also feature stories about the winter and summer schools for cross-learning carried out in each of the four places and city-specific lessons learned from the *Trustmaking* process. In between the descriptions, young participants’ opinions appear as important voices of *Trustmaking* together with statements by other collaborators and new friends who joined along the way throughout the process. With the question ‘What’s next?’ each of the *Trustmaking* partners

provide an outlook of how to continue beyond the ENUTC-project and what lessons learned will be taken on.

Instead of a closing statement, the book's epilogue from Brigitte Felderer, vice-rector of the University of Applied Arts Vienna, highlights the challenges that lie ahead and reminds us that speaking of trust means democratic involvement and that such an involvement could only begin with the young creators. In this sense, the present book is an open invitation to join the endeavour of Trustmaking by including more diverse voices while acknowledging differences, forming new alliances and bonds working towards democratic engagement, continuously fighting against isolation and distrust, and adding new sections to this book with new joyful collaborations.


Judith M. Lehner
For the Trustmaking Collective

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*I: Perspectives on
Trustmaking and
Beyond*

Fostering Co-Creation

The Perspective of Young People in Participatory Urban Planning

Jekaterina Lavrinec

Challenges in Participatory Planning – Incorporating the Perspective of Young People

‘We need serious sports equipment on this site, for adults’, 10 and 11-year-old boys told me during one of the co-design workshops, and explained: ‘If they have their equipment, swings will be available. Otherwise, they will keep sitting on our swings’. This kind of care and support for the needs of another age group (even if only for the sake of your swings), when the actual users of the place are organically involved in developing places together, is a vital part of placemaking. This local togetherness is dynamically woven from various social connections and emotions, sometimes tensions. Still, it is based on the understanding that all participants of various ages are neighbours and share the same small territory.

In a horizontal participatory process initiated from below and arranged around public places in the form of open creative initiatives, children and young people organically join together and propose the direction for the activities, becoming co-creators and later, initiators, of urban furniture, creative routes, and cultural events in their neighbourhoods. The role of open, non-formal public places for cooperation with residents of various ages, especially children and young people, is essential, as it prolongs community initiatives into the future.

However, in the vertical participation process (which sometimes is called ‘invited participation’¹), the role of children and young people is episodic at best and mainly reduced to participation in the creative ideas workshops,

detached from the actual sites, the results of which magically evaporate – with rare exceptions. In urban planning, the interest of young people is typically localised in a few types of urban spaces – e.g. skate parks. Thus, to root the perspective of young people in the urban planning process, the imaginary youth geography needs to be re-examined, which I will do in the following contribution.

A shift in the paradigm of urban planning that initiates and encourages cooperation with the users of urban spaces goes through its early stages. Incorporating the experiences of multiple groups of residents into urban planning requires systemic change in decision-making. Often, participatory practices – an essential part of placemaking – have been cultivated long before institutions started recognizing the need for bottom-up co-design initiatives. Therefore, the question of just incorporating participation into the decision-making system is sensitive. The Lacol collective of architects aptly names the threats of a non-systemic, episodic approach to participation in urban planning. According to this collective, ‘False participation, where what people decide is not taken into account or people are not asked about the topics they really want to discuss, generates frustration and a mistrust of future processes’ and they admit that ‘Today, the most complete participation is found in citizens’ initiatives that come from below’.²

The participation arrangement, whether top-down or bottom-up, reflects the roles and hierarchies within society, and by bringing the perspective of young people and gender to urban planning, a hierarchy of interests is rearranged, and powers are redistributed. Delegating the



FIGURE 1: Open Square workshop in Vilnius brought together the users of the Lukiškių square, many of them young people and children, to express their visions and needs. The architects were assisting participants. Source: Laimikis archive, 2015.



FIGURE 2: Placemaking initiatives can be led by representatives of various generations. However, the involvement of local children and young people is crucial as they might be the most active users of public spaces. Use of module furniture at the neighbours’ picnic in Šnipiškės. Source: Vilnius. Laimikis archive, 2013.

decision-making role to the young users of urban places may initially seem challenging from the institutional perspective. In contrast, those who work on sites co-developing public places may find that cooperation with young people and children enriches the co-design process with innovative ideas, non-standard solutions and modes of play.

The direct and self-motivated involvement of children and young people also brings a much-needed prolongation and perspective to the placemaking initiatives. In my curatorial practice, young people who joined artistic and design initiatives in their neighbourhood as co-creators at an early age, within a couple of years started arranging cultural events for the community in the same previously co-developed public places. An example being the wooden Šnipiškės neighbourhood in Vilnius between 2012 to 2019, where such actions as implementing configurations and functions of the urban furniture, and the development of a mosaic route by decorating electric poles and facades took place. A sense of ownership and intergenerational trust emerges and grows through ongoing co-creation and care of the shared place. The actual process of co-creating places may take years, and during this long and slow process, the local connection becomes stronger.

Rooting the perspective of young people in the urban transformation process requires revising how young people and their needs are perceived in institutional and non-institutional discourses that shape urban places. What are the imaginative geographies attributed to youth? Further, I will highlight some aspects of young people's spatial experience that are usually overlooked in

urban planning and placemaking, but which show up in my curatorial and educational practice regularly. I will combine the insights suggested by the young participants of the co-design workshops along with the perspectives of formal, informal and non-formal educators; something I can do due to working in all three fields.

Spatial Experience in Rapidly Growing Cities – Non-Formal, Silent and Green Places

Returning from the city centre to your district, a green yard by the block of flats is a place for quiet rest. I would love to leave it like that; after the eventful day, you need a place for solitude. There are too many places for extroverts; why not design a place where you can just be, observing nature, meditating or reading a book?

This insight was brought by a 23-year-old participant from the placemaking workshop focused on the potential of the courtyards by a block of flats in a so-called sleeping district. Providing a choice of not being involved in social activities and having a space of your own seems essential for designing and co-designing both exterior and interior urban places. Still, it is usually overlooked, mainly when rooted in a stereotype of children and young people as being always active and even inconveniently noisy – a typical complaint from elderly residents.

In 2023–2024, proposing to reflect upon the changing youth geographies in the rapidly growing city of Vilnius, I took a series of interviews with young professionals

from various fields working with young people. The respondents included social workers and educators of the youth centres, an urban dance choreographer, street artists who run workshops in urban art, and a teacher of mindfulness and introspection who runs classes both for school youth and for teachers. The respondents recognized the importance of non-formal urban places open for creative experiments, whether it was street art, music or dance, and expressed the concern that fewer non-formal spaces were now available in the city. Some respondents noted that young people usually find themselves as ‘undesirable’ citizens whose activities are not welcome in the city centre, or in their own living districts. The source of control may vary – local elderly residents, commercial structures that take over the space, or services that implement the newly proclaimed zero tolerance towards street art, revoking the legal status of previously recognised places for street art. As one of the social workers from the youth centre pointed out,

When I put myself in the shoes of the youngsters, I think that I have few places for myself in the overcontrolled, overpolished city spaces. Although the activities of young people are usually associated with loud, inconvenient self-representation, in fact, as a young person, you may also seek quiet places. Do we still have these places for solitude? In our youth centre, we provide a safe place to come and just be there for the young people who are not into co-creative activities in the next room.

This insight is echoed in an interview with a teacher of mindfulness who runs breathing and concentration sessions in schools across Lithuania:

With pupils, we figured out that it is vital to have a silence room where one could retreat for a while during the day. A place where you could do breathing exercises, maybe meditate, or just spend some time in silence. However, some schools do not have the capacity for a silence room, so it can be a corner in a class. A possibility to retreat for the breathing exercise helps to improve concentration and overcome stress, and also important for the teachers.

By establishing a space for silence, the need for solitude is legitimated and the range of different social activities (in this case at schools) is expanded. Here therefore, spending time on your own is recognized as an essential need that helps to cope with everyday challenges, and not as a marginal behaviour.

To recognize solitude as a part of social life, and silence as an essential part of an urban soundscape, one needs specific sensitivity in the questions asked during discussions with young people and other users of urban places. In many languages, being inactive or doing nothing in public places have some negative connotations. Therefore, when discussing the scenarios for urban places, the usual result of participatory workshops is a list of new objects and public activities but often excluding scenarios where people just have a break and enjoy nature in a passive and quiet way. If an architect asks ‘what would you like to do here?’, it takes some courage to answer that you just want to do nothing – to have a deep breath, to think, to observe others, to read or listen to the environment or music in your headphones is enough. The urban place is usually seen as an empty container that

needs to be filled with activities, and this premise leads to the abolishment of fragile micro-scenarios, which may already be present in places that have turned into objects for another architectural project.

Most of the public places that I have studied over the past two decades, and which at some point were represented as abandoned places where nothing happens by the architects of new projects for these places, had dedicated user groups. These were primarily young people for whom the non-formality of the places looked attractive and who used these places both for informal gatherings – BMX or parkour training – and for solitude. If, after radical renewal, the perspective of these users is not included in the new vision of the place, the groups of young people usually move somewhere else. In addition, dedicated users of the place may bring valuable insights into a more-than-human perspective. Birds, bats, hedgehogs, insects, and plants are silent users of the same urban places, and they rarely get their representatives at public discussions concerning the renewal of public places. In rapidly growing cities, green spaces with a rich biodiversity are all likely to be perceived by city planners as places where nothing happens. Yet these green spaces create many benefits for residents, such as neutralising the effects of heat islands, reducing air pollution and providing natural conditioning, reducing stress levels and improving mental health. However, during the co-design workshops in the residential estate courtyards, you can learn from a young participant: ‘Birdwatching, bats watching, stargazing, having a station for the observation of nature, maybe a kind of hut made of plants. It might be a transparent construction to observe the environment while you are

inside’. Thus, at least by some young residents, green yards are perceived as eventful places – or places for encountering nature. To move further and enrich this human-centred perspective on urban spaces with a ‘more-than-human’ perspective, a transdisciplinary approach in cooperation with ecologists, geographers, historians, and artists must be developed as a part of both formal and non-formal research and planning practices.

From 2009 to 2019, the Laboratory for Urban Games and Research¹ launched a campaign to revitalise public places in cities, inviting residents of cities in Lithuania and abroad to pick an easily accessible public place which needed to be reanimated. In most cases, the participating cities and towns were led either by young people or by young mothers. The Laboratory proposed a simple revitalisation scenario: to gather every second Monday during the warm season in these chosen public places to make soap bubbles together. Additional local activities such as music performances, juggling, and drawing sessions have enriched or prolonged the life of this simple event in more than 30 towns and cities worldwide that participated. This project allowed us to collect data on the preferable characteristics of public places: informality (expressed in freedom to choose various positions in the place and initiate various small performances), greenness, and the possibility of choosing between sunny and shady places stood out as the most desirable characteristics. With a few exceptions, the most proposed places were green zones – parks and squares – which were more open for non-formal scenarios like sitting on the grass, arranging picnics, and hosting small performances, as well as allowing for participants to freely choose between joining

bigger groups of participants or staying aside. It was interesting to explore how young participants described their experience of just ‘doing nothing’ in public spaces – being with others, making soap bubbles, and maybe listening to or playing music.

In some cities, young people have initiated a prolongation of this periodic Monday event. For example in the Lithuanian city of Kaunas, young people started bringing a sofa to a public place and arranging Music Sofa evenings; a vivid example of how by micro-intervention, one enriches the public space with new scenarios. Spending an hour or two with strangers, friends, and family members in public spaces, practising leisure forms in a relaxed way, appeared to be a much-needed and inspiring experience and was worth organising for a decade. Green places where



FIGURE 3: Soap bubbles Mondays in Vilnius and other Lithuanian cities revealed open green public spaces’ cultural and recreational potential. Informal activities led by mothers and young people brought together various groups of residents. Source: Artūras Zukas, 2015.

‘nothing happens’ are friendly for various scenarios, including those connected with introverted behaviour.

To develop sensitivity towards micro-scenarios rooted in urban places, observing how people use the place and what species are already present there helps. A starting question for any co-design workshop should concern the actual characteristics of the place and the connections of all involved users to their actual environment. By attending various places daily, young people and children have clear ideas of what they value in these locations and what they would like to adjust – as well as what not to change in a place, as some places are already perfect.

Inviting young people to be observers and gather data on public places’ use can become a valuable exercise in participatory urban planning. It can promote mutual understanding between young people and urban planners, architects, and other groups of users. As it was put by one of my students after completing two-week field research in public spaces: As an architect, you suppose that people will use your design in this and that way, but when you observe actual use, you may be surprised, that what you considered to be convenient is not, and people find other ways of using what you have designed’.

Urban Mobility and Developing Cultural Routes

The city experience is shaped by the locations we live at and attend and the routes we take between these locations,

which all depend upon urban mobility. Therefore, another aspect of the geography of young people that needs to be added to participatory-oriented urban planning is mobility. The ‘young people’ category appears tricky, as it embraces a broad range of all possible mobility habits. Thus, the reachability of various locations in the city is a crucial topic with regard to the ability to socialise and grow independence at a young age. Urban walks, bicycling and skating, and public or private transport provide different perspectives on the city and the accessibility of its places. In turn, good reachability of urban places plays an essential part in developing and keeping the network of social contacts and constructing social identities.

In his book ‘Walkable City Rules’ Jeff Speck briefly examines the interconnection between the shift in the models of playgrounds as well as sports facilities and the growing demand for motorisation in the United States from the 1970s to the 1980s:

It’s a good guess that, in the 1970s, no child had access to such an abundant collection of sports facilities. Most of us had access to one or two soccer fields, baseball diamonds, and basketball courts. But they were in our neighbourhood, and we could walk to them on our own. . . . it allowed both us and our parents the space to do our own thing and grow as individuals in the world. Communities that want children who are both truly active and growing in independence will keep their sports facilities small and local.⁴

Despite the differences in the challenges and approaches in urban planning in European and American cities, the

principle of easy reachability of places is a universal rule in developing both socially vibrant places and creating conditions for young people to be independent users of the city and to grow their network of social contacts. In another chapter of the same book, Speck advocates for an holistic approach to planning local schools at a walkable distance, noting that when the entire social life becomes another experience in commuting, ‘neighbours remain strangers, and place-based community is less likely to form.’⁵ In this sense, the walkability of the neighbourhoods is a key to socially engaging urban localities; it provides the opportunity to make contact with other users of the place, and by overcoming anonymity and practising small talk, it helps to create a safe place and a place of mutual trust.

The promotion of walking encourages closer contact with the environment and understanding of its uniqueness and fragility. During my teaching at Vilnius TECH University in 2023–2024, I asked first-year students to draw mental maps of the faculty’s surroundings. After collecting 120 maps and studying them, I found a direct correlation between the modes of mobility and the level of detail of the maps. The maps of those who reached the faculty building by car were centred on parking, with road signs carefully noted and parking lots counted. The maps of those who reached the faculty by public transport pictured objects around their route in detail; however, the rest of the territory around the faculty remained mostly unattended, with some exceptions. Students who walked to the faculty depicted several lakes, trees, a cafe and leisure facilities around the faculty; some commented that during the longer breaks, they enjoyed the walks

exploring the environment and took opportunities after classes to vary their routes. The most detailed map was provided by a student who used to arrive by scooter, and who explained the amount of detail by saying that whenever possible he took every chance to explore the surroundings to and from the faculty. Walking as a basic type of mobility is fundamental in rediscovering the potential of districts and neighbourhoods and encouraging social contacts and, as a result, social cohesion. That's why cooperating with young people and children to design creative routes for walks in the districts is a task that can have many positive side effects. In 2012–2014, in cooperation with children and young people from Šnipiškės district in Vilnius, the Laboratory for Urban Games and Research launched a co-development of the mosaic route in the part of the district, historically known for its ceramic workshops. Each day over the course of a number of weeks, young people and children decorated the electric poles and facades of some buildings with ceramics, and in just half a year, the spontaneously created mosaic route started attracting excursions of new people who previously had never found a pretext for visiting the district. This growing interest had positive effects on the participating young creators. Their involvement in this creative activity that became a notable local attraction, helped raised the profile of this historic yet neglected area where many of these young creators had homes. In doing so, it encouraged some of the young creators to bring their classmates to the area and to successfully overcome bullying issues. This case also demonstrated that the walking cultural routes, created by simple means, can contribute to a positive shift in the image of the area. Developing walking routes deepens the understanding

of the potential even of those places we know well. Whilst teaching an Urban Studies course at Vilnius TECH University in 2019–2022, students were given a practical task to develop creative routes in the districts. They started by picking areas in the districts. Once chosen, they had to analyze how people used the area daily, the potential of the area, and to test solutions for cultural routes, encouraging people to vary their usual routes in their district. During the lockdown period, many students picked green areas close to their homes, such as parks, forests or systems of green yards within or surrounding blocks of flats. Students developed engaging creative formats to encourage walking, incorporating playful tasks, interesting facts and even small artistic interventions into the routes. Mobile applications, printed and online maps, cards and QR codes with tasks and information were used to gamify the walking routes.

Students reported that while preparing the tasks on-site, they expanded their knowledge of the areas which they previously thought they knew well. When it was possible, they involved local elderly people and children, along with institutions like schools and kindergartens in both the research phase and creative phase. As one of the students shared, 'My team found that the residents were eager to contribute to the activities in the neighbourhood, so we arranged the creative workshops before launching the route, proposing to create small artistic signs that were later placed along the route. Parents with small kids and several elderly ladies took part'. Small-scale adjustments in the neighbourhoods that target all age groups and are initiated by young people were usually met positively and strengthened intergenerational cooperation in the

districts and neighbourhoods. As another student pointed out, reflecting on her creative experience in the district, ‘Senior people kept telling me they are too old for the quest game, but were very nice to me, sharing their knowledge about the district’. Besides the experience of being a catalyst of social contacts in the neighbourhoods, this kind of simple task for young people – to create and encourage other people to test a new walking route – may contribute to the positive image of the districts as walkable and exciting places, where everyone can get recreational experience which in turn contributes to the well-being of various age groups.

Articulated perspectives of young people on their experience of public places and mobility can significantly enrich urban planning practices. In horizontal participatory processes, open creative initiatives such as placemaking actions provide opportunities to understand and reflect on the spatial behaviors, needs, and visions of young people. Recognizing children and young people as co-designers we can reimagine public spaces and ensure that community-driven initiatives grow, evolve, and sustain their impact into the future.

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Rethinking Placemaking

A Critical Approach for Building Trust and Place in Urban Planning and Design

Roland Krebs
and Hans Karssenber

The *New Leipzig Charter — The Transformative Power of Cities for the Common Good*, presented by the European Union in 2020, proposes a place-based approach for the development of places through an integrated framework.¹ In this new approach, urban planning and creating public spaces are no longer seen as top-down processes for shaping cities based only on predefined goals set in city halls. In recent years, participatory and dialogue-led approaches have become essential for the co-creation of places and areas together with communities. The place-based approach advocates combining long term transition goals with short term immediate local action. This is a more iterative and co-created approach, that allows for many influences, while keeping an eye on the long-term goal. The immediate action makes the long-term vision concrete and helps to build the trust in the networks of co-creation to test, learn, and then based on this to co-create bolder actions together – rather than only working on long-term, rigid planning schemes. Urban experiments drive the shared work on these transitions, bringing placemaking into focus.²

Placemaking is both a strategy and a process of co-creation that focuses on enhancing social and economic well-being, as well as the overall quality of life.³ It recognizes that human needs for prosperity, sociability, and security are essential to counter feelings of alienation. As a multifaceted approach to urban development, placemaking emphasizes the creation of meaningful places through active community involvement. It draws on local knowledge, culture, and the unique characteristics of a place to design environments that reflect the needs and desires of the people who live, work, and interact there.

The core idea behind placemaking is to empower local communities to be active participants in shaping the public spaces they inhabit, fostering a sense of ownership and belonging.

Placemaking refers to the collaborative efforts to transform public spaces into vibrant, inclusive areas that foster social connections. Trustmaking, on the other hand, focuses on building relationships and trust between citizen groups, youth, elderly, and society in general with planners, and authorities. We believe that both concepts work hand in hand; however, we must carefully consider who is driving these efforts.

Are the placemakers the usual suspects – those who are already vocal but may not truly represent the majority’s needs and challenges? In this context, the intersections of placemaking and trustmaking within urban planning and public space creation are worth examining in order to understand how these approaches contribute to sustainable cities and inclusive environments.⁴ How can we, as architects, urban planners, sociologists, social designers, economists, cultural activists, and all those who consider themselves placemakers, foster a more balanced urban development that creates usable, vibrant, and inclusive public spaces for everyone?

How the City of Vienna Uses Placemaking as a Planning Tool

To illustrate this relationship between Placemaking and Trustmaking, let’s explore a number of case studies from

Vienna. In 2020, as part of the practitioner-led JPI project called *PlaceCity*⁵, (which is a predecessor of the *Trustmaking* and *InclusiveCity* projects), the project partners conducted research on placemakers in Vienna. The investigation focused on identifying who was engaged in placemaking in Vienna at this moment, what the leadership structure looked like, and where placemakers sourced their funding. The findings showed that funding for placemaking initiatives, either directly or indirectly, typically comes from various departments of the City of Vienna. Several funding schemes exist to encourage placemakers to take action, sometimes through support from, and funding provided by, local organizations such as *Lokale Agenda 21* offices, *Grätzloase*, along with other funding opportunities.⁶

In Vienna, the term placemaking is not widely known or commonly used. However, the research revealed that there are many placemakers in the city – though they may not identify as such – who have started inspiring projects in public spaces which the city is supporting and initiating. Through interviews with key placemakers and enablers of placemaking in Vienna, the research sought to understand what placemaking means to them and what their main goals are. The stakeholder map below illustrates the analysed connections between the placemakers, their funders, enablers, and the services and networks they engage with.

Overall, it became evident that there is a dense network of placemakers in Vienna. The map underscores the importance of the City of Vienna in enabling placemaking, showing that the city is already using placemaking as a

tool for urban regeneration and public engagement in order to work on complex transitions such as greening the city, climate change adaptation and mobility shift. Most of the funding programmes and associations are funded by the City of Vienna, through entities such as the municipal department for cultural affairs, GB* *Gebietsbetreuung Stadterneuerung* (Vienna Urban Renewal and Management), the urban development department, among others. The city not only provides financial support to placemakers but has also initiated two key programmes – Grätzloase and the Lokale Agenda 21 offices in Vienna, as well as *Wien gibt Raum* to name just a few. Those entities act as intermediaries and enablers between bottom-up initiatives and municipal institutions.

As a result of the City of Vienna's dominant role in funding the placemakers, most practitioners and activists depend on public funding along with its conditions, which means there is a certain guidance of placemaking towards city-related projects. This also demonstrates how placemaking can be integrated into planning processes by activating all social groups, involving them in dialogue, and fostering a sense of place, identity, and ownership. It is about transforming spaces into places and building trust among stakeholders, especially between planners and citizens.

Another two other key elements are also highlighted here. First, placemaking is not necessarily always a bottom-up process. Long-term transitions will work better if they are not solely top-down, as this can generate unnecessary resistance. Co-creation – combining the bottom-up energy of local initiatives with the top-down long-term

investments and strategies – is crucial for building trust. STIPO has coined this approach as 'middle-up-down': bringing both bottom-up and top-down forces together at the same table, where each brings different kinds of expertise and has an equal voice.

Second, placemaking involves creating short-term changes that demonstrate the potential for long-term transitions. It starts with small-scale investments aimed at learning. This approach lowers the threshold for the fear of failure since large sums of money are not invested upfront. By testing ideas in practice, trust is built as stakeholders see that sharing ideas leads to real change. For stakeholders from the community, trust is built by doing more than only talking. Testing to see what works, then learning from what eventually went wrong or went well, and then building on that to co-create larger investments, that is how transitions can be accelerated. Placemaking and trustmaking go hand in hand here.

InclusiveCity and the Critical Approach of Placemaking

Another example regarding the use of placemaking in the urban development process is the *Driving Urban Transition (DUT)* project *InclusiveCity – Critical Placemaking for Inclusive Cities*.⁷ *InclusiveCity* aims to combine placemaking and the 15-minute city concept through the lens of social inclusion and diversity. Building on the results of the JPI Urban Europe project *PlaceCity*, the project adopts an integrated approach that considers the social, economic, and environmental impacts of placemaking. It develops

a set of tools, methods, and policies to support the multi-generational and gender-inclusive use of public spaces, while also ensuring access to natural assets, such as the urban waterfronts. At the same time, the project seeks to protect vulnerable groups and activities from the negative effects of public space improvements, such as gentrification, touristification, and commercialization.

One significant issue that has emerged is the excessive commercialization of public spaces through placemaking efforts led by businesses, who have received concessions from the public sector to activate areas such as the Donaukanal (in English: Danube Channel) in the city centre. A public space manual designed by the architects Gabu Heindl and Susan Kraupp had the intention to activate and revitalize a grey, underutilized and unsafe Donaukanal with defined zones for enabling spaces, green area and flexible art-spaces for people – and business – led placemaking as a concession of public spaces to commercial use and cultural activities.



FIGURE 1: Public events to activate a street in the 21st district of Vienna as part of a placemaking strategy to regenerate public spaces in Vienna. Source: superwien 2021.

While the municipal manual for the Donaukanal was successful in its initial stage, today we observe an overuse of public space occupied by restaurants and bars.

InclusiveCity aims to better understand who the users of these public spaces are, who has economic interests in commercializing them, and how placemaking can be regulated by public policies. There is a clear conflict between the needs of residents and neighbours, those seeking accessible public spaces, and the customers of restaurants and bars. The body of knowledge of placemaking has always stressed the importance of not letting a place be dominated by one user group, but for it to cater for daily activities for people of all ages, genders, cultures and wallets. It is however important to be aware that all kinds of processes of push-out are present, and to actively take an approach of diversity requires a concentrated effort from all involved. To create a more democratic approach to placemaking as a tool for revitalizing underused public spaces, it is essential to provide guidance and to regulate social behaviour in these areas. Temporary uses of public space through placemaking can sometimes spiral out of control and lead to conflicts. A strong example of community-led placemaking in the context of the Donaukanal is *Sophiengarten*, a community garden located along the river, which demonstrates a more balanced and inclusive approach to activating public space.

The Placemaking Europe Toolbox

Both of the aforementioned applied research projects, *PlaceCity* and *InclusiveCity*, were developed within the

framework of *Placemaking Europe* and have deepened the knowledge base of Placemaking Europe. Placemaking Europe started as an NGO in 2017, and is now a network of more than 13,000 people across every country in Europe, working together to accelerate placemaking as a means of creating healthy, inclusive communities. It connects practitioners, academics, community leaders, market actors, and policymakers throughout Europe in the fields of placemaking, public space, social life, human scale, and the city at eye level. At its core is community engagement with placemakers through its annual conference, *Placemaking Week Europe*.

The concept of placemaking was pioneered in the US by William H. Whyte, Fred Kent, Kathy Madden and many others. It has a body of knowledge stemming from urban sociology and built up since the 1960s. Despite this, in most parts of Europe, the concept was less known but has caught on more in recent years, partially thanks to the advocacy work and networking of Placemaking Europe. However, participants quickly felt the need to get past the initial awareness, and the why, and to deepen the knowledge of the how. This led Placemaking Europe, with the help of many others, to start to develop a toolbox for placemaking. To ensure that people are included and involved in the planning process, the tools are essential for enabling community participation. The Placemaking Europe Toolbox is an open-source database of tools that explore how placemaking can be integrated into the planning process.⁸

Taking a few co-creation tools from the toolbox, we like to highlight the Place Game, originally developed by Project for Public Spaces in the US, it is an effective tool



FIGURE 2: Placemaking action during the participatory process of the transformation of the Julius-Tandler-Platz in Vienna. Source: superwien 2023.



FIGURE 3: The urban regeneration of the Bernardgasse in the 7th district of Vienna. Source: superwien 2024.

for stakeholder inclusion through a playful approach. The Place Game involves rating public spaces using various observation indicators, such as cleanliness, safety, and usability, among others. The second part of the game asks participants to create short and long-term scenarios for these spaces identifying potential pioneers and the social groups to be addressed. In a group of diverse stakeholders, the results will be discussed and will lead to a co-creative vision of a place. Another tool is the *Open Call*, developed during the *PlaceCity* project. The *Open Call* is a tool for the joint appropriation and design of public spaces, which mobilizes the local community to engage. The temporary activation of public spaces (so called enabling spots) within the framework of an *Open Call* allows residents to test different uses of the space without taking risks, encouraging the community to make these spaces their own. Over time, the community-led activities including events and construction projects initiated by the *Open Call* can contribute to strengthening the neighbourhood. Moreover, by engaging with public spaces, awareness of one's own living environment is heightened.

The *Florum* is another tool developed during the *PlaceCity* project. It began with the idea of creating a set of mobile furniture in a public park next to a library in the 21st district of Vienna, which would then be used for small events, such as public lectures or workshops. This idea evolved into a more flexible and mobile furniture system designed for the entire neighbourhood. As the owner of the furniture, the public library not only became a user of the furniture but also acted as a platform to lend it to neighbours and assist them in organizing their events. In this way, the library

played a lead role in activating the neighbourhood and served as a platform for fostering a lively community.

The Toolbox is a collection of curated placemaking resources for all to access, learn from, and practice. The Placemaking Europe Toolbox currently holds 48 tools like these, each with a step-by-step manual. There are tools in three categories:

■ *How to create better places,
How to engage the community, and
How to make placemaking long lasting.*

Each tool is accessible through a downloadable digital manual or booklet. All of the materials are open-source, and have been published under the Creative Commons for all to share and freely work upon, in order to grow the impact through placemaking.

Placemaking as Part of the Planning Process

How are these tools used in practice? At the core of placemaking, the idea of doing things together and building trust among stakeholders always stands out. In planning projects, these tools and methods can be used to involve people in the process, uncover valuable insights, and inform decision-making. Placemaking bridges the gap between planners and the public, fostering collaboration and mutual understanding, providing a useful tool in the planning process, such as the urban regeneration of parks, squares, and design of public spaces in general.

We have explored many ways to involve people in the planning dialogue and have used placemaking tools during co-creation processes in public participation efforts.⁹ One of the pressing challenges in urban development is transforming public spaces into inclusive areas for all; while also ensuring they are climate resilient. The City of Vienna is currently upgrading a significant number of squares and streets across the city. We would like to highlight two examples of how placemaking tools supported the co-creation process through on-site actions in public spaces.

The first example is the redesign of Julius-Tandler-Platz, located in the 9th district of Vienna. The strategy for the redesign includes creating a shared space and implementing traffic-calming measures. During the planning process, we focused on engaging with the public through ad-hoc encounters on three different days of the week. A pop-up participation studio was set up in the public space, where we engaged passersby in various participatory activities, including emotional mapping, scenario building with stickers, and a Goals-Grid analysis. Additionally, three Place Games were conducted with girls, boys, and mixed youth groups. Through this process, a clear concept and set of goals for the square were developed in a co-creative manner. This concept was then the basis of the final landscape design. The construction of the new square with 46 new trees is about to begin in early 2025.

The second example is the participatory transformation of Bernardgasse, a narrow 10 metre wide street characterized by Biedermeier buildings and small-scale facades.

Despite its charm, the street, approximately 500 metres long, had 140 parking spaces and minimal sidewalks, making it difficult for pedestrians to use. Typical for Vienna, the street had no trees and became a heat island during the summer months. Through the research project *GLARA*¹⁰, we began the transformation process with stakeholder mapping and observations of how people used the public space.¹¹ We then used the *Florum* project (from *PlaceCity*, see above) to temporarily activate two parking spaces with our mobile placemaking and planning tool. Additionally, we used augmented reality tools for real-time impact assessments and microclimate simulations, allowing people to engage with the participatory process through their mobile devices. The planning process resulted in the successful implementation of a shared space, free of parking spaces for cars, with seating elements and 37 new XL-sized trees.

Transdisciplinary Approaches and the Integrated Planning Approach

Placemaking in modern urban planning requires a transdisciplinary approach, one that integrates knowledge and expertise from various fields such as urban design, sociology, ecology, economics, health, and others. By involving a diverse range of experts and community members, this approach promotes holistic thinking, which is crucial for creating spaces that meet both human and environmental needs. The participatory process in placemaking is not about information and consultation, but about delegating local power and trust to citizens.¹² By combining different perspectives, placemakers can

develop solutions that are sustainable and that address social, environmental, and economic issues. Planners should focus on moderating and facilitating the process in the initial stage, rather than imposing their own ideas. It is essential to collect input from a wide array of stakeholders from throughout the community, to foster cooperation across sectors, which is key to integrated urban planning.¹³ Creative solutions often do not emerge within siloed professions, which is why openness in the planning processes is important.

We have recently seen this put into practice again during the two-year peer-to-peer learning programme called Cities in Placemaking that Placemaking Europe set up. This programme with 13 cities throughout Europe, and four partners, was set up to help embed the values of placemaking into the entire municipal system. These cities use the knowledge and tools of placemaking to break through silos, and provide a bridge between communities and municipal departments – ‘middle-up-down’.

Trust and Placemaking: Paving the Way to Inclusivity

As we have seen in the analysis of exemplary practice of placemakers in Vienna, placemaking triggers transformative processes that empower communities, foster collaboration, and create urban spaces reflecting the needs of all residents. Cities can make use of the civic engagement of placemakers, to initiate new projects for testing and to develop novel ideas through the place-based

approach. In addition, the visioning and design process of urban planning, architecture or public space regeneration projects can all benefit from the use of placemaking.

By engaging in co-creation, utilizing urban living labs, incorporating green infrastructure, and adopting transdisciplinary approaches, urban planners can build public spaces, neighbourhoods and new districts that are not only sustainable but also equitable and inclusive. Ultimately, the integration of trust into the urban planning process – through transparency, accountability, and genuine community engagement – is what allows placemaking to thrive. In the rapidly evolving landscape of urban development, it is the commitment to trust, collaboration, and shared goals that will ensure the success of placemaking initiatives and the creation of cities that belong to their inhabitants.

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Reframing Urban Living Labs

*A Platform for
Cultivating Trust
between Different
Stakeholders*

Paulina Budrytė

Urban Living Lab (ULL) is a participatory and experimental approach to urban planning and innovation, focusing on real-time testing and learning from social and technical innovations in urban settings.¹ Hence, ULLs often contribute to sustainable urban development and are good practices for participatory decision-making. Furthermore, ULLs are intended to design, demonstrate, and learn about the effects of urban interventions in real-time, providing opportunities to translate new ideas into practice and fostering innovative city systems from a circular economy perspective.²

Moreover, ULLs could be considered public forums where local governance institutions and experts interact with local communities in order to look for solutions for existing problems, establish prevention measures, and discuss the future development of the place.³ They are considered an innovative approach. As they bring different stakeholders together and establish a safe environment, it becomes easier to innovate and later implement ideas in a creative way. Additionally, ULLs are user-centric as well. Hence, the tools most often applied are various co-creation and co-production activities, and in doing so, they encourage a mood of innovation and creativity. According to scientific literature there are several contextual considerations to have in mind in order to have a successful ULL. The key factors based on the vast research body are provided in the figure below.



Shared goals
Openness and flexibility
Digital and physical spaces
User involvement and co-creation
Supporting governance structure and processes
Engagement of public institutions

FIGURE 1: Key factors of successful ULL

Furthermore, ULLs could also bring a few more benefits, one being an aim to include marginalised communities. Since ULLs often investigate political issues, it could be argued, that ULLs foster local democracy and social inclusions and establish trust amongst participants and institutions, which they represent.⁴ Another benefit is an example from the climate resilience field, which showed immense possibilities to mainstream and upscale positively impacting actions via ULLs.⁵ So, ULLs could be a helpful tool to replicate the tested actions amongst other communities as well as within the same community. In summary, the key components of ULLs comprise of active stakeholder inclusion, experimentation and learning, strong contextual considerations, participation and user involvement, leadership and ownership, and reflection. These components also contribute to sustainable urban development by fostering innovative city systems and urban transformative capacities. However, the implementation of ULLs could be challenged by the under-representation of social agents and the difficulty of navigating existing legal frameworks, while best practices for evaluating their effectiveness involve the use of structured evaluation tools.

The Main Principles of Urban Living Labs

The main principles of ULLs for youth inclusion in the urban planning practices could be grouped as:

1. Involvement is a must. As has been emphasized many times, involvement is one of the key principles of any successful ULL, and ULLs will frequently prioritise active involvement. Therefore, the participatory approach ensures that all voices are included in the dialogue and respected. As ULLs facilitate early-stage stakeholder engagement, they help to mitigate uncertainties and enhance adaptability, resulting in greater agility and resilience of projects. Additionally, ULLs promote ongoing stakeholder dialogue throughout all project stages, fostering new stakeholder relationships within the developed partnerships. ULLs provide opportunities for youth to adapt to technology and engage in collaborative processes; processes that may not yet have become widespread. That is why ULLs have the potential to serve as a powerful tool for building urban transformative capacities by providing a platform for local actors to develop their skills, knowledge, and networks for intersectoral cooperation, thus empowering and engaging youth in urban planning activities.
2. Experimentation and Learning. ULLs serve as experimental environments where new ideas and solutions can be tested and refined. This principle allows for the continuous learning and adaptation

of strategies that better meet the needs of youth in urban settings. Simultaneously, ULLs empower local communities by actively involving them in urban development processes. Such empowerment fosters a sense of ownership and trust as stakeholders feel their voices are heard and valued.

3. **Open innovation and co-creation practices.** ULLs leverage open innovation and co-creation methodologies to develop urban services. This approach encourages the active participation of youth in the idealization and implementation of urban projects, fostering a sense of ownership and engagement.
4. **Capacity building.** It has been observed many times how valuable ULLs could be in building the capacities of individuals and communities, enabling them to become agents of change. It also involves providing youth with the skills, knowledge, and opportunities to actively participate in urban transformation processes.
5. **Co-creation and collaboration.** ULLs bring together diverse stakeholders to co-create and test innovative solutions in a collaborative environment. Furthermore, the participatory approach fosters mutual understanding and trust among participants by involving them directly in the decision-making and problem-solving processes.
6. **Collaborative governance.** As mentioned above, ULLs foster a collaborative approach to urban

governance and bring together various stakeholders, such as local authorities, researchers, businesses, and citizens, including local youth. This multi-actor collaboration is crucial for creating inclusive urban environments that cater to the needs of youth. Additionally, ULLs serve as experimental governance platforms that offer creative solutions to urban problems by involving various stakeholders, including youth, in decision-making and collaboration processes.

7. **Context is king.** ULLs are context-specific and tailored to the unique needs and characteristics of the local environment. This principle ensures that the solutions developed are relevant and effective for youth in that particular urban area. Further, the geographic embeddedness of the project implementation emphasises their connection to the specific place, which is the focus of ULL.

So, ULLs are innovative frameworks in urban planning that emphasise participation, experimentation, and co-creation to address various urban challenges. By adhering to the listed above principles, ULLs can effectively promote youth inclusion in urban planning, ensuring that young people are not only considered but are active contributors to the development of their urban environments.

Why Urban Living Labs are a Suitable Format for Cultivating Trust Between Different Stakeholders

ULLs are a suitable format due to several key characteristics, implementation principles and opportunities. Firstly, ULLs bring together various stakeholders, such as citizens, researchers, businesses, and policymakers, to co-create and test innovative solutions for urban developments, fostering a collaborative and participatory approach to urban solutions. This, in turn, directly creates a network of people working on particular issues. Prior research has shown that early-stage stakeholder engagement, reducing uncertainties and enhancing adaptability, resulted in greater agility and resilience of projects, particularly amid evolving territorial public actions and disruptions.⁶

Additionally, ULLs offer a platform for local actors to develop their skills, knowledge, and networks for intersectoral cooperation, creating opportunities for experimentation and experiential learning, thus empowering local communities and fostering a culture of shared foresight and mutual learning.⁷ Furthermore, some ULLs are user-driven innovation environments facilitating active engagement aimed at urban transformation.⁸ Such transformation is achieved by establishing a culture of foresight and mutual learning and providing a platform for experimentation and experiential learning. Although prior research disclosed that trust-building among stakeholders is crucial to enhancing the potential of ULLs in practice, it still needs

further research into underexplored theories and models of ULLs, power dynamics, and their self-sustaining character. Additionally, ULLs also face challenges that need to be addressed to fully realise their potential for trust-building. Here, different technologies could be applied to encourage trust-building among various stakeholders.

Some Considerations Before Launching an Urban Living Lab

Before initiating an ULL, it is critical to understand the specific context in which it will operate. This involves identifying local needs and challenges through a thorough analysis of socio-economic, cultural, and environmental dynamics. Understanding the priorities and aspirations of diverse groups, is essential to ensure the ULL addresses pressing issues and fosters inclusive participation. Stakeholder mapping plays a pivotal role in this preparatory phase, as it identifies the key actors – such as local governments, community organizations, businesses, and academia – and evaluates their roles, interests, and potential contributions. Furthermore, recognizing existing trust levels among stakeholders and the community is vital for designing engagement strategies that prioritize transparency, respect, and co-creation.

Equally important is assessing the broader institutional and spatial frameworks in which the ULL will operate. This includes an understanding of relevant policy and legal national strategies such as climate action plans or

youth engagement initiatives. We had included here a summarized list of criteria to consider before starting any ULL:

1. **Governance and management structure:** Establish a clear governance and management structure to ensure smooth operations and accountability.
2. **Financing models:** Secure diverse and sustainable financing models to support long-term projects and initiatives.
3. **Stakeholder engagement:** Foster strong partnerships with stakeholders, including public institutions, to ensure broad support and collaboration and engage citizens actively through various participation methods to enhance social inclusion and ensure the ULL addresses local needs.
4. **Regulatory and policy support:** Implement a regulatory ‘sandbox system’, to facilitate innovation and experimentation within the urban context through e.g. reducing regulatory or bureaucratic requirements during the testing phase.
5. **Educational programmes:** Develop educational programmes to strengthen the capabilities of participants and ensure they are well-informed and empowered.
6. **Urban context and local demands:** Tailor the ULL to the specific urban context and local demands to ensure relevance and effectiveness.

7. **Technology and infrastructure:** Utilize innovative I.C.T. solutions to visualize and understand the impacts of proposed interventions, making them more accessible to the public.
8. **Iterative processes and adaptability:** Embrace iterative processes and adaptability to refine and improve interventions based on real-time feedback and changing conditions.
9. **Success criteria and monitoring:** Define clear success criteria and establish frameworks for measuring and monitoring the effectiveness of the ULL.

In summary, launching ULLs requires careful consideration of key components, addressing challenges such as trust-building and overcoming barriers, and leveraging the benefits of ULLs for sustainable urban development. Best practices involve open innovation, community engagement, and the implementation of various participation methods to ensure success.⁹ However, it is important to underline that this list is not a definitive list and should be elaborated and added to as newer research and experiences bring new ideas forward for consideration.

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Strengthening Capabilities

Generating Trust in Inclusive Planning Processes

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Introduction

While participatory practices like placemaking initiatives, co-creation, and community engagement are not new to city-making, they are still frequently criticized. Scholars often report participatory practices that are not inclusive of the affected communities, that lack meaningful decision-making opportunities, or that remain merely tokenistic.¹ Additionally, influenced by NIMBYism², urban professionals do not always value direct citizen participation and view it as a risk for delays in development projects.³

Behind the numerous discussions on how participation is practically organized in city planning lies a fundamental question: what is needed to establish meaningful relationships between professionals and citizens, especially when young, marginalized people are involved? In this contribution, we approach this question by embarking on Amartya Sen's Capability Approach (CA) that helps to specify the fundamental means and ends of participatory practices in spatial planning.

In the following, we first discuss the theoretical contribution of the Capability Approach to spatial planning. We then discuss how we applied the CA in a Horizon 2020 participatory research project, and its relationship with trust-building. The project applies a set of strategies promoting capacity and trust-building before actual co-creation can take place. We conclude the contribution by emphasizing that trust is a foundational precondition for inclusive participatory planning practices

inspired by the Capability Approach, and simultaneously, that enhanced trust can be seen as a positive capability outcome that enlarges young people's agency in spatial decision-making processes.

A Capability Approach to Social Justice in Spatial Planning

The Capability Approach is a well-known normative framework that articulates a vision of social justice, focusing on a person's freedom to live a worthy and dignified life.⁴ Originating from political economics, human development, and political philosophy, it has influenced various disciplines, including recent urban debates that advocate for more just, inclusive, and human-centred cities⁵. Furthermore, Susan Fainstein⁶ identifies the Capability Approach as a valuable tool for addressing her three dimensions of The Just City – diversity, democracy, and equity – and for devising rules that can guide the evaluation of urban policy.

Ideas on social justice in urban discourses are generously fuelled via critical urban theory on for example the Right to the City developed by Henri Lefebvre⁷ and David Harvey⁸, and further urban debates on spatial justice⁹, yet the Capability Approach puts a slightly different emphasis to the question of justice. While Harvey's discourse moved towards the existence of a collective 'right to the city' and focuses on how the suppressed can undertake collective action to reclaim power in society¹⁰, the Capability Approach focuses on

what principles or rules of coexistence in society could ensure equal capabilities of different individual persons. It is needed to look at real-life situations, Sen argues, because formally distributed goods, rights and liberties do not necessarily do anything yet for what people experience in real life.¹¹ For example: a person is formally entitled to vote but does not exercise this right because she believes that her vote will not lead to any impact. As a result, this person may experience less opportunity to be heard and to feel part of society than others. In line with this logic, a researcher or policymaker that operates from a capability-perspective is most concerned with defining whose opportunities are more marginalized than others, what personal, social or structural hindrances cause those inequalities, and how they can be overcome.

Acknowledging Human Diversity, Contextual Structures and Agency

From a spatial justice perspective, impartially distributed spatial resources – think of public spaces, affordable housing or public amenities such as libraries or schools – that are equally available to everyone may be seen as a way to achieve just outcomes. Paradoxically, however, as contemporary political scientists argue, equal provision of such resources to the collective may, in fact, support inequalities, or in a worse case, repression of certain groups. As pointed out by Nussbaum¹² 'individuals need differing levels of resources if they are to come up to the same level of capability to function'. Recognizing

differences between people rather than seeing civic actors as universal and unified thus implies that certain groups may be treated differently in public policy than others if this leads to more just outcomes.

According to Sen¹³, focusing on resources as evaluative space in assessments would not be fair because equality of resources does not automatically lead to equality of capability. For instance, a disabled person might not have the same access to public transport as an abled person, or two children in the same neighbourhood might not have the same career opportunities because they grow up in different families. Sen¹⁴ argues that each person has a unique set of conversion factors that influence how means lead to ends. Conversion factors can refer to personal heterogeneities, environmental diversities, variations in social climate, differences in relational perspectives and distribution within the family, or any other structures that a person relates to. Because the Capability Approach incorporates many circumstances from a person's real life, it is therefore sensitive to structures and situations that may produce social injustices in daily life. Finally, the Capability Approach puts a strong emphasis on people's freedom to choose and to act. It is not about what people eventually *do in life*, but about the factual freedoms they have to *choose what to do*. A well-known example that Sen uses to illustrate this, is the situation of two people who do not eat. Whereas the first person may suffer from injustice (and thus capability deprivation) because of starvation, the second may not be deprived at all if they make a deliberate choice to fast for religious or political reasons. The Capability Approach therefore also has a strong account of agency and self-determination. Since human beings are

able to reason for themselves, and even for the collective good, Sen argues, capability does not only refer to a person's level of well-being but also to a person's development towards their own values and goals.

UPLIFT: Capabilities in a Participatory Research Project in Amsterdam

The human centred perspective of the Capability Approach was the theoretical backdrop of UPLIFT, a participatory youth research project carried out between 2020 and 2023.¹⁴ UPLIFT aimed to understand the patterns of inequality across Europe, focusing on young people, and to explore how their voices can be put at the centre of youth policy. Our core assumption in the project was that individuals need different levels of resources to achieve the same level of capability. This implies that certain groups may require tailored approaches in public policy to attain more effective and equitable outcomes. Through interviews and focus group discussions with young people, the project initially aimed to explore how they experience inequalities in the housing market, job market, and education system. Following this, young people and institutional stakeholders participated in a co-creation process to formulate policy solutions for the identified inequalities, with careful consideration of the varying capabilities within the target group of young people. The aim was for young people to actively contribute to policies that directly impact their capabilities and life chances. Policies tend to be more effective when they are tailored to the specific needs of the groups they aim to support.

Listening to and actively involving these recipients is essential to designing such policies. In UPLIFT, young people’s perspectives are represented through Youth Boards – inclusive and representative groups that are structurally involved in the co-creation process. Together with institutional stakeholders, the Youth Board co-creates and agrees on a shared Reflexive Policy Agenda, which outlines proposed policy interventions under the stakeholders’ competencies to address the challenges young people face.

This approach, however, depends on establishing trust among the various actors involved. Our research revealed that young people across the European countries we studied – particularly those who are more socio-economically vulnerable or come from more marginalized communities – tend to have relatively high levels of mistrust in institutions, which they perceive as disconnected from their life experiences. Consequently,



FIGURE 1: Young people in one of the co-creation sessions in Amsterdam. Source: UPLIFT.

the policy co-creation processes faced a challenging beginning. Before meaningful discussions about the content could begin, it was essential to establish trust and a safe and respectful space for interaction.

Trust-building Strategies in the UPLIFT Project

This section addresses the strategies that were developed in the UPLIFT project to meet these preconditions for meaningful participation.

1. Establishing trust and building capacity within the Youth Board: A successful Youth Board depends on trust, respect, safety, and cohesion among its members. Without these elements, members may limit themselves to non-controversial opinions, hindering the co-creation process. To build trust and cohesion, icebreakers, excursions, and social events can be organized and tailored to the needs and interests of the members before the co-creation activities begin. Just as trust-building is essential, capacity-building is also key to a successful co-creation process. Youth Board members may need to develop skills in communication, listening, presentation, and reflection, as well as gain a solid understanding of the ‘system world’ of policies and institutions. Acquiring these skills and knowledge will support them throughout the co-creation process and provide lasting benefits in their personal lives.

2. **Trust and capacity-building within the group of institutional stakeholders:** When multiple institutional stakeholders are involved in the co-creation process, it's important for them to take time to get to know one another's competencies and objectives before the actual co-creation activities begin. This helps build mutual trust among them. Capacity-building activities can run in parallel and contribute to the trust-building process. To make the co-creation process successful, policymakers and professionals may need to change their mindset and become more open to the opinions and ideas of young people, especially if they have always worked in a top-down manner. Training and expectation management sessions may be helpful in this regard.
3. **Establishing trust between young people and institutional stakeholders:** Managing expectations and clarifying communication between policymakers and young people is essential at the onset of a policy co-creation process, particularly in the capacity-building stage – when Youth Board members and institutional stakeholders meet in separate sessions. Young people should understand what to expect from institutional partners, while institutions must recognize that young participants are there to be heard and to seek solutions to their challenges – not merely to generate innovative ideas for institutional use.

Having a so-called 'youth facilitator' can be beneficial in bridging the gap between the Youth Board and institutional stakeholders, as well as in building trust

among Youth Board members. This facilitator, ideally from the same age group as the Youth Board members, should understand both the language and culture of young people and those of the institutional stakeholders. Youth facilitators can serve as liaisons between the two groups, facilitating communication and collaboration within and outside joint co-creation meetings, throughout all phases of the co-creation process.

Core moments in the co-creation process involve joint sessions where Youth Board members and institutional stakeholders exchange ideas. These interactions can be challenging due to the power imbalance between the groups. To ensure young people's voices are heard, it is important to have neutral moderators who are objective and do not have a direct stake in policymaking or implementation. Additionally, to prevent institutional stakeholders from dominating discussions, moderators can ask them to apply a listening mode, where they simply listen to the Youth Board's experiences and proposals without any immediate reaction. Finally, in their feedback to the Youth Board, institutional stakeholders may cite the difficulty of changing current systems and policies ('the system is like this, these are the rules'). However, this should not be an excuse for inaction. Even small, subtle changes – such as altering professional attitudes or providing better information – can have a significant positive impact on young people's capabilities and overall trust in institutions.

Trust: A Necessary Precondition for Capability-based Participatory Planning

From a capability perspective, participatory practices should recognize and respect the diverse perceptions of citizens in urban areas. The Capability Approach emphasizes the need for a deep, localized understanding of people's personal, social, and environmental situations, while also highlighting each individual's agency to express their needs and engage in urban development processes. Guided by these principles, the ultimate goal of participatory approaches should be to enhance people's capabilities and agency in shaping urban or policy development.

However, a participatory process inspired on the capability approach involving both policymakers and policy recipients can only yield fruitful results if there is sufficient trust – both between the policy recipients and policymakers, and within each group. If such trust is lacking, trust-building strategies must be implemented before the actual co-creation process begins, as trust is a necessary precondition if progress is to be made. From the perspective of the Capability Approach, trust can be seen as an important conversion factor, required to transform the resources invested in the participation process into valuable enhancements of capabilities and functionings.

Participatory practices can also function as a means to strengthen trustworthy partnership relations. This is especially so for marginalized youth not familiar with participatory decision-making processes. For them,

the feeling of being recognized, able to trust others, and of experiencing agency can be a significant boost to their personal development. As the UPLIFT project showcased, building trust between youth and institutions may be just as important in a co-creation project as the eventual policy or urban development interventions that come out of it.

We therefore conclude this contribution by stating that successful trust-building processes – that go beyond tokenism and lead to meaningful relationships between institutions, professionals and citizens – are crucial in youth development and should be considered an inherent goal of participatory practice in spatial planning itself.

This contribution is based on two previously published texts: the dissertation “Developing Places for Human Capabilities – governing social sustainability goals into urban development projects”¹⁶ and deliverable 4.8 of the UPLIFT Horizon 2020 project.¹⁷

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The project analyzes existing data to identify factors contributing to socio-economic inequality, particularly in housing, education, and employment, across 16 urban areas in Europe. In eight of these areas, partners conduct further research through interviews and workshops with young people to investigate their personal experiences of inequality. In four cities – Amsterdam (The Netherlands), Barakaldo (Spain), Sfântu Gheorghe (Romania)
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- In collaboration with institutional stakeholders, young people in these four cities design potential policy solutions to address their inequality experiences. Through this so-called reflexive policymaking process, UPLIFT aims to create a new, sustainable, and participatory co-creation model where young people actively contribute to policies that directly impact their capabilities and life chances.

Corners, Stages, Niches

How Young People Appropriate and Engage in Urban Spaces and the Reactions They Provoke

Christian Reutlinger

Urban squares are popular places for young people to spend time, and they use these spaces in different ways: to chill out (relax and meet each other), to retreat or to put themselves on show. When young people appropriate places as meeting points and linking activities, they give these places their own socio-spatial meanings. The first part of this contribution uses a case study to illustrate the different socio-spatial formats that emerge when young people use public spaces. Then, it presents the results of further studies on the types of young people's involvement in public spaces and how it is interpreted by local government representatives.

The focus in this case is on two central squares in a major German city that serve as important meeting places for many young people. Hence, they function as physical places where young people can meet by arrangement or chance, be it with acquaintances or strangers, like-minded people or those who are different from themselves. Meeting up provides opportunities for interaction, getting to know each other, sharing information, mutual support and social activities such as chilling out, partying and other shared experiences. These activities can create a sense of belonging, community and support, which, in turn, strengthens well-being and mental health. However, the two squares are different in terms of their location, design, functions and importance to young people.

The first square is located in the middle of the city centre and is considered the city's main square due to its size, history and importance. It is lined with numerous prestigious and historic buildings. Thousands of locals and tourists alike make their way to the square every day

via the main shopping street, which starts at the train station and leads to the city centre. Events and gatherings take place there almost constantly, both simultaneously and in turn (timing), with and against each other. Many young people with different interests and needs feel almost magically attracted by this hustle and bustle. They come and go, checking to see whether there is an activity or event that might interest them and which other young people are there. From their point of view, the square could be characterized as the city's big youth club, an extraordinary place that people frequent to experience something special. It is a place of balance and a complement to the everyday places where young people tend to meet in the outlying neighbourhoods or surrounding communities where they live and go to school.

The second square is located on the edge of the city centre, far away from the hustle and bustle of the city and is less affected by tourist and cultural events. However, it is well served by public transport. Since a major redevelopment of the square a few years ago, the users – and therefore the previous image of the square as a problematic location – have changed fundamentally. Today it is trendy and considered hip, especially in the summer, when it has a Mediterranean feel. Visitors then sit at outdoor tables set up by the neighbouring restaurants, enjoy cool drinks and engage in loud conversation. The square is regularly enlivened with themed markets, events and festivals. A wide range of restaurants and cafes invite you to stay for lunch after work or at the weekend. This range of activities on offer attracts not only people who work in the city centre or live in the neighbouring district but also affluent people from other parts of the city. Though

for many young people, the square is more of a place for everyday activities: they go there because they have to go to the dentist, the chemist or the shops. They arrive early or stay a little longer, talk to others or consume something before taking the metro back home.

Living Room, Showcase and Retreat

Only a detailed, socio-spatial view of the components, subdivisions and overall arrangement of the two squares – including the interplay between them – can sharpen the contours of their general function as a meeting place for young people. The stairs, which are found in both squares and are important for young people's socialising with peers, stand out as structural elements. People can sit on them, form groups and relax. The second square is mainly used for consuming food and drinks, which can be bought in the nearby supermarket or a fast-food restaurant. On Saturday evenings, young people use the first square to 'warm up' with affordable alcohol before they head in groups to a disco or nightclub. In socio-spatial youth research, such meeting point formats are called corners, a term derived from the phrase 'street corners', as places where not only streets meet but where young people in a neighbourhood come together. This format was described in detail in the study *Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Neighbourhood*,¹ conducted in 1943, which focused on the structure and organization of youth gangs in Boston, USA. While the so-called college boys were primarily concerned with social advancement and wanted to leave the neighbourhood quickly, for the

so-called corner boys certain street corners signified entry into the gang and their future position in the socio-spatial structure of the neighbourhood. By sitting on the stairs and thus being in a slightly elevated position, young people also have the opportunity to see what is happening in other areas of the two squares. At the same time, newcomers can be seen early on. They make contact from a distance or are greeted loudly by those waiting.

This theatre-like situation and the roles of protagonist and spectator address another important socio-spatial format: the stage. On the stages of public spaces, young people present themselves and test social roles, identities and their own impact on others. As early as the mid-1960s, studies on so-called 'subcultural youth cultures'² from a working-class milieu in Birmingham, England, highlighted the socio-spatial significance of stages. Male youths, in particular, become 'visible, they are identified and labelled (either by themselves or by others), they dominate the stage of public attention for some time and then fade away again, disappear or become intermingled that they can no longer be sufficiently distinguished from their surroundings'.³

Young people look not only for places that are geared towards visible interaction but also niches that offer the possibility of retreat as a third format of socializing. However, neither of the squares has any corners that are hidden to third parties – adults or other young people – due to their construction or lighting. Nothing remains hidden from the view of others, which restricts the possibility of more intimate moments of face-to-face conversations, caresses or actions that are not considered

legal. This is challenging for young people of all genders, even if certain stereotypes about gender-specific spatial behaviour persist. The link between small action spaces, restrictive movement patterns and reduced activity or a lack of self-confidence and assertiveness is often false and says nothing about the qualities of spatial appropriation.⁴ Rather, it is necessary to work out in a class-specific, differentiated way how young people of different genders create spaces by appropriating certain places and their formats, linking people and things with each other, and which competences they bring in or develop in the process.⁵

Interactions of Spatial Appropriation

The use of a central part of the main square for various youth work activities has made it more attractive to more groups, but it has lost its appeal for more marginalized young people. As a result, this group has lost another place in the city centre, as these individuals are approached by security guards on the second square, looked at with suspicion and turned away because of their appearance. Yet, as the young people tell us in conversation, they are the ones who keep other groups, such as younger children, safe. It is not video cameras that make young people feel safe, but older young people who make sure that large groups do not cause stress. Hence, it is not just the interplay of different formats or the relationship to other places that provides information about the function of a space as a meeting place, but above all whether the homogeneity or heterogeneity of young people can be experienced.

Whether and how young people use public space depends on the structural possibilities of that space and their own forms of social and political engagement. These forces can interact or contradict each other, and their effects need to be analysed on a site-specific basis. Two empirical studies illustrate the range of possibilities: on the one hand, through the different forms of engagement in which young people shape spaces and become visible or withdraw into niches, and on the other, through the (re)interpretations and rationalisations that shape public spaces. Professional urban actors, such as social workers, can consciously or unconsciously open or close spaces for young people.

Varieties of Young People's Engagement

How and where are young people active? What intentions do young people associate with their activities? In which places and areas of society do they get involved? The European study 'PARTISPACE – Spaces and styles of participation. Formal, non-formal and informal possibilities of young people's participation in European cities'⁶ compares the social, political and cultural engagement of young people in eight European cities: Bologna (IT), Eskisehir (TK), Frankfurt (DE), Gothenburg (SE), Manchester (UK), Plovdiv (BG), Rennes (FR) and Zurich (CH). One of the study's findings is that the following seven different types of youth appropriation and engagement can be identified across cities:⁷

1. Interest representation: Formal forms, such as youth parliaments and student councils, are important, but they are often perceived by young people as an obligation. Although such platforms can express young people's interests, they can achieve little. The level of identification with the parliament or council is higher among elected representatives than among young people themselves. It is important to consider the relationship between these formal forms of participation and other forms and to create access for less active young people.
2. Fighting within and with the system: In this type of activity, young people become involved in parties or movements for social change, partly within and partly against the existing order. It is crucial to analyse the places from which changes are brought about, because certain places are very much in the public eye, while others are of no interest at all and therefore trigger fewer conflicts. The so called *Last Generation* – a group of young climate change activists using forms of direct action, and who are mostly active in Germany, Italy and Poland – shows the significance of places in concrete and symbolic terms, for example, through physical interventions such as blocking cars. However, it remains unclear whether these actions are sufficient to bring about far-reaching changes in climate-damaging lifestyles. Radical changes in ownership and consumption patterns would be required to do so.
3. Social living alternatives: Young people organize grass-roots democratic projects, such as cultural

houses or alternative forms of housing, to live political alternatives or challenge the existing system. These groups create spaces that they organize and use physically and medially to establish and maintain their alternative lifestyles.

4. **Creating and exploring their own spaces:** In this type of play, young people create their own living environments without explicitly understanding them as political models. Meeting places in public spaces serve as places of entertainment or retreat. Virtual spaces also play an important role in self-presentation and socializing with peers.
5. **In between service of humanity and service enterprise:** This group of young people avoids politics and instead becomes involved with NGOs or self-organized projects. They want to do something meaningful in a 'politics-free' space and help to shape concrete places. This type of participation offers them a wealth of lived experience.
6. **Acting out skills in different scenes:** Young people experiment in areas such as theatre and/or sports. These are often stages where they can showcase their talents and be recognized by others. The media dissemination of these activities, for example, through films, supports self-expression.
7. **Educational leisure infrastructure:** Publicly organized leisure activities offer young people alternatives to consumer-oriented leisure activities and achievement-oriented everyday life.

The success of such programmes depends on their attractiveness and design.

In terms of basic motivation for the design of space by young people, these seven forms of engagement correspond to the structural conditions that exist in certain places in public space. These forms are not only material and effective in the sense of physical design elements, positioning and arrangement, but are also highly dependent on the respective communally shaped ideas of public space, as the results of a second empirical project show.

Interpretation Framework of Public Spaces

The building administration of a Swiss city was scientifically supported to reflect on the revitalisation of public space, for example, through pop-up furniture, and the unintentional displacement of certain user groups.⁸ The aim was to develop strategies to prevent such displacement effects. In workshops, the different perspectives of urban stakeholders were made transparent, and various interpretations were discussed. The focus was on the question of which of the four interpretations of public space dominates in everyday work, particularly with regard to the localisation of children and young people and the role of youth work/social work in enabling young people to be young. Several understandings of public space exist, some of which are detailed below.

1. As the material basis of urban life: Public space must fulfil the different needs of a heterogeneous society and is therefore often contested. Where different interests clash, conflicts arise that require openness, tolerance and consideration. Children and young people must learn to deal with conflicts and strengthen their self-efficacy. This requires professional support, for example, through community work or outreach youth work.
2. As a resource to which one may have a right: Public spaces are seen as a resource to which one has a right, as long as certain (often 'soft') rules of behaviour are observed. Those who do not respect these rules lose this right and are excluded from using these spaces. It is the task of social workers to deal with breaches of the rules and, if necessary, to call in the police.
3. As a place of democratic practice: Public space serves as a field for learning and experimentation in which people learn and negotiate practices of living together. Jürgen Zinnecker describes this space as a place where children and young people develop independent forms of play and behaviour.⁹ Social work should promote the ability to deal with conflict and enable experimentation to maintain this space as a place of tolerance and respect.
4. As the clients' living room (this is specifically an understanding of public space by social workers or other professionals): For some people, the public space becomes their 'living room', as this is where they socialize. Professionals should act with

'accepting restraint' in this living environment to initiate change without assuming a position of power.¹⁰

These four interpretations of public space are examples of rationalisations used by urban adult actors and social work professionals, in particular, to legitimize their actions and to structure specific places. They help to promote certain forms of expression by children and young people while suppressing others or labelling them illegitimate.

Participation in Spaces as a Complex Negotiation Process

The social space perspective allows for a differentiated view of the processes of spatial appropriation and design that are part of the political socialisation of young people. Young people articulate their interests and engage in specific places in public spaces where they become visible or act in secret. These places enable them to change or reinterpret existing spatial structures and thus create new spaces, so-called 'third spaces'.¹¹ In doing so, they connect affiliations to places, cliques or lifestyles that would remain undiscovered in a purely static view of participation.¹²

Conclusion: Public Spaces as a Mirror of Youth Engagement and Urban Negotiation Processes

Public spaces are dynamic arenas in which young people engage in a variety of ways, whether for self-expression, retreat or to create their own social connections. These activities imbue places with particular meanings and make them important sites for identity formation and collective belonging. However, the interplay between youth appropriation and urban policies highlights the contested nature of public spaces, shaped by power dynamics, societal norms and municipal interventions. To make public spaces truly inclusive, it is essential to recognise the value of heterogeneity, support the participation of all social groups and design environments that reflect the diverse needs and aspirations of young people. Such an approach not only benefits young people, but also promotes social cohesion and strengthens democratic practices in urban life.

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Building Bridges

A Social Capital Perspective on Youth Participation in Urban Contexts

Lois Schenk

Introduction

The involvement of young people is crucial for fostering vibrant and inclusive communities, especially in urban environments, where diversity, social inequality, and rapid change create both challenges and opportunities for their inclusion. Young people's perspectives and creativity can lead to innovative solutions that address the challenges cities face today, such as the creation of inclusive and sustainable public spaces. However, the extent to which young people can engage in these transformative processes often depends on their *social capital* – the networks and relationships that empower them to collaborate and build trust within their communities.¹ More marginalized youth – often from low socioeconomic backgrounds and urban communities – face social and economic barriers that limit their access to resources and opportunities, impacting their capacity for participation. From a social capital perspective, it is challenging to involve them in urban transformation processes due to their limited social connections and lower levels of interpersonal and institutional trust. However, being involved can help them expand their networks, develop support-seeking skills, and experience trust-building interactions that support future social capital-building strategies. Thus, despite the difficulty of involving them, more marginalized youth may benefit from these processes more than any other group. This contribution emphasizes the role of social capital, offering valuable insights for planners, policymakers, and youth workers to foster environments where all young people can actively participate in shaping their communities.

Diversity of Social Networks

Access to social capital is unevenly distributed, influenced by factors such as socioeconomic status and cultural background. Youth from higher socioeconomic backgrounds often have greater access to networks, resources, and opportunities that enhance social capital. This includes access to quality education, advice and assistance of non-parental adults, extracurricular activities, and community programmes that foster connections.² Social capital often correlates with higher levels of trust³, which enables youth to engage more actively in civic activities. Marginalized youth may encounter significant barriers to engage, such as lower levels of trust, experience, and access to opportunities. These barriers can limit their ability to engage meaningfully in urban planning and to shape the decisions that affect their communities. As a result, their voices can remain marginalized in discussions about the future of their cities.

Understanding social capital involves recognizing the different types of relationships individuals maintain within their networks. These relationships can be categorized into two primary types: strong ties and weak ties.⁴ Strong ties refer to close relationships with family and friends who are usually similar in terms of social class and ethnic background. While these adults can provide crucial and mutual support, they are often less equipped to connect youth with (educational and job) opportunities, as their focus tends to be on emotional support and maintaining close-knit community bonds. In contrast, weak ties are connections with a more diverse

group of people, such as teachers, acquaintances, coaches, and employers. These relationships, while often less emotionally intimate, can provide valuable access to new information and opportunities, contributing significantly to personal and professional development.

Both types of social ties play a crucial role in fostering social capital and shaping individual experiences, offering unique benefits in personal and professional development. However, it is important to highlight that a network containing weak ties plays a key role in helping young people connect with the resources, knowledge, and skills needed to move from marginalized backgrounds to more affluent ones. This concept is often referred to as *bridging capital*, which connects (bridges) individuals across different social groups, enhancing access to more resources and support. This bridging capital is especially vital during the transition to adulthood when young people face various challenges in their identity development and career path.⁵

Although marginalized youth would benefit the most from a diverse social network that includes weak ties that bridge them to new information and opportunities, they often have less access to, and fewer connections with, individuals from different social groups.⁶ Factors such as family income and neighbourhood poverty independently determine reduced access to weak ties. Important adults in their lives are often strong ties, primarily family members or close friends, whereas more privileged youth benefit from a more diverse network of connections that can introduce them to new information and opportunities.⁷ In summary, marginalized youth have less access to bridging capital compared to more privileged

youth. These connections (or social ties) are especially important for marginalized youth because they provide valuable resources and diverse perspectives on education, employment, and well-being. However, despite their individual strengths and abilities, the social networks of marginalized youths may not be enough to help them navigate the complex challenges they face.

Sense of Control and Social Capital

Diminished access to bridging social capital can contribute to a reduced sense of control over a young person's life, a feeling that is crucial for managing transitions into adulthood. This psychological aspect of feeling in control is essential because, without it, even individuals with a supportive social network may feel helpless or overwhelmed. For more marginalized youth, developing a strong sense of control empowers them to advocate for themselves, seek out opportunities, access support, and build trust in their own abilities, as well as in the people and systems around them. This belief in their capacity to shape their future fosters resilience, even amid difficult or uncertain circumstances.⁸

A sense of control is related to various positive outcomes, such as less depression, better stress management, and less performance pressure.⁹ Furthermore, youths that experience a sense of control, display more positive support-seeking behaviour in their network.¹⁰ Support-seeking refers to the process of reaching out to others within one's network for help, advice, or resources.

This behaviour not only strengthens existing relationships but also expands social capital by creating new connections, fostering trust, and enhancing access to valuable information and opportunities. However, research shows that youth from lower socioeconomic positions have a lower sense of control compared to their peers from mid and higher socioeconomic positions.¹¹ Factors that contribute to a lower sense of control in marginalized youth range from experiencing stigmatization and discrimination, institutional barriers, and distrust in other adults or authorities due to negative experiences.¹²

Strengthening Social Capital in Young People

Marginalized youth often face challenges in seeking support from their social networks due to a reduced sense of control, and their networks may also lack the resources necessary for effective support that connects them to new opportunities. This combination hinders their ability to thrive and, more specifically, limits their participation in civic activities. They may feel disconnected from their communities, miss out on valuable opportunities for engagement, or lack confidence in their ability to contribute. To address these challenges, it is crucial to assess possibilities for youth to strengthen their social capital, as teaching young people to garner support is one of the most sustainable ways to prepare them for the future. In the context of weak ties, this may involve seeking advice or assistance from a friend's parent, a teacher, a sports coach, a friend of a friend, or to engage in civic activities. Successfully doing so requires the right

attitude – such as openness to seeking support – as well as essential skills such as social competence.

A positive support-seeking attitude includes a sense of control, which allows individuals to overcome negative experiences and to be open about their support needs. To foster this positive attitude, normalizing support-seeking and acknowledging that individuals across all social levels rely on their networks for success, can be particularly beneficial for marginalized youth. For instance, youth from more privileged backgrounds not only directly benefit from their parents' social networks, but are also more likely to model their parents' networking behaviours and skills, such as asking favours and advice from weak ties.¹³ Recognizing and accepting this dynamic can help normalize support-seeking among youth. Additionally, it can be beneficial to help youth reflect on why past attempts to seek support were unsuccessful. For instance, they might examine which (institutional and interpersonal) barriers they experienced, identify the underlying reasons, and explore how to achieve more positive outcomes in the future. By shifting their attitudes and reinterpreting these experiences, youth can cultivate a greater sense of control.

In addition to fostering a sense of control and normalizing support-seeking, developing strong social skills is essential for youth to navigate their social networks effectively. As previously mentioned, some youth model their parents' networking skills or already have significant experience connecting with non-parental adults. Therefore, their social skills in effectively communicating and building trust with new people are typically more advanced. Indeed some research shows that youth with higher social

skills are more likely to establish a trusting bond with new people, which in turn allows them to gain greater benefits from these connections.¹⁴ For marginalized youth, developing these skills, can enhance their ability to leverage their social capital, ultimately leading to greater opportunities and more positive long-term outcomes.

Brief social psychological interventions can support youth in this process. One approach involves teaching them about the importance of social capital, support systems, networking, and mentors in achieving their goals, while also addressing potential challenges they may face when trying to network. Youth can create visual representations, or eco-maps, to better understand their current support networks, engage in role-playing exercises to practice reaching out to potential contacts, and conduct interviews with individuals they want to build stronger connections with.¹⁵ Research shows that this approach not only improves their attitudes, behaviours, and skills regarding support-seeking, but also strengthens their relationships with existing weak ties.¹⁶

In the context of involving youth in urban transformations, a helpful first step could be to have them create an eco-map to gain insight into their personal networks. Additionally, encouraging them to develop an eco-map of the neighbourhood's existing networks could also benefit project facilitators by providing a visual overview of key stakeholders and connections within the area. Building on this foundation, youth could then be connected with local figures, such as entrepreneurs or community members, to foster meaningful interactions. Providing guidance on the importance and benefits of networking – and supporting them in making these

initial connections – can empower youth to engage more actively in their communities. To further empower youth in the urban transformation process, it’s crucial to improve their sense of control by ensuring they are given appropriate levels of responsibility, for example in public space design. Setting clear expectations about their influence in the process – while demonstrating that their experiences and insights are genuinely considered in the final outcomes – can strengthen their engagement and belief in their ability to make a difference.

Conclusion

When seeking to engage urban youth in transformation processes and civic activities, it is crucial to consider this from a social capital perspective. Youth from marginalized communities are often less involved in civic activities, and when they do participate, building trusting relationships can be more challenging due to their limited experience, skills, and attitudes toward social networking. However, involving youth is essential not only for inclusive urban planning but also for providing them with positive experiences with institutions and non-parental adults. Such interactions can serve as corrective experiences, potentially increasing the trust of youth in others and improving their overall social relationships.¹⁷ Additionally, these engagements can lead to the development of new weak ties. Offering youth these opportunities is vital, as trust is a foundational element for fostering meaningful connections and empowering them to navigate their communities and society effectively.¹⁸

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18. While focusing on (re)gaining marginalized youths' trust is essential, uncovering social injustice should lie at the core of research, policy, and practice. The focus must shift from merely helping youth navigate these injustices to advocating for systemic change that addresses the root causes of their challenges. Additionally, it is important to recognize the forms of capital that marginalized youth bring with them to help us better understand the richness and diversity of minority communities See Yosso, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 8*, 69–91.

un/der/
represented

*A Summer School
as an Alternative
Model of Learning*

Ed Wall

Introduction

The *un/der/represented* summer school was a programme for teenagers from across London – especially those frequently disadvantaged – to design their own city. There are over two million young people under the age of 18 in London, and they are underrepresented in decision making about the places they call home. The forms of cities are made by politicians, landowners, developers, planners, and designers, many of whom do not live to see their urban visions realised: Building cities and neighbourhoods takes a long time! For the *un/der/represented* summer school, that opened its doors in 2018 with 16 students, we argued that streets, neighbourhoods, and cities should be designed by young people who have the most at stake in their future. As Elion Veliaj, the Mayor of Tirana, describes: ‘To design and build a child-oriented urban space means to both improve the lives of all citizens and to make urban space accessible for all.’¹

Building the School

The summer school was planned to be inclusive of a wider demographic than is typically involved in designing cities. The projects were designed by young people, but even more so by students often left out of university programmes. Engaging with different departments within the University of Greenwich we established a structure of widening participation. While it was open to young people between 16 to 18 years-old from across London,

we encouraged greater enrolment from schools with higher percentages of disadvantaged pupils. We therefore applied for grants to make it more inclusive, to not only ensure that all places were fully subsidised, but also to provide free travel to and from the university each day and to provide lunch for all participants.

We received full support from the senior managers in the school, however, we were limited in staff resources. So we developed external partnerships. The practical difficulties of costing activities, of invoicing, and of receiving funds restricted opportunities to seek sponsorship from design studios who were otherwise supportive, government departments who were keen to collaborate, and charities who had projects that would benefit our pedagogy. So instead of asking for financial support, we contacted alumni from our academic programmes who worked in these organizations to invite them to be involved. We drafted a letter to their employers, requesting that they be given leave to support the summer school, and in return we would list them as the programme sponsors.

The partnerships that we forged and the contributions in time exceeded our expectations. From Gustafson Porter + Bowman to the Royal Parks, we were supported by so many organizations that the ratio of instructors to students averaged at about one to five in the first year. We also invited organizations to join for a day to share their diverse experiences of city-making. Planners from the Greater London Authority, officers from the Landscape Institute, and representatives from the Royal Parks presented the work of their organizations. Through the partnerships we forged, we established a shared mission of

supporting young people in learning about how to design their city.

The participation of young practitioners who were also alumni from the university enabled the students to make sense of opportunities that they could have as they graduate from high school and college. The practitioners worked in small groups with the students while also presenting their work in lunchtime talks throughout the week. Through a combination of one-to-one conversations, small group tutorials, and informal presentations, students and practitioners found confidence in this pedagogical experiment. Several practitioners even found an interest and strength in design school teaching and are now established lecturers in Greenwich and other architectural design schools in the UK.

It was important for us to leave tendencies to promote our professions, offices, and institutions at the door. We resisted professional bodies who wanted to persuade students that one discipline was more significant to follow than another; we declined offers of design studios to present their own work to students rather than participating as tutors; and we slowed colleagues whose task was to promote the university and the programmes that it offers. Such resistance was not to deny the enormous generosity from our partner organizations – or the university that supported the summer school through staffing and accommodation costs each year. The ambition, however, was to create a free education that was uncluttered by market-based imperatives to commodify education and that treat young people as consumers.

Processes of Shared Learning

The summer schools spanned five days. Monday included a visit to the urban landscapes that the students would redesign. Friday involved the students presenting their work back to guests and family, framing a celebration of the designs that the young people had produced.

Between the site visits and the presentations, the students took photos, they made drawings, and they produced a five metre long collective model. In the production of the model, students were required to reconcile their own urban designs with the existing grain of London streets, neighbourhoods, and waterfronts. They also had to navigate and work with what their colleagues had proposed in the same or adjacent spaces.

The summer school projects were situated in South London, where we could walk directly from the university through a diversity of neighbourhoods, streets, and parks. We focused on Deptford more than once, an urban landscape from which discussions about urban form, history, and tidal ecologies could be founded. The students took photos with their phones, responding to single-word prompts. We printed the photos when we returned to the university design studios and then students developed drawings or made collages. From this knowledge of the existing neighbourhoods and the immediate responses made through drawings and collage, the students then worked in teams to make large models.

Some years students constructed the models in thick paper, other years they modelled with clay. With paper,

students showed the height of existing buildings and within this urban structure they constructed dramatic additions. With two colours of thick card, students twisted and folded to make new architectures. With clay, students modelled the creek and the river. The dexterity of the clay provided for the ground to be reimagined and the relations between water and land to be blurred. We introduced students to working at scale, as well as the range of tools and techniques needed to cut and mould.

The culmination of each summer school was marked by an exhibition of the student work. Drawings and photos were pinned up with care and models were brought together on big, long tables. Design professionals and family members were invited to join a celebration that was marked by students describing their designs with humour and precision. While much of the summer school was structured around students drawing, designing, and making informal conversation, the presentational mode of the final day required more precise preparation. The studios were cleared and cleaned, tables and chairs were intentionally arranged, short presentations were drafted, and guests were welcomed as they arrived.

Sharing food together was important during the summer schools. We provided lunches for the students each day, and on the final day of the presentation, students, tutors, guests, and family members were invited to eat together. Free lunches ensured that students from all backgrounds could join without concern for cost. Sharing food in the university was also a practical decision: we didn't want students getting distracted by the many cafes and restaurants around the campus and returning late for



FIGURE 1: Students developed new skills in drawing and modelmaking. All photos: Robbie Munn.



FIGURE 3: The students created a 5-metre long collective model.



FIGURE 2: The student designs needed to negotiate the existing city streets and neighbourhoods of London as well as the proposals of their colleagues.



FIGURE 4: The summer school closed with a celebratory presentation to guests and family.

the afternoon workshops. Eating together is shown to improve relationships and connections²; for us, this sharing facilitated open conversations between students and with the wider team of tutors and guests.

Persistent Ideas

un/der/represented was a collective work.³ The ingenuity of tutors framed a programme that could be directed and generous, using simple materials to encourage a wider engagement, and to focus on cities to blur disciplinary bounds. Over five weeks, across five years, we endeavoured to realise again a more public education, where attendance was free, where learning was the goal, and where what was produced was celebrated in its collective form.

However, in recent years as new leadership was appointed in the university, the core principle of a free programme focused on young people designing their own cities was lost. Through a combination of expanding the good practice of the summer school across more fields, and managers aiming to generate income from international students, the summer school ceased to focus on cities and with the intent of being free for all students. Programme partners were also less engaged with a for-profit model that spanned multiple creative fields and tended to promote the universities academic programmes as much as student learning.

While the *un/der/represented* summer school no longer runs, the energetic experiment of the programme continues in the work of the students who participated and the tutors who contributed. Some students enrolled in architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design programmes, and some are now working in leading design firms in London. Reflecting on the summer school, Elise, a student on the first summer school, who went on to study landscape architecture and work on community focused projects, explained: ‘The summer school truly set the foundation for my career.’

Summer schools in architectural design are not uncommon. There are even some, like the Summer Sessions at the Architectural Association that ran between 1970 and 1972, whose experimental models have informed wider approaches to architectural pedagogy.⁴ But Elise described that in 2018, ‘...other universities didn’t offer anything like the Greenwich summer school.’ The focus on giving back to teenagers, who are too frequently excluded from decision-making processes about urban change, and the exposure to young practitioners made the *un/der/represented* summer school unique.

In the context of UK higher education that is increasingly adopting market principles, summer schools are too often approached like short courses – as a means to generate income through recruiting students to the universities as well as profiting from the summer school fees themselves. And even when scholarships are provided in these programmes, for teenagers from minority groups, such initiatives are used to promote the universities rather than realising equity in education.


That the *un/der/represented* summer school was organised within an increasingly privatised system of higher education is an important context. Tuition fees in the UK were introduced in 1998 and since this time government funding has been increasingly withdrawn from the sector. Although the government controls the cost of undergraduate fees for UK students, and they provide research funding through systems like the UKRI (UK Research and Innovation), they promote competition between universities in a massively uneven higher education landscape. This has partly led to universities embracing a global marketplace for students and, in return, students (and even more so, their parents) expecting an increasingly better service for what they pay.

The *un/der/represented* summer school attempted to set aside these expectations through a free programme of learning. Over five years' we supported the university in giving back to its constituents of young people across London. The summer school also helped the university diversify its cohorts of architecture, landscape architecture and urban design students as well as contributing to its broader social responsibility. Separate from fee-paying programmes, from Bachelors to Masters, a more experimental pedagogy could be explored. And unshackled from open days, application processes, and marketing activities, the *un/der/represented* summer school opened up, for a short time, the '... possibility of having [a] countermovement...' within our own institution.⁶

In *Radical Pedagogies*, the research project and publication led by Beatriz Colomina, Ignacio G. Galán, Evangelos

Kotsioris, and Anna-Maria Meister, the authors recognise that by 'testing the limits of the discipline', the alternative models of learning that they investigated 'were by definition precarious'.⁷ By focusing on cities we questioned the hierarchical, and often siloed nature, of architectural design professions. We also defined a different space and time of learning that contrasted with what schools and universities offered. Through the achievements of many of the students who joined the summer school programme, the methods that were adopted in other areas of teaching, and the partnerships forged across and beyond the university, we hope that in some way, 'their ideas linger and their networks persist.'⁸

1. Elion Veliaj (2019). Children are the urban superheroes who provide inclusivity in the city. *Topos* 106, Healing Landscapes.
2. Dunbar, R.I.M. (2017). Breaking Bread: the Functions of Social Eating. *Adaptive Human Behavior and Physiology* 3, 198–211. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40750-017-0061-4>
3. There were six different design tutors and lecturers who led the programme each year, writing the design briefs, hosting guests, and editing a publication for the young students.
4. See Sunwoo, I. (2016). *Progress: The IID Summer Sessions*. London: Architectural Association Publishing.
5. The *un/der/represented* summer school was changed in the second year to more clearly describe the role of young people designing future cities.
6. Colomina, B. et al. (2022). *Radical Pedagogies*. Cambridge: MIT Press. p 15.
7. Colomina, B. et al. (2022). *Radical Pedagogies*. Cambridge: MIT Press. p 52.
8. Colomina, B. et al. (2022). *Radical Pedagogies*. Cambridge: MIT Press. p 11.



*II: Trustmaking
– From Principles
to a Practical
Approach*

A Trust, Complex Phenomenon *A Conceptual Framework for Trustmaking*

Marcel W. Musch
and Žemartas Budrys

In this chapter we will describe several factors that determine trust formation and propose a preliminary Conceptual Framework for Trustmaking.¹ Based on the extensive literature on trust we distinguish two types of factors that determine trust: actor-related characteristics, in this text referred as basic trust, and social and situational characteristics, which we call social trust.² The trust formation factors together form a model that describes how trust in various situations develops organically. To devise a strategy for trust making it is necessary to know how these factors can be influenced. For this purpose we have looked at four social and psychological theories that offer us different perspectives on how to design interventions to actively encourage a Trustmaking process. These theories help us to answer questions such as: what capabilities are needed for actors to participate in Trustmaking, how can connections be made between people that generate trust, how to create partnerships that build trust and how to organize Trustmaking processes.³ The Conceptual Framework for Trust Making that we propose consists of four dimensions, concisely described as: capabilities, cooperation, shared realities and commoning.

Basic Trust

Trust research originated in management and organizational studies, focusing on one-directional exchange relations from one person to another, from a

trustor to a trustee. Trust is a complex phenomenon, a clear definition seems elusive. Trust has almost as many definitions in the dictionary as terms such as 'love' and 'like'.⁴ It has been researched by economists (rational choice), psychologists (personality) and sociologists (social structure). McKnight and Chervany's influential Initial Trust Model integrates various aspects of trust into a multi-dimensional construct, combining the research of many scholars. The model is limited to the establishment of initial trust, when trustors base their decision to trust on first impressions and a limited amount of information.⁵ The core of the model consists of two elements: trusting beliefs and trusting intentions.

Trusting beliefs are characteristics of the trustee (the one to be trusted) as observed by the trustor (the one that trusts). McKnight and Chervany identified four trusting beliefs: benevolence (the trustee cares about the trustor), competence (the trustee has the ability to deliver for the trustor), honesty (the trustee tells the truth), and predictability (the trustee's behaviour is consistent). The perception of these characteristics is considered to be a cognitive process.

Trusting intentions are a willingness of the trustor to depend on the trustee with a feeling of relative security. Trusting intentions include a willingness to accept the possibility of negative consequences, to make oneself vulnerable to the other and to accept that one does not have full control over the other.

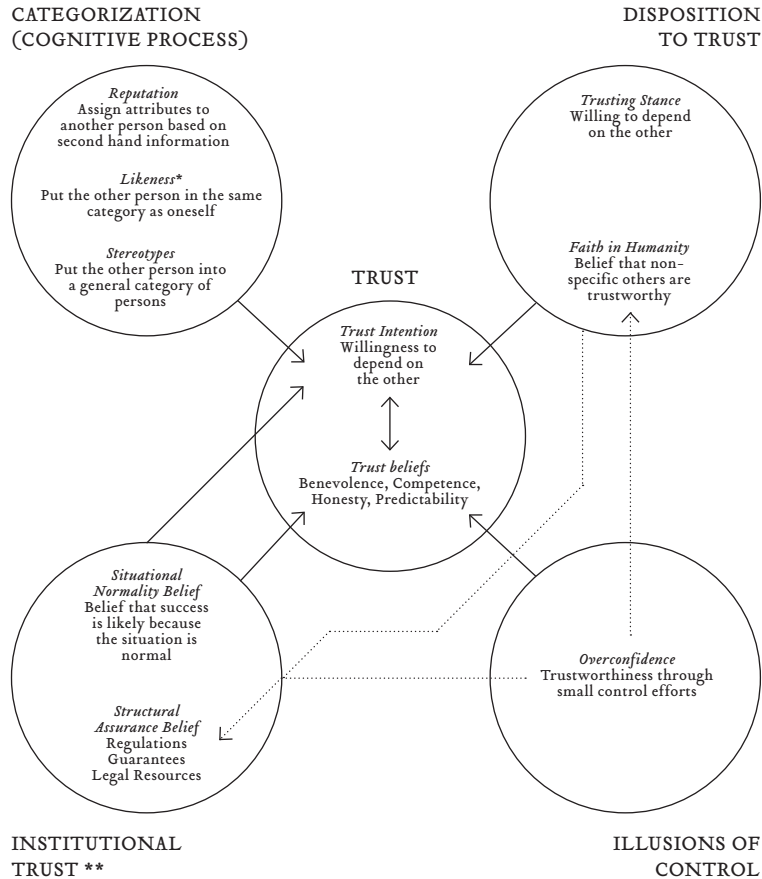
The trusting beliefs are influenced by factors such as the reputation of the trustee (as observed by the trustor),

and the social category of the trustee (as categorized by the trustor). Social categorization can refer to in-group categorization (to put the other in the same category as oneself) or to stereotyping (to put the other into a general category of people). Both reputation and social category are (constructed) characteristics that can strengthen or weaken the trustworthiness of the trustee and are likely to affect one or more of the trusting beliefs (benevolence, competence, honesty and predictability).

The willingness to depend on the other (trusting intention) is influenced by the person's disposition to trust. A disposition to trust is a general attitude towards other people and society in general (whereas an intention to trust is linked to a specific person). McKnight and Chervany identify two types of disposition: faith in humanity and trusting stance. Faith in humanity assumes a general trust in others, whereas trusting stance is a personal strategy where one assumes that trusting people, at least initially, leads to better outcomes.

The base of the framework is formed by the four main components of the Initial Trust Model by McKnight and Chervany: trusting beliefs and intentions, disposition and cognitive processes.⁶ These factors and processes mainly determine interpersonal trust and look at trust formation in a one directional way (from trustor to trustee). Also it focuses on trust formation in the initial phase, even though the factors will continue to play a role in later phases in more durable relationships. Besides these four components the Initial Trust Model includes an institutional or structural level. Trust on this level is based on formal assurances that norms will be followed

FIGURE 1: Initial Trust Model by McKnight and Chervany adaptation by authors.



- Primary trust relation
- ⋯→ Secondary trust relation
- * by McKnight and Chervany referred to as *Unit Grouping*
- ** Institutional based trust: belief that impersonal structures are in place to enable one to act in anticipation of a successful future endeavour.

or a belief that the situation will remain ‘normal’. The model suggests that structural beliefs could influence the interpersonal trust factors, and vice versa.

Social Trust

In the previous paragraph we discussed the actor-related factors. Taken together this is quite a complex configuration. Still, this is only a partial description of the complex web of relations in which trust is formed. Early trust research focused on trust in one-to-one (exchange) relations. The wider context of these relations was considered not to be relevant (or too complex for a solid methodology to capture). However, in real-life settings trust formation is part of a situated social process. Therefore, if we aim to design effective Trustmaking strategies we need to broaden our understanding of trust formation. Current trust research offers a wealth of material to broaden our scope.⁷ We found four additional characteristics on trust formation that we felt are relevant for Trustmaking. Firstly, trust formation is a dynamic process that develops through dynamic interactions. Secondly, in these interactions emotions play an important role, which means that trust is not only based on cognitive assessments. Thirdly, these interactions take place on multiple levels: personal, group and institutional. And fourthly, trust formations take place in a specific context, be it historical, social, economic or spatial.

Even though it seems obvious to say that trust develops in the interaction between two persons or parties, this has not been the focus of trust research. The Initial Trust Model focuses on one directional trustor-trustee relationships as is the case in most (early) trust research. This makes sense in the initial phase of trust formation. In short term relations, such as in many commercial or business exchanges, this type of trust formation determines the success of the (exchange) relation. These types of trusting decisions are primarily cognitive risk-assessments. However, in other contexts, long term relationships are more important, and in these, the interactive (sometimes referred to as dyadic or interdependent) and the temporal (or history and duration) character of trust formation deserves more attention.⁸ A bigger focus on the dynamics of long term trust relationships is especially relevant when working in organizational contexts and even more so in educational and community contexts.

To understand how trust can be developed it is important to take into account the role of emotions and the expectation of reciprocity. But besides that, (interactive) relationships can flourish when there is, simply, enough opportunity to get to know each other. One way to do that is to just meet each other regularly. Another way is increasing the intensity of the interactions is to organize events that stimulate a postponement of absolute judgements by offering new, alternative ways of looking at the world and each other.

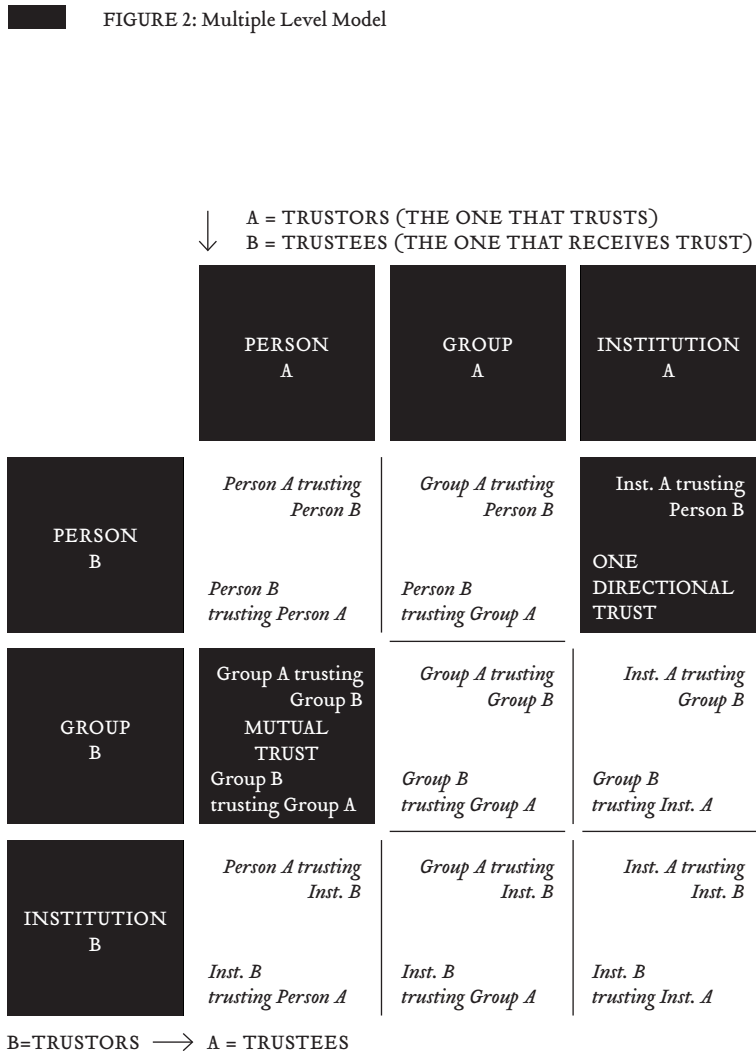
Obviously, in human interactions, emotions (hidden or visible) play an important role. Thus, trust is not only the result of cognitive processes; emotional or affective processes can play an important role too.⁹ However, in the Initial Trust Model, emotions are given a limited role in the formation of trust. In the model it is not treated as an independent factor (only implicitly as part of trust intentions), hence it does not get the attention it deserves. For example, the role of emotional pain on self-trust is important to consider, as it could influence a person's trusting disposition.¹⁰ It is also important to note that emotions are emergent and non-transitive (not related to an object). In other words, emotions might be caused independently of specific trust relations. They might be separate and different from cognitive processes.¹¹ Therefore, even though emotions are not directly linked to specific relations and are separate from cognitive factors (e.g. the assessment of the trustees' benevolence or integrity) it is important to acknowledge the role of emotions in trust formation.

Of course, the role of emotions is not only apparent in trust formations; they are playing an increasingly important role in politics, democracies¹², social structure, culture, and media.¹³ Emotions are more and more seen as an important factor in social change.¹⁴ As such, emotions (unavoidably) play a role in democracy, as noted by Stephen Coleman: 'what democracy does and how democracy feels are not separable considerations'.¹⁵ Current understanding considers emotions as a

‘combination of thought and embodied feeling’ rather than as one side of the rationality-irrationality dichotomy.¹⁶ Instead, emotions can make abstract and complex events tangible, which help people to be engaged in communities and social change. A word of caution should be made here: emotions can be used for normatively ‘good’ purposes but they can also fuel distrust, hate and exclusion.¹⁷ We have to be aware that affective and ‘trusting’ strategies are often abused, stirring up distrust with ‘others’ and institutions as we can see everywhere around us.¹⁸

Multiple levels

Herian and Neal describe trust as multilevel phenomenon.¹⁹ They propose a matrix to show the various trust relationships on, and between, three levels: personal, group, and institution. We suggest that this matrix could be useful in identifying crucial trust factors for each of the specific relations in the matrix (nine in total) and subsequently specify tools or strategies to stimulate trust creation for each of these relations. Also, the matrix illustrates how trust formation can occur on multiple levels in parallel — which, in real life settings, is likely to happen. A Trustmaking strategy that focuses on one level will most likely influence the trust formation on another. Therefore, in the design of Trustmaking strategies it is useful to take into account the interdependency of these levels.



Italic: Potential trust relations
Regular: Examples of one-directional and mutual trust relations

Context

Trust formation is situational; it takes place in a context. For example, existing social relations and values will determine the level of trust people have in social networks or institutions, or it will determine the personal intentions and dispositions to trust people. Also, the personal capabilities people have to categorize and identify trustworthy people and actions, is an important characteristic of the social context. Of course, it also works the other way around: people with self-trust or a high disposition to trust another person or a group will more likely play an active role in their community, engaging together and developing mutual interests and in the process will contribute to trust formation on various levels.²⁰ Especially in projects which involve a high level of interaction with unknown others (such as in participation, co-creation or placemaking projects), the existence of a minimum level of social trust is required. More generally speaking, social trust is a condition for a society to function and to nurture itself, and it is needed for the realization of the common good.²¹ The development of trust relations, both on the level of a specific project, or on a more general societal level, doesn't happen in a vacuum, as Lewis et al. have noted: 'Trust relationships have histories', in other words the past will be embedded in the social context.²²

Similarly, economic conditions will greatly influence trust formation processes. For example, the potential to create durable trust relations can be related to the durability of economic relations (short or long term),

the economic conditions of actors, and the interdependency or hierarchy between actors. Likewise, physical conditions and spatial structures are important conditions for social relations and as such, an important factor in the formation of trust relations.

A Conceptual Framework

In this last paragraph we will describe four dimensions that need careful consideration when working on Trustmaking or designing a Trustmaking strategy. In brief, these dimensions are about:

1. developing capabilities,
2. committing to real and future looking cooperation,
3. creating shared realities and
4. developing commons based on a plurality of dialogue and decision-making forms.

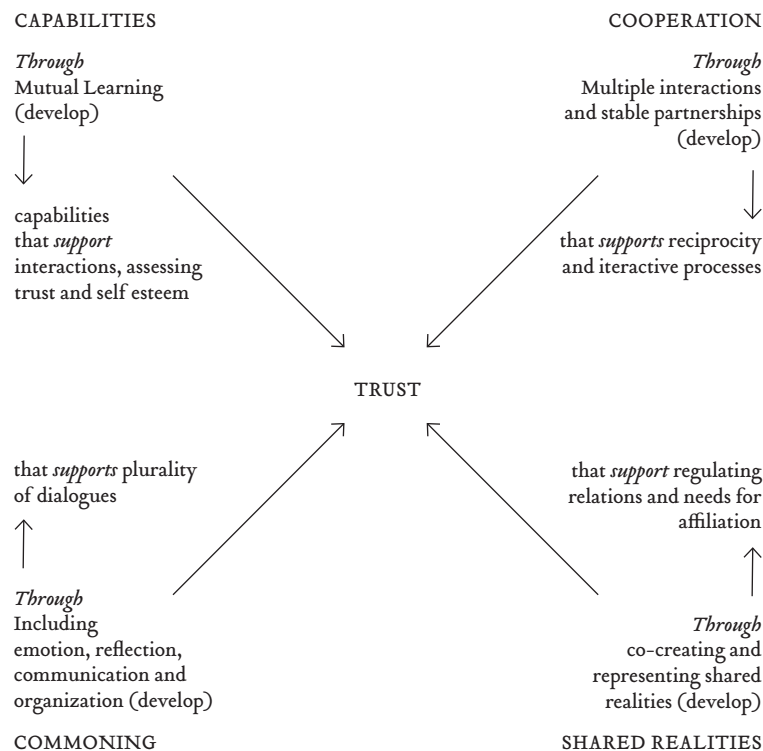
In relation to trust formation: the first dimension is about the capabilities and skills actors need to develop trust relations; the second dimension is about how to develop trust relations within a collaboration on multiple levels; the third dimension is about what is shared in trust relations; and the fourth dimension is about how to organize the dialogue within trust making processes and integrate institutional and grass-roots ways of working. All four dimensions play a crucial role in the process of trust making. These dimensions are based on four theoretical models, respectively: the Capability Approach²³, Cooperation Theory²⁴, Shared Reality Theory²⁵ and

Commoning Theory.²⁶ In the following we will describe these dimensions and their theoretical underpinnings in more detail. In the next section we have formulated Trustmaking Principles based on our experiences in the four Urban Living Lab's (ULLs).

Capabilities

Trust formation is highly dependent on the capabilities of the actors. Capabilities are an important factor in the creation of self-esteem (self-trust), in the ability to sustain social interactions and in the ability to distinguish and assess characteristics that determine trust. Therefore developing capabilities is a condition for Trustmaking. More generally, developing capabilities is an important condition to develop equity (social justice). The Capability Approach distinguishes between an equal division of resources and the capability to use these resources. Also, it is important to acknowledge the difference between people and the agency of actors.²⁷ The theoretical model of the Capability Approach offers useful guidelines for application in an ULL. Based on the experiences in the four ULLs we defined three principles that support a Capability Approach within an ULL: Acknowledging Differences and Avoiding Othering (Principle 3), Building Capacities and Mutual Learning (Principle 5), and Engagement in Line with Needs (Principle 6).²⁸

FIGURE 3: Conceptual Framework Trustmaking



Cooperation

For a society, community or any partnership to function, trust does not necessarily have to reach high levels. In everyday life we continuously make decisions on what and whom we trust, and often so-called 'thin' trust will suffice.²⁹ Often this is based on preliminary or incomplete knowledge of the trustworthiness of another party. Lewis et al. distinguish between trust based on a combination of emotionality and rationality and identified high, low and virtual absent levels of trust. A low level of trust can be enough to cooperate with someone or make use of a service.³⁰ An important factor in this process is the reciprocity we expect from the other. If we put trust in someone we implicitly expect the trust to be returned. This expectation of reciprocity then becomes part of the process of trusting each other, or if trust is not returned a negative cycle of reciprocity will develop and distrust will grow. In other words, beyond the initial trust phase, in long term relationships trust formation is a continuous, iterative process.

Axelrod showed with his game experiments based on the Prisoners Dilemma, that the length of a game is an important factor in the reciprocity the players expect from the other,³¹ with the length of the game not so much measured in the absolute length in time. A great number of interactions or a large intensity of the interactions will also increase the likelihood that players will expect more reciprocity. The more interactions (e.g. subsequent moves) there are in a game, the more both players are motivated to invest in future rewards that can be expected to be gained from the relationship. Axelrod has shown

that if the game has no (fixed) end the reciprocity and trust between players will have a bigger chance to grow to an optimal level. In the words of Axelrod: enlarge the shadow of the future.³² Besides a commitment to stable partnerships an approach that focuses on developing ideas for the future can also contribute to create a feeling of a common cause. Creating narratives or design ideas and communicating these to a larger audience can support this aim. Based on the experiences in the four ULLs, one principle clearly supports the creation of future oriented partnerships: Not Just Participation but Partnership (Principle 4).

Shared realities

Public spaces are, by definition, always shared spaces. They represent our shared reality. This reality gives us an opportunity to maintain and regulate interpersonal relationships, while satisfying relational needs for affiliation. According to the Shared Reality Theory³³ when people are able to perceive themselves and their environments as stable, predictable and potentially controllable, they will gain a sense of security which is necessary for a regular social life. People will gain this sense of security by creating a shared reality. According to Echterhoff et al. people create a shared reality by sharing their inner states. This shared reality needs to be about something; it needs a 'target referent'. Another requirement is that the creation of shared reality needs to be grounded in a motive: e.g. making a connection or gaining knowledge. For this the process is more important

than the end state. A last requirement is that the shared reality needs to be confirmed by both parties, in other words it needs to be mutually established that there is in fact a connection.³⁴ If this is achieved and people harmonize their understanding, beliefs, behaviours and attitudes on reality – in our case the social reality – we can easily deploy trust in one another.

Public spaces should be the safe places for expressing ourselves and for recognizing others. Referring to the process described above, public spaces are an important dimension of our shared realities (target referents). Here we should think about space in the terms Henri Lefebvre proposed: space envelops a triad of interlocking dimensions: material space – the actual space and its forms and objects; representations of space – the knowledge about space and its production; and lived space – the emotional experience of space and the subjective practices that are attached to space.³⁵ Public spaces are socially constructed and constantly negotiated environments in which trust is produced through shared experience. Mechanisms such as pedestrian paths, communal activities, and common physical contact are ways in which people are able to create a sense of certainty, predictability and, finally, trust. According to Echterhoff et al., this trust is not only an effect of alignment, but it also acts to catalyze the establishment of deeper community bonds and shared meanings. Hence making public spaces is vital in fostering social cohesion and mutual understanding.³⁶

Increasing the awareness of the connection between material space, representations of space, and lived space can contribute to the connection amongst people living in

the same space. This is, in other words, an *activation* of the shared reality. A further step is to (co-)create alternative shared realities, to create alternative ways to design, represent or experience the shared reality. This approach entails more than only designing an alternative future or creating images of one's environment, or collaborating and working in a different way. Instead it is all these things at the same time: a holistic and alternative for a shared reality, which in essence, is what placemaking entails.³⁷

In the four ULLs we have experimented in various ways to create (semi-) public spaces – such as schools, art-spaces or neighbourhood hubs – into 'alternative shared realities'. The ULLs were transformed into small scale models of society; places to play, make and explore, or places of interdependence between different groups. To reiterate: the point here is that creating an alternative shared reality is more than just organizing an activity, instead it aims at creating experiences that are anchored in a place/space, related to people and that are represented by means of storytelling – visuals or otherwise.³⁸ These shared realities can be temporarily as well as more permanently embedded. Based on the experiences in the four ULLs we defined various principles that support in a direct or indirect way the (co-) creation of alternative shared realities within an ULL. These principles are for example: Joy as a Principle in the Collaboration (Principle 7) and Trustmaking as Care Work (Principle 8).

Commoning

In our ULLs, social trust and shared reality are being built by at least two stakeholders of public green spaces: youth and municipality. Public space, or more generally the public realm, is a common good. In the sense that the public realm is used, consumed, taken care of by people, who do not hold any legal ownership over the place. We argue that only in this way public spaces can thrive and could become effectively managed. However, space is usually defined to be either private or public.³⁹ The commons are neither of these.⁴⁰ The task at hand is to re-envision the commons outside of the public-private dichotomy and introduce the social, cultural, and political practices that allow new possibilities, thus reconstituting the commons as an object of thought.⁴¹ The commons can then serve as a platform for envisioning and developing an alternative framework for social relations and social practices.⁴²

According to Eizenberg, the urban commons follow several core characteristics. First, the urban commons are produced. Second, they offer a set of livelihood qualities over which rights are negotiated: dwelling, open space, recreational and social space, movement in space, and control over space, to name just a few. Third, the urban commons fulfil these and other social needs in a non-commodified manner. Fourth, they necessitate communities⁴³ to operate them through collaboration, cooperation and communication⁴⁴ rather than through private interest and competition. Gielen argues that for commons to be successful collaboration and communication need to take into account four

aspects: emotion, (self-)reflection, communication and organization.⁴⁵ Gielen describes these aspects as phases in an ongoing dialogue: a dialogue can start as an emotional reaction to an event. If followed by a reflection these emotions can be formulated into more concrete ideas which can be communicated to others. Which, in turn can lead to a form of institutional organization. The process can also start at an institutional level, where ideas are communicated (top down as it were), leading to reflection and emotions of the recipients. Gielen argues that these two processes (or cycles) can and in fact need to mutually reinforce each other. The double cycle allows for the emergence of ideas based on emotions, and vague ideas informally shared, while at the same time allowing for the development of an institutional basis. Gielen calls the process going from emotion, reflection, communication and organization the constituent cycle, which is a cycle that starts at the base (bottom-up so to say). The cycle can also run in the opposite direction: from organization to emotion. The four steps in the cycle allow for different models of democratic decision making and civic communication: a (classic) model of representative democracy (voting), a model of deliberation (participation), and finally a model of empathic (Gielen calls it: agonistic) participation - a model that allows for co-creation and participation by doing things and showing engagement by being there and caring for each other.

This double cycle can reinforce the formation of trust in organizations like an ULL. It's a model that makes it possible for two dialogues to happen at the same time. It facilitates a plurality of dialogue and decision-

making forms which allows for trust to grow between the various levels and thus meets the first requirement to develop trust on multiple levels. Also, as is obvious, it allows for emotions to get a place in the process. The principles that support the plurality of dialogues and decision making forms are: giving young people agency while at the same time acknowledging the institutional limitations: Transparency on Limitations and Possibilities (Principle 1), being aware of the need to continuously affirm trust: Continuity and consistency (Principle 2) and Acknowledging Difference and Avoiding Othering (Principle 3).

The commons provide the opportunity ‘to obtain social wealth and to organize social production’.⁴⁶ Thus, ULLs are a way to create the new commons that serve as a platform for envisioning and developing an alternative framework for social relations and social practices.

For all these characteristics to become possible it requires trust among stakeholders, making trust very context dependent. This is why, while talking about trust formation in an urban context, we need to approach the concept from various angles and theories that are discussed above.

Summary

In this section we attempted to briefly describe the complex process of trust formation. We distinguished between basic trust and social trust to clarify the difference between factors that determine trust on an interpersonal level and the factors that determine trust

in the more complex situational, social setting. We used these characteristics as the input for devising a Conceptual Framework for Trustmaking.

The relations between the factors of trust formation and the four dimensions of the Conceptual Framework are in some cases explicitly mentioned while in other cases they are only implicitly suggested. For example, Interactions will play an important factor in all four dimensions: Capabilities (the ability to interact), Cooperation (the link between interactions and reciprocity), Shared realities (what is shared in the interaction) and Commoning (organize alternative frameworks for interactions). This framework is a work in progress, and we believe it should be refined based on future experiments by us and others on the intersection of placemaking and trust making by others.

1. In this text we use the term ‘trust formation’ when discussing the organic development of trust in a variety of situations as this is the most common word used in trust research. The term ‘trust building’ is mostly used in an active way, referring to specific interventions to stimulate the development of trust. We reserve the term ‘Trustmaking’ to refer to strategic interventions where the development of trust is a long term objective and requires an integral approach.
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Transparency on Limitations and Possibilities

From the beginning of a collaboration, it is crucial that all partners communicate their aims and expectations. While co-creation processes give young people the opportunity to take agency within a project, limitations exist – such as regulations of public spaces, budget and funding, or the short-term character of a project. Managing expectations with clarity and transparency early on ensures a trustful base for the partnership. Transparency and publicness in processes, results, and achievements help to build a shared foundation among different actors.

TWO

and Continuity Consistency

Trust needs to be continuously affirmed. Trustmaking requires social and spatial consistency, and at the same time is embedded into a social and spatial network. For co-creation projects, cultivating trust in relationships within and between projects and people must be established. For this to happen, it needs individuals who will continuously show up. In addition, projects will benefit from a connection to a specific place; a place people care about, a place that provides connections to the lives of individuals. Working on both social and spatial consistency helps to create a trust safety net that neither only relies on specific individuals nor on a specific place in case projects need to adapt to changes.

Acknowledging Differences and Avoiding Othering

Co-creation projects often bring together people from very different backgrounds, in terms of age, culture, gender, professional or educational paths. To avoid othering and challenge preconceptions or prejudice about one another, we need to acknowledge and appreciate the differences we bring. Working towards the same goal, not despite differences but seeing, valuing and putting them to use, as various sets of perspectives and skills will enhance co-created projects.

Not Just Participation, but Partnership

Trust is the connective tissue between individuals and the environment, but it is a two-way street. It manifests its full potential only if young peoples' voices are truly valued by adults and officials. Thus, co-creative projects can only be successful if they are conceived as partnerships, with all participants on an equal footing.

Building Capacities and Mutual Learning

We are all capable of learning in co-creation processes. This means not just focus on capacity-building of young people but also aim for decision-makers. Decision-makers both in public and private sectors need to recognize other skill sets and perspectives as valuable, and acknowledge young people as key contributors in sustainable development, which in turn will empower youth to take action. Therefore, our work is based on an agreement on mutual and shared learning – the adults and officials, too, are learning from the co-creation processes and from the perspectives of young people.

Engagement in Line With Needs

Engaging youth in co-creation processes can only be successful if they find the methods exciting and the topics relevant. What may seem obvious, can be a challenge to implement. Thus, while choosing and developing co-research and co-creation tools, consistently reflecting on the balance between other actors' interests and the methods and approaches which intersect with young people's lives is key.

Joy as a Principle in the Collaboration

Experiencing joy is at the core of developing a shared and hopeful vision of the future. Acknowledging joy as a central tenet for collaboration with youth in urban transition processes, and focusing on methods which spark joy, can create more meaningful, innovative and powerful outcomes. Creating events and experiences, which are out of the ordinary and different from young people's everyday lives, and sharing moments of being positively surprised, create strong and special memories. Bringing joy to collaborative processes can be a powerful tool for all ages.

Trustmaking as Care Work

A significant portion of the work behind trustmaking is essentially care work, which often stays unnamed and invisible. It is important to name and make visible these aspects of trustmaking, as this care work – cleaning up, preparing snacks, looking out for everyone in the process, creating bonds and networks between new actors – opens up spaces of possibility for new participants and actors. In a protected environment, they can experiment, freely explore, and collaborate. Co-creation processes rooted in care can, in turn, inspire care in others, for a place, a community or a city.

A Practical Approach to Trustmaking

Eglė Vitkutė,
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and Žemartas Budrys

With this practical approach to trustmaking we give readers an understanding of trustmaking as a practice-oriented, continuous process alongside a catalogue of techniques and methods to provide practical information and inspiration for the successful implementation of similar projects. Trustmaking in an Urban Living Lab (ULL) setting is a complex and open-ended endeavour, impossible to be described definitively. In the following phases, we therefore highlight in the first part the process with some practical elements and ways to navigate obstacles along the way, and in the second part we introduce you to a set of methods, approaches and strategies around trustmaking – with room for extension through your own experience.

While the subsequently described process phases follow a linear structure, we advise that you understand this practical approach as more of a supporting guideline, with phases overlapping and even happening in parallel. Based on our trustmaking project experience, rather than replicating a recipe rigorously, we encourage explorative and situated practices!

Relying on trustmaking principles, the proposed phases for building up an Urban Living Lab are:

- Phase 1: Understanding the context to facilitate the development of Urban Living Labs,
- Phase 2: Building an ULL community to encourage youth involvement and other partnerships,

- Phase 3: Co-research for collective exploration of the urban context and youth needs,
- Phase 4: Hands-on placemaking for co-ideation and collective idea implementation,
- Phase 5: Reflection, showcasing and celebrating to facilitate continuation

*Phase 1:
Understanding the Context to Facilitate the
Development of Urban Living Labs*

Prior to launching an Urban Living Lab based on trustmaking principles, several key factors need to be considered regarding the local context to facilitate the development and implementation of the ULL. Consciously choosing the scale and the context of the project is key, in order to accomplish geographical embeddedness as well as participation and stakeholder involvement¹ to build a reliable ULL community. Decide at what scale and in which context the ULL is going to be implemented, remembering that ULLs have the prior aim of societal impacts in real-world spaces in close collaboration with actors from practice.² Whether you envision multiple workshops in different green spaces across the city, or choose to focus the activities of the ULL on a specific green space (e.g., a local youth club and its surrounding green spaces), it is important to define the general scope of your Urban Living Lab. Gathering general information about the youth situation and current possibilities of participation in the urban planning

processes at a chosen scale/area, is another important key factor. In order to be able to plan your ULL accurately, it is essential to gather information about the local context to be able to co-create situated activities in the later stages. Try finding answers to the following questions:

- What are the general social, cultural, economic and environmental characteristics and distinctive features of the chosen area of intervention?
- What are the main organizational and urban reference points to youth in the given context (e.g. schools, youth clubs, certain urban spaces where youth meet and spend time etc.)?
- Does the municipality or city administration have a youth council department or specific policy guidelines on youth?
- Do youth already actively shape their environment (e.g. self-organized youth groups, municipal programmes dedicated to youth ideas for urban spaces or informal ways to shape their environment)?
- Do you already know about youth needs and their challenges/conflicts in relation to the use of urban spaces?

There are multiple ways in which you can gather this information. Look at the second part of this text to find out useful approaches and methods on how to get answers to these questions. At that point, the detailed understanding of the context in which you are going to act will incrementally increase during the co-research phase, but the general knowledge in this phase will enable you to situate your further activities better.

*Phase 2:
Building an ULL Community to Encourage Youth
Involvement and Other Partnerships*

As mentioned, Urban Living Labs are collaborative, real-world spaces where stakeholders come together to co-create, test, and implement innovative solutions to urban challenges. This means that building a community (Phase 2) and collectively exploring stakeholders' needs (Phase 3) are happening in parallel, in order not only to build on and respond to local needs but also to collaboratively work on the ULLs' project definition.³ When starting a youth-oriented ULL, it is necessary to know youth and other people who are relevant for the project's aims, beyond the scope of the project team. Mapping stakeholders or creating an open list of individuals, groups, or organizations that may have an interest in, or may be impacted by, the activities, goals, and outcomes of the lab is the first step to facilitate a proactive communication in the highly heterogeneous setting of ULLs.⁴ The groups vary from context to context. We suggest the mapping of stakeholders, who may be important to consider and/or involve in your project, along the following categories⁵:

- Youth – the main stakeholder of the project: formal and informal groups of young people, schoolchildren, visitors of a youth club, users of a skate park, and citizens up to 18 years old. It is up to your specific ULL setting which youth groups to involve in the project.

- Rights-holders: institutions or organizations with legal and/or customary rights over the place(s), that is/are going to be of an interest to your ULL. Some rights-holder groups may also have responsibilities for managing the place or parts of it. Examples include the city or municipality, the region or district, ministries, housing associations, private owners etc.
- Managers: this refers to institutions and other types of entities, as well as the individuals working within those institutions, which are recognized, responsible and accountable for managing the place. Examples include a certain administrative department of the municipality, NGOs or associations, private owners, businesses, housing associations or developers.
- Other stakeholders: local communities and/or cultural groups who have direct or indirect interests, concerns and influence over the place, but do not necessarily have a legally or socially recognized entitlement over the place's resources or their management. Examples include local communities, cultural and educational institutions, students, NGOs or associations, tourists, businesses, future residents, protest organizations etc.

These categories are a useful reference point; however, we stress the importance to differentiate and ask questions such as who is meant by youth and young people, and to not generalize the very different realities of young people's lives. Within these different stakeholders, it is also important to already identify institutions or persons that

might have relevant interests to take up the potential of long-term, transferable results.⁶

Additionally, we have some practical tips for building a successful ULL community based on trustmaking principles that tackle issues such as: establishing contact with different stakeholders; engagement in line with needs; and building on networks that are already on-site. These include:

- Building a core partnership: identify the motivated and available main actors of the ULL. The core partnership may evolve and change within time, but only motivated and present partners, interested to collaborate, can make it possible. For a successful collaboration it is important to identify these door-openers. When building a core partnership it is important to understand and acknowledge what motivates each of the people involved to engage in the initiative and what are the levers to cultivate their engagement.
- Building on existing networks and frameworks: search for synergies with existing networks, activities and frameworks that can facilitate and enrich your ULL. You may have identified these during the context analysis, e.g. participatory budgeting, union of youth organizations, and others.
- Establish shared governance: define the roles and responsibilities within the partnership. Aim for

shared-governance and horizontal exchange by acknowledging the roles and responsibilities across a group rather than concentrating on a hierarchical structure that would enforce issues of legitimacy, power, and normativity. Encourage and facilitate youth leadership as much as possible and make sure young people's perspectives are on an equal footing with other (more powerful) stakeholders. Trustmaking can only be successful if the voices of young people are truly valued by adults, such as researchers, professionals or civil servants in the city administration.

- Establish partner communication channels and routines: within the partnership, agree on the most suitable communication channel adapted to youth or public administration routines in order to facilitate engagement in line with needs, e.g. regular email updates, weekly meetings, social media groups etc.
- Creating the setting for an open community: keep the community open to other potential partners and interested people, who could enrich your ULL. To address a lack of specific competences, collaboration with external partners is recommended. Not all the partners have to be core partners. Acknowledge and foster different levels of involvement as important care work in your ULL.
- To address the risk of low youth involvement, partnerships with youth organizations should be established, activities tailored to young people, and

youth-oriented communication channels utilized. Low involvement from city administration can be mitigated by engaging motivated and interested individuals or departments, ideally through existing contacts. It is crucial to transparently communicate the project's benefits, provide regular updates on progress, and define municipal workers' roles based on their availability and interests.

*Phase 3:
Co-Research for Collective Exploration
of the Urban Context and Youth Needs*

The purpose of the co-research phase is to generate collective knowledge about the context in an engaging way and to identify needs and expectations of youth and other stakeholders towards the city's green infrastructure and/or particular public spaces. Co-research activities expand the understanding about the given context which will facilitate new ideas as a focus of hands-on activities and enhance the co-development of these ideas. All the main stakeholders should be involved in the co-research activities with the aim to gain as many relevant perspectives as possible (e. g. by youth, professionals, civil servants, youth workers), and encourage the co-design of further project plans. Co-research also fosters building the ULL community and a collaborative step towards building trust between different stakeholders – still allowing for differences to emerge and challenging preconceptions. An important first step to take in this phase is to identify

questions that will guide your co-research activities and eventually modify them according to youth or other stakeholders' inputs.

Co-research activities with participants of different age groups and professional backgrounds are a challenge. Heterogeneous participant settings demand careful preparation and in-depth knowledge of the needs and demands of the different groups. Our trustmaking experience showed that building relations between different stakeholders incrementally towards a 'contact zone' is effective. Specific co-research activities with one group at a time (young people or professionals/planners) allow for a focused approach and create safe spaces. Co-research activities can also be carried out in parallel (parallel research activities are implemented with each stakeholder group and then the results are integrated).

Advanced ULL settings with established stakeholder groups or stakeholders with similar routines, co-research capacities or institutional logics also allow for joint co-research activities (e. g. youth workers and civil servants participate in the activity together) that further enhance mutual learning and capacity building. There are many types of co-research activities that you can implement in order to gain valuable insights from the involved stakeholders. The most common formats are surveys, individual and group interviews (focus groups), but more youth-oriented and experimental ways, such as explorative bike rides, audio and photographic explorations, joint city mappings are even more effective for engaging young people. For further details and inspiration see the second part of this text, where we

introduce a set of methods, approaches and strategies. The results of the co-research phase vary according to the chosen co-research methods, ranging from a co-created map of places, that are currently relevant to youth or envisioned places of future hands-on activities via summarized insights from the workshop in the form of blogpost or film, to sound beats of youth's favourite park area – anything that helps to build shared knowledge between the participants of the ULL.

*Phase 4:
Hands-on Placemaking for Co-Ideation
and Collective Idea Implementation*

The previous project phases enabled you to bring onboard various stakeholders, to understand the context and youth needs in relation to green infrastructure or public spaces that are the focus of the project, and to get co-created inspiration for hands-on activities. This collective knowledge is the basis and the gateway to the next phase – using a hands-on placemaking approach for the co-ideation of (tangible) solutions and their implementation.

Hands-on placemaking is an approach to create or transform public spaces through active, collaborative, and practical engagement by community members, designers, and stakeholders. Unlike purely theoretical or top-down planning, hands-on placemaking emphasizes direct, on-the-ground involvement, where participants actively contribute to developing the design, building, and to maintaining a space. This often includes activities such

as community-led design workshops, painting, planting, constructing, and setting up interactive features or public art installations. An experimental approach in your ULL also provides the opportunity to learn what can contribute to positive change.⁷

In the context of your Urban Living Lab, hands-on placemaking is a way to empower youth as urban changemakers by building capacities and involving them directly in shaping their environments. This active participation fosters a sense of ownership and pride, while building creativity, teamwork, and problem-solving skills essential for young creators who want to make their cities more green and sustainable. Since hands-on placemaking is a collaborative process, building trust between the involved stakeholders (young people, city administration etc.) is essential. At the same time, hands-on placemaking allows different age groups to collaborate. Through this collaboration, a contact zone is established (e.g. this could be such an activity as young people inviting civil servants to jointly play a co-created hockey game).

The main practical goals of this phase are:

- Generating an environment that is surprising and inspires many relevant ideas for a public space, green infrastructure or the ULL site. The ideation should be based on the understanding and knowledge co-generated in previous project phases and on the input from new participants.
- Creating a process that allows for choosing the most relevant ideas according to the pre-agreed criteria.

- Co-constructing the hands-on project or its prototype (a tangible, trial version of a community-driven design or space feature, built to test ideas and gather feedback before final implementation).

There are various hands-on placemaking approaches that can be used to achieve tangible goals. Tangible results of placemaking activities, such as a piece of urban furniture, plant bed, a mural or a hockey field, are extremely motivating for youth, as seeing their efforts materializing and having an impact on the environment can be very rewarding. Browse through the second part of this text or look at the activities in section 3 on Urban Living Labs for inspiration! Tips for implementing successful hands-on placemaking activities:

- Establish clear links between all ULL activities. A cohesive and integrated approach ensures that activities reinforce each other, enhancing the overall impact and effectiveness of the ULL. Weak continuity between activities can be avoided by setting clear, connected goals for each stage of the project, using a 'build-up' approach where one activity informs the next, and ensuring coherent communication that ties all activities together.
- Start from comfort zones at the beginning. Engaging the community and local youth effectively requires starting from within their comfort zones and organizing interactive, community-building activities around safe and familiar spaces.

- Once trust is established, create events and experiences which are different from young people's everyday lives and something out of the ordinary. Having moments of being positively surprised will create strong and special memories
- Early scheduling is essential for effective planning and coordination especially in this setting of highly heterogeneous stakeholder groups. Bureaucratic challenges, such as delays or issues with municipal processes, can be managed by identifying required permissions and resources early, being well-informed, and planning extra time in the project schedule. Recognizing that trustmaking can be a lengthy process, a flexible timeline should be designed with additional time allocated if needed.
- Food is important! Eating together facilitates relationships and motivates. Include snacking and common meals as part of your programme.
- Choose appropriate communication channels and digital means, those that are comfortable and suitable for youth, the stakeholders involved, and yourself.
- Build partnerships with your ULL organizations and youth clubs that actually care about the cause – their involvement is important to ensure continuous youth involvement. Also, stay open and seek involvement of those youth that do not belong to any club or organization and/or come from vulnerable backgrounds.

*Phase 5:
Reflection, Showcasing and Celebrating
to Facilitate Continuation*

Congratulations! You achieved the main tangible and intangible goals of your ULL! But what's next? Showcasing and celebrating the results is one way to locally and broadly communicate your achievements. You can invite stakeholders and others to a celebration, co-organize a sports game or arrange a gathering where all stakeholders present the ULL journey and achievements – and most importantly celebrate the efforts of all ULL participants. After having concluded your ULL project cycle, showcase the results not only among the participants of the ULL, but also within the wider community and international networks, through conferences and publications.

Creating room and time for reflection in this phase is essential, even though this should be the case throughout all project stages. Cross-learning workshops allow the transfer of learning between all engaged stakeholders, and open up the possibilities to identify opportunities for continuation. You hopefully have identified opportunities for the continuation or upscaling of the ULL activities already at the beginning and during the implementation of your ULL. If not, it might be a good occasion to reflect on and discuss the possibilities with relevant stakeholders during or shortly after the conclusion of the first edition of the ULL. The established contact zone between different stakeholders will facilitate a transfer of results and the applicability to other contexts. The opportunities

of a transfer can vary according to the context and may include the following: integrating a trust-based ULL approach to the urban development routines of the local administration; looking for funding for organizing another larger-scale edition of the ULL; transferring the learning from this approach to another city, district or location; or joining another network and enriching it with your ULL experience and trustmaking method.

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A Catalogue of Trustmaking Practices

The Trustmaking Collective

Walking Focus Group

Collectively Exploring Sites of Transformation

The Walking Focus Group is a moderated group discussion set in motion. As a qualitative research method, it combines the method of the walking interview with the focus group method, by involving multiple participants in a guided, mobile discussion, where they explore a specific urban area together. In walking interviews, researchers walk together around specific locations and engage in conversation with the participant, exploring the connections between self and location. The focus group method gathers multiple participants to discuss a particular topic or issue. The combination of both allows for a collective exchange of perspectives that reflects diverse insights and the shared built environment experience. The Walking Focus Group is particularly effective for examining socio-spatial aspects of urban transformation, as it enables participants to experience and respond to an environment as they traverse it. For example, when exploring youth engagement in urban renewal projects, a Walking Focus Group might bring together social workers, urban planners, and young residents to discuss potential developments or public spaces. Researchers may begin with brief input talks from facilitators or experts to frame the discussion and encourage participants to share immediate impressions and ideas as they encounter different sites. Both dialogue and the spatial context should be documented through audio recordings, mappings, and photographs. By capturing

participants' responses directly within the spaces being discussed, the Walking Focus Group reveals unique insights into how individuals and groups perceive and interact with their surroundings, facilitating a richer understanding of collective urban experiences and aspirations. Helpful advice: instead of the researcher documenting the insights of the exchange in a map, the Walking Focus Group can be combined with a Collective Mapping.

TARGET GROUP DURATION

Young people (different age groups fit for walking)
Preparation involves definition of the route and its stops, organizing inputs at different locations.
The joint walk should not exceed two hours.

APPLICABLE IN PROJECT PHASE

*Phase 1 — Understanding the context,
Phase 3 — Co-research for collective exploration.*

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

Site-map with indication of route and stops, camera, audio-recorder and printed or digital map for documentation.

TESTED BY

ULL Vienna

Collective Mapping

Exploring Spatial Likes and Dislikes

Collective Mapping enables participants to understand which places in a chosen geographic area (city, district, park etc.) are already appreciated by youth and which could become transformed into more youth-oriented spaces. The same activity can also be performed with city administration to identify places that are both of interest to the city municipality and to young people. Steps for Collective Mapping:

1. Print a large-scale map of the chosen area.
2. Prepare a legend of the map. Print or draw a legend for the map assigning different emoticons to these categories: places that I like (are important to me); places that I would like to change; places that I would like to protect; places that I would like to hide. If you're working with the administration, the legend can include two categories: places that are liked / used by youth and places that have the potential to be more youth-oriented.
3. Prepare the sticky notes. Use pre-made or print-out stickers with the emoticons mentioned above. As an alternative you can use sticky notes of different colours.
4. Organize a collective mapping workshop or invite young people to map the places in other circumstances: as passers-by in the city, or as participants of an event etc.

The result of the Collective Mapping gives you an overview of how and where young people interact with urban spaces in a selected area, and helps to identify which places could be transformed to meet youth needs. Helpful advice: instead of stickers with a variety of emoticons, you can use sticky notes of different colours.

TARGET GROUP	Young people and city administration personnel (no age limit).
DURATION	Preparation time is approximately five hours (printing maps and stickers), and for implementation two to four hours are recommended.
APPLICABLE IN PROJECT PHASE	Phase 1 — <i>Understanding the context</i> , Phase 3 — <i>Co-research for collective exploration</i> .
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	City/location map with a legend, stickers with emoticons.
TESTED BY	ULL Panevėžys.

Youth-to-Youth Interviews

Facilitating Peer Interaction

Youth-to-Youth Interviews are a participatory qualitative research method that harnesses peer interaction to generate deeper insights into young people's perspectives, experiences, and behaviours. Rooted in the principles of participatory action research, this method involves young participants interviewing their peers in a structured yet conversational setting. It builds on the advantages of shared lived experiences and mutual understanding between interviewer and interviewee, fostering a sense of trust and openness that can yield richer data. Traditional qualitative methods often rely on researcher-led approaches that can unintentionally introduce a sense of hierarchy or detachment between the researcher and participants. In contrast, the Youth-to-Youth Interview method bridges this gap by empowering young people to take on the role of researchers. To understand the ways young people engage with public spaces this Youth-to-Youth Interview method relies on co-creating the research questions together with youth that are hired and paid as researchers to do this work together with the project team. Hiring the young people is a way of showing them that their work is valued. By situating the conversation within a peer-to-peer framework, the Youth-to-Youth Interview method not only generates valuable data but also empowers young people to contribute actively to research and build skills. This empowerment fosters a sense of ownership over the

narratives being shared and can lead to more effective and sustainable solutions to the issues being explored.

Helpful advice: training of interviewees is important. Ethical considerations and consensus need to be prepared and clarified before the interviewing process.

TARGET GROUP	Young people (15–24 years).
DURATION	The preparation takes around four to six hours including initial planning and research on survey questions, brainstorming session together with youth to prepare survey questions, preparation and printing of surveys, briefing youth on conducting the surveys.
APPLICABLE IN PROJECT PHASE	<i>Phase 1 – Understanding the context,</i> <i>Phase 3 – Co-research for collective exploration.</i>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Map of the site if necessary, printed surveys and clipboards.
TESTED BY	ULL Oslo.

Public Space Analysis with Youth

Critically Engaging with Policies on Urban Space Interaction

The Public Space Analysis with Youth is an activity where youth can reflect on the municipality's criteria for the key characteristics that define a quality public space. After reflecting on these criteria, youth walk around the neighbourhood to observe and analyse local public spaces, evaluating them based on the municipality's own standards. This method encourages critical thinking and civic engagement as participants assess how well their environment meets the criteria that the municipality itself has set, and what other criteria could be added to better reflect youth needs. It also fosters a sense of ownership over their urban surroundings and promotes discussions on potential improvements. This activity can also be combined with a skills-building course for youth on a topic that they value: for example, youth could be first offered a short photo course to learn how to document their observations with photos. After the activity, participants should be guided to reflect on the findings as a group, discussing what works well and what could be improved in the neighbourhood's public spaces. This activity helps young people connect with their community while developing valuable skills in urban analysis and participatory planning.

TARGET GROUP DURATION

Young people (15–24 years).
For preparation, calculate four hours (research into the principles for a quality public space as defined by your municipality, which can be done together with youth or presented to them). The implementation of the analysis takes three hours.

APPLICABLE IN PROJECT PHASE MATERIALS AND RESOURCES TESTED BY

Phase 1 — Understanding the context,
Phase 3 — Co-research for collective exploration.
Maps, printed principles for a quality public space (specific to city/municipality), good shoes for walking around the city.
ULL Oslo.

Photovoice

Youth-led Visual Exploration of Urban Spaces

Photovoice is a participatory photography method that seeks to empower different target groups. The photos allow for a creative approach towards the built environment or important matters related to the participants. For a youth-oriented urban space project, young people are asked to walk around the city and collect, describe, and evaluate the place in the perspective of youth preferences.

The steps of implementing this activity are as follows:

1. Prepare the task for the participants. It is optional but very helpful to prepare a map for participants where a few important objects are already listed. This helps participants to orientate themselves around the city.
2. Ask participants to walk around the city and observe the objects and landscapes of the city.
3. Make photos of the objects, which in their opinion are important for youth.
4. Analyse the area and objects. Participants are invited to take notes about their observations
5. The photos are then discussed in a group session to explore and elaborate on the experiences in greater depth.

6. Prepare a final evaluation and share findings with other participants, or with the city administration/municipality.

The findings of Photovoice can be the starting point for co-creation activities that initiate changes in the urban area. Through the exhibition of the photos, public awareness is raised. Also, this approach can promote a critical dialogue of youth about urban spaces and build capacities to voice concerns and needs related to the built environment.

Helpful advice: this task can be accomplished in different groups or be adapted for a different setting or purpose.

TARGET GROUP	Young people (15 years onwards).
DURATION	Preparation takes around eight hours. For walks and photo taking calculate one to three hours. Discussion session can be set around two hours. Exhibition or other public events afterwards require more preparation time.
APPLICABLE IN PROJECT PHASE	<i>Phase 1 – Understanding the context,</i> <i>Phase 3 – Co-research for collective exploration.</i>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Map (optional).
TESTED BY	<i>ULL Panevėžys.</i>

Remixing City Beats

Making the Urban Soundscape Tangible

The Remixing City Beats method invites participants to engage with their surroundings by capturing and remixing urban sounds to create a unique city beat. Participants start by exploring diverse locations - such as a supermarket car park, a park playground, or a subway near railway tracks - using recording devices to collect ambient noises. Participants can work individually or in groups to capture sounds they feel define their environment. Typical sounds might include children playing, trams passing, shopping trolleys squeaking, crows cawing, and voices speaking in different languages. Back in the workspace, these recordings are transferred to a computer and played back to the group, sparking a guessing game: is that a crow or a squeaky gate? This interactive activity highlights the distinctive soundscapes of each location. Participants then assign the sounds to buttons on a MIDI controller and experiment by layering and mixing them into their own city soundtracks. Over time, sounds are overdubbed and remixed, fostering creativity and collaboration. Professional recording equipment generates significant interest, though encouraging certain participants to engage with the technology requires extra support, emphasizing the importance of trust-building. Entrusting participants with valuable devices empowers them and deepens their engagement. The workshop culminates in the creation of custom city beats, mixed by facilitators, which contribute

to larger projects, such as soundtracks for community events. This method demonstrates how soundscapes can be both a medium for creative expression and a tool for building trust and connection.

TARGET GROUP
DURATION

Young people (12-17 years).
Calculate around two hours to explore the neighbourhood and collect recordings and then again two hours for the remixing back in the workspace; post-production of the tracks by facilitators requires extra time.

APPLICABLE IN
PROJECT PHASE

*Phase 1 — Understanding the context,
Phase 3 — Co-research for collective exploration.*

MATERIALS AND
RESOURCES

Sound recording device or smart phones,
software for mixing sounds.

TESTED BY

ULL Vienna.

Exploratory Treasure Hunt

Teambuilding within Spatial Settings

The exploratory treasure hunt is a method tailored for younger people of school age (from around 11 to 15 years old) and gives an opportunity for them to explore their surrounding environment in a fun and engaging way.

Tips for the method application:

1. Set the goals that you want to reach with this activity: Do you want the young participants to visit and observe the space from different angles and perspectives? Do you want to guide them with step-by-step guidance into reaching one goal?
2. Think of a reward for the group that wins the game.
3. Choose a public space (e.g. a green area near the school or a public square).
4. Based on the goal set, think of up to five tasks that children could execute once they reach the intermediate spots e.g. take a selfie in a place that you like / is beautiful / you enjoy in this square; choose and take a selfie of a place that you don't like / is ugly / inappropriate in this square and think of what you would most like to do in this place (such as skateboarding, climbing on a climbing wall, painting graffiti, training your pets etc.); dream big and take a photo of a place in the

square that you think would be suitable for this activity.

5. Design clues that will help the participants to find the treasure by following step-by-step guidance. Use a drawn or printed map for this purpose.
6. Guide the participants through the game, encouraging their leadership.

As a result, depending on your goals set, the activity may lead to strengthened teamwork and collaboration skills as well as valuable reflections and ideas for the public space they are exploring.

TARGET GROUP
DURATION

Young people (10-15 years).
Preparation takes around four hours and the implementation should be set for one and a half hours.

APPLICABLE IN
PROJECT PHASE

Phase 1 – Understanding the context,
Phase 2 – Building an ULL community.

MATERIALS AND
RESOURCES

Map, objects to find tasks and a reward for the winning team.

TESTED BY

ULL Panevėžys.

Applied Theatre Workshop

Teambuilding and Urban Exploration

The trustmaking-oriented Applied Theatre Workshop is a method that can help build trust and self-confidence between the participants and encourages a playful dialogue on youth relationships to urban spaces. The method/workshop is structured in three parts:

1. **Introduction:** Ice-breaking and teambuilding activities aimed at building trust and confidence among the participants.
2. **Living sculptures:** Participants of the workshops collaborate in forming living sculptures to express their ideas. The types of ideas to be expressed as living sculpture can be chosen according to your context and needs, e.g. a living sculpture that represents how young people feel towards the city; their idea for a dream public garden, etc.
3. **Presentation and discussion:** The living sculptures are presented and discussed amongst all participants facilitating and encouraging dialogue on youth relationships to urban spaces.

As a result, self-confidence among participants is increased and topics related to young people's relationships with the urban environment are explored, visualized and discussed.

Helpful advice: if you do not feel confident in guiding theatrical experiences, collaborate with a professional who has direct experience in (applied) theatre.

TARGET GROUP	Young people (15 years onwards).
DURATION	Preparation takes around four hours and implementation should be calculated with two hours.
APPLICABLE IN PROJECT PHASE	<i>Phase 1 – Understanding the context, Phase 2 – Building an ULL community, Phase 3 – Co-research for collective exploration.</i>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Indoor or outdoor space for workshop.
TESTED BY	<i>ULL Panevėžys.</i>

Co-created Film Making

Exploring Urban Neighbourhoods Through a Youth Perspective

Co-creating a documentary film about the neighbourhood is an active tool which brings different stakeholders together. In a workshop series, facilitated by professional film makers, it involves learning the necessary film-making, recording, and video editing techniques. Additionally, implementation days are dedicated to the exploration of the neighbourhood in a first round and the interviewing of stakeholders in the neighbourhood in a second round. While the film as an outcome can be valuable as a means to communicate with the wider public youth perspectives on the neighbourhood, the actual process of making a film is powerful and, thus, can be the beginning of several initiatives involving youth in the neighbourhood. The documentary film screening involves all co-creators and interested people in the neighbourhood. Additionally, different occasions such as film festivals with a wider set of audiences, can help to initiate a discussion in a broader context and create awareness for youth perspectives.

Helpful advice: clarification of ethical issues and consent are key before starting the project. Copyrights and ownership of the film need to be clarified with the filmmakers and the project team beforehand.

TARGET GROUP	Young people (15 years onwards), film makers and researchers.
DURATION	Preparation takes four months.
APPLICABLE IN PROJECT PHASE	<i>Phase 1 – Understanding the context, Phase 2 – Building an ULL community, Phase 3 – Co-research for collective exploration.</i>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Audio and video recorder, software for video editing.
TESTED BY	<i>ULL Rotterdam.</i>

Collective Bike Ride

Reclaim, Explore, Empower

The Collective Bike Ride method engages youth in a collective cycling experience that promotes urban exploration and awareness of mobility and sustainability. It fosters empowerment, self-efficacy, and critical thinking by combining safe cycling practices with thematic stops that inspire reflection on urban spaces. By encouraging physical activity, shared experiences, and critical perspectives, it creates an engaging connection with cities and communities. Planning an accessible route tailored to participants' skills and designed to provoke meaningful reflections is crucial. Stops at key locations, such as green spaces or familiar areas, allow discussions on strengths and weaknesses of the urban infrastructure. Thematic stops may include guest speakers, hands-on activities, or moments of reflection, linking the ride's purpose to the locations. Materials like flags, snacks, water, and maps ensure energy, safety, and focus, while optional elements like sound systems enhance communication and ambiance. Before the ride, participants practice group cycling skills – hand signals, formations, and traffic navigation – ensuring confidence and safety. The journey starts at a central meeting point with bike checks, a safety briefing, and supply distribution. Along the route, scheduled stops encourage observations, discussions, and documentation of urban mobility challenges and opportunities. These moments inspire participants to critically engage with

their surroundings and explore potential solutions. The ride concludes at a significant location, such as a park or reclaimed space, where participants reflect on their experiences through discussions, creative activities, or journaling. By documenting their insights, they identify challenges and propose ideas for improving mobility and public spaces. This dynamic method fosters learning, connection, and action, inspiring participants to engage meaningfully with urban environments.

TARGET GROUP
DURATION

Young people (15 years onwards).
Preparation involves several days, involves the tour planning, contacting presenters / initiatives along the route, riding along the planned route to check for obstacles / other potential problems, one-hour bike training session with youth. Implementation takes three to six hours including breaks and closing session (dependent on chosen route).

APPLICABLE IN
PROJECT PHASE
MATERIALS AND
RESOURCES
TESTED BY

Phase 1 – *Understanding the context*,
Phase 3 – *Co-research for collective exploration*.
Planned route on a GPS app or a map, bikes, security measures (helmets, vests etc.).
ULL Vienna, ULL Panevėžys.

Trustmaking Workshop

Relating to Youth Organizations and Urban Space

This method is designed to enable young people to enhance trust either in urban settings, in relation to a place that they care about, or in organizational settings (youth clubs, informal groups etc.). The participants of the workshop can choose whether to work with an urban or organizational context. The workshop is structured in four parts:

1. Presentation on the importance and principles of trust in organizational and urban settings.
2. Analysis of either a youth organization or a place that could become more youth-oriented through categories of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the place (S.W.O.T analysis). The aim of this part is to understand the context in which trust can be cultivated and/or help to solve challenges identified by youth.
3. Group work facilitates the identification of intervention areas and trust-building, either in the organizational or urban settings. For organizational settings use the following questions: in which areas would you like to strengthen trust in your organization (empowerment, vulnerability, familiarity, openness, stability)? What measures

would you like to take to build trust in this area (technology, meetings, information, assessments, research, training, other)? For urban settings use the following questions: ideas - what solutions would make this place more attractive to young people (sports facilities, events, other)? Means/tools: what measures could help to implement these ideas (funding, meetings, piloting, research, information and communication, training, other)? Areas of Trust – where would these measures help build trust in the context of urban planning (empowerment, vulnerability, familiarity, openness, stability)?

4. Presentations and discussion in a plenary session: As a result, each of the participating teams produces their strategies to build trust in youth organizations and urban spaces.

Helpful advice: it is not necessary to include both – urban and organizational dimensions – in the activity; according to the target group and context it is possible to choose and concentrate on one of them.

TARGET GROUP
DURATION

Young people (15 years onwards) and professionals.
Preparation takes four hours (presentation, printing and preparing materials) and the workshop duration is set at two and a half hours.

APPLICABLE IN
PROJECT PHASE

Phase 2 – Building an ULL community.

MATERIALS AND
RESOURCES

Presentation material (optional), workshop canvases, pens, sticky notes.

TESTED BY

ULL Panevėžys.

One-to-One Buddy System

Fostering an Exchange on Urban Matters

While group activities create community feeling, the one-to-one buddy system between young people and professionals (e.g., municipal workers, architects) helps build personal connection. It also provides a chance to understand better each other's role and interest in co-creating a neighbourhood. Create pairs only after several group activities so that stakeholders can get to know one another before working one-to-one. There are different options when it comes to pairing: One idea is to let stakeholders decide with whom they would like to work. This requires a careful moderation to avoid any uncomfortable situations. Other options are to draw lots or assign buddies by the project team. In the latter case, whether a pair has some common features like interests may be considered as this helps build connections. The buddies are expected to meet regularly and discuss how the neighbourhood can be improved. In-between group activities during the period of the One-to-One Buddy System are important, especially for those buddies who do not meet on a regular basis (e.g. due to the lack of time and/or motivation). Youths provide their local knowledge, experience of the neighbourhood, and wishes for areas of improvement, while professionals make suggestions on how those wishes can be realised based on their professional knowledge. In this process of creating a future vision, mutual understanding can emerge. An exchange among different buddy pairs may be useful

to promote the level of motivation. Pairs document discussions and the process in a diary. The results of each pair may be presented to different audiences (e.g., residents and policy makers) in the form of design posters.

TARGET GROUP
DURATION

Young people (20-24 years) and young professionals.
Preparation takes one month and the implementation should be set for three months.

APPLICABLE IN
PROJECT PHASE
MATERIALS AND
RESOURCES
TESTED BY

Phase 2 – Building an ULL community.

Indoor and outdoor spaces to meet and present results.

ULL Rotterdam.

Intergenerational Urban Gardening *Planting Visions Across Ages*

The co-ideation workshop around the topic of urban gardening can be a great way to involve youth into hands-on placemaking activity, boost knowledge and awareness on urban sustainability, and foster intergenerational dialogue between different community members. The method includes two main parts:

1. Theoretic part (presentation): Introduction in the form of an informal presentation or a talk on urban gardening and its value to citizen groups of different ages, main urban gardening principles and tools. At the end of the presentation all-age participants understand what urban gardening is and what value it can create for them.
2. Practical part (co-ideation workshop): Co-design of a plant bed, including choosing form, soil, plants and maintenance strategies. Guided by an experienced urban gardener, the participants collaborate on answering these questions: what would you call your dream garden? Where and with whom would you like to start your dream garden? What plants would you like to grow in your dream garden? What architectural elements (e.g. raised beds, benches, hammock, etc.) could be installed in your garden? What could your dream garden look like? Draw it!

The result is a co-created concept of urban plant bed designs and maintenance strategies. Ideally, the ideation phase is followed by a hands-on co-construction phase when you meet with the same (or extended) group of people and implement the ideas generated in the previous workshop. The method can be applied both for only working with young people or as a platform for intergenerational dialogue. If both young people and older people are involved, their group interactions should be facilitated through professional guidance in order to prevent the conflicts between age groups and promote knowledge sharing on an equal level.

Helpful advice: collaboration with an urban gardening expert or a person who has direct experience in urban gardening is advised.

TARGET GROUP	Young people (15-24 years) and older people (65 years onwards), gardeners or urban gardening experts.
DURATION	preparation for the presentation and printing of canvases takes approximately four hours. The ideation workshop can be set for two hours. Possibly allow additional time for co-construction.
APPLICABLE IN	<i>Phase 3 — Co-research for collective exploration,</i>
PROJECT PHASE	<i>Phase 4 — Hands-on placemaking.</i>
MATERIALS AND	Presentation, workshop canvas, showcase of urban-
RESOURCES	gardening related tools and materials.
TESTED BY	<i>ULL Panevėžys.</i>

Public Space Gym

Appropriating Open Spaces for Sports

The Public Space Gym transforms public spaces into accessible spaces for moving our bodies, encouraging participants to reimagine urban spaces as inclusive areas for physical activity, social interaction, and reflection on shared resources. In a typical Public Space Gym session, participants learn basic sports techniques for different sports under the guidance of trainers, who introduce the activity not only as a form of exercise but as a tool for empowerment and connection to the urban landscape. After a brief introduction to the physical practice and its potential to promote diverse, low-threshold engagement, participants are invited to appropriate the space around them, reflecting on the role of public fields, playgrounds, and informal gym spaces as critical social infrastructure. This active exploration supports an embodied awareness of shared urban spaces fostering dialogue about the inclusivity and accessibility of such spaces, particularly for young people in urban settings. Through the physical activity the qualities of specific spaces are put to the test, e.g. while running up and down long staircases, using handrails for push-ups etc., which opens up re-thinking and re-purposing these qualities through the moving body. By using public squares, streets, and parks as exercise spaces, the Public Space Gym method highlights the potential of open areas to foster inclusion, belonging, and a sense of ownership among diverse community members, contributing to a socially just city.

TARGET GROUP
DURATION

Young people (15 years onwards).
Preparation includes a site-visit of the public space together with the sports trainers. A typical session consists of a 30 minute introduction and 60-90 minutes of training.
Phase 4 – Hands-on placemaking.

APPLICABLE IN
PROJECT PHASE

MATERIALS AND
RESOURCES

Specific training equipment depending on the sports.

TESTED BY

ULL Vienna.

Participatory Scenography Workshop

Green Scripted Realities

The aim of the Participatory Scenography Workshop is to offer young people a platform through the staging of analogue-digital spaces on which they can actively shape visions of the future in relation to urban development and climate change. This approach combines elements of collective self-presentation in real and virtual spaces. The aim is to uncover creative individual forms of expression of young people in social media and to make them usable for the joint creation of the future.

The Participatory Scenography Workshop encompasses artistic, exploratory, and performative elements of placemaking, and is comprised of five steps:

1. Firstly, participants reflect on design experiences from social media and incorporate them into productions in analogue spaces.
2. Secondly, they appropriate project areas and through scenographic and narrative techniques design creatures and story lines on future worlds. They are asked to develop imaginative creatures that combat climate change through the symbiotic coexistence of humans, animals, plants and machines. How do creatures and their world influence each other? Which location provides a good background for these creatures?

3. Thirdly, these fantasies take on concrete forms: costumes, props, and stage sets are created using simple materials.
4. Fourthly, the young people practice directing and collaboratively develop rules and roles. They use digital tools to effectively stage the analogue creations and record the scenes with smartphones.
5. Finally, the imagined worlds are brought to life as co-creative spaces, where the stages and settings for possible futures are explored and played out with others in a modal way. The participants present the worlds they have created and enable visitors to immerse themselves in them and actively participate. This method has the potential to create shared analogue-digital spaces for action and experience.

TARGET GROUP	12-16 years, ideally a school class with interlinking project or art lessons.
DURATION	Preparation takes one school hour each for preparation and follow-up and additional five school mornings (at least three hours per day).
APPLICABLE IN PROJECT PHASE	<i>Phase 4 — Hands-on placemaking.</i>
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	Paper, pencils, erasers, acrylic paints, markers, cutters, scissors, fabrics, cardboard boxes, old clothes, glue, adhesive tape, tools, found objects, lamps, internet, smartphone, social media account, wooden frame. Outdoor space should preferably be a publicly accessible open space, brownfield site, or urban development area.
TESTED BY	<i>ULL Vienna.</i>

Soil Kitchen Dinner

Connecting Local Resources and Youth Engagement

The Soil Kitchen approaches a place by working with its materials and resources, and initially tries to perceive it on a sensory level, to create awareness for the embeddedness of global challenges. Active engagement and joyful exploration of a place and its resources is a strategy for becoming conscious of the materiality of urban spaces and sharpens sensitivity for the associated challenges and solutions. Site-specific cuisine, food, fashion, handcrafts, agriculture, art and design, for example, are suitable mediators of exploration and offer diverse approaches to local materials. The Soil Kitchen, consisting of a workshop series and a final dinner, aims at co-creating a setting that allows for collective engagement with local resources. The choice of training techniques provided in workshops – clay pottery, fermentation, etc. – is primarily determined by the materials that characterize the specific environment. Each workshop introduces the respective local materials, the associated techniques for processing them (fermenting, pottery, screen printing . . .), the actors involved (farmers, local producers, artists . . .) and thus also the location. The aim of the workshops is to make local materials and the co-creation procedure visible. A dinner setting, as the final format, creates an inviting atmosphere for the presentation of techniques and workshop results. It allows for a contact zone by inviting other external guests. All elements of the dinner refer to the location,

displaying materials in a sensory and aesthetic manner: co-created plate made of local clay, fermented vegetables as local dishes, tablecloths printed with local plants etc. The young people are given responsibility for curating the dinner (the menu, dramaturgy, localisation, and aesthetic decoration). It is important to reflect on and playfully challenge the allocation of roles and responsibilities (e.g. role reversal between guests and table service at dinner). Via working with place-specific materials the method can be transferred to other local contexts.

Helpful advice: Soil Kitchen requires long-term engagement with a site (no ‘one-off’ event). Defining young participants’ roles and responsibilities by themselves takes time.

TARGET GROUP
DURATION

Young people (17-20 years).
Preparation involves several workshop days over a minimum of three to six months for the exploration of place, processing of local materials and training of techniques in workshop settings. The dinner implementation takes one day.
Phase 4 – Hands-on placemaking.

APPLICABLE IN
PROJECT PHASE
MATERIALS AND
RESOURCES
TESTED BY

Tools are dependent on local resources, kitchen facilities, indoor and outdoor locations for workshops.
ULL Vienna.

Co-Creation of Urban Furniture

From Urban Exploration to Public Space Intervention

The co-creation of urban furniture is a hands-on placemaking method, fostering a sense of ownership and agency among participants while addressing specific community needs for public (green) spaces. By engaging participants in the design process, the method ensures that urban furniture – such as benches, planters, or interactive installations – reflect the preferences of youth. The degrees of involvement can vary according to local settings and participants' capabilities. Phases and activities include:

1. Exploration of (green) public spaces: Participants receive a handout with prompts focused on infrastructure and sustainability to guide their exploration. They freely assign plant markers and descriptions to areas of interest.
2. Co-ideation: Seated in a circle, participants write personal ideas for the square, and then exchange sheets to build on the ideas of others. This process continues until all sheets are circulated. The group evaluates and selects the three most suitable ideas.
3. Co-construction: Guided by a craftsman or an architect, young people co-construct the selected urban furniture based on the chosen idea(s).

The results of the process include participants' increased capabilities to critically observe and identify areas suitable for intervention. The co-ideation results in a concrete idea for a material urban intervention, enhancing the youth-friendliness of public spaces.

Helpful advice: Involve youth as much as possible in all the stages of the activities, especially for example in the planning, choosing and buying materials. Share responsibilities according to their interest and capabilities. Collaborate with craftsmen, architects or artists in the implementation of the activities.

TARGET GROUP DURATION

Young people (15 years onwards).
Preparation takes several workshop days for initial planning, two days for preparing the construction and the materials, and two to three full days of co-construction.

APPLICABLE IN PROJECT PHASE MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

Phase 4 – Hands-on placemaking.

Indoor site for planning, outdoor site for construction (ideally sheltered from rain but with power outlet), workshop canvas, markers for exploration, flipchart / paper rolls for ideas, construction materials and tools, picnic mats and snacks.

TESTED BY

ULL Oslo, ULL Panevėžys.

Visual Visibility of Co-Creation

Highlighting Youth Contribution to Public Space

The Visual Visibility of Co-Creation is an approach that ensures the collaborative process behind public space design is recognized and celebrated through publicly accessible documentation, such as signage, plaques, or artistic displays. This approach highlights the contributions of youth and other community members, fostering a sense of pride and shared ownership while informing future users about the participatory nature of the space's creation.

The process typically starts at the beginning of a co-creation project by choosing how the co-creation process will be documented publicly for future public space users. Facilitators and participants collaboratively design the documentation format, which might include text, images, or symbols that reflect the identities and efforts of contributors. For instance, signage might narrate the design journey, showcase participants' names or artwork, or detail the project's goals and community impact. Digital components, like QR codes linking to multimedia content or websites, can also be integrated to provide a richer narrative. As an example, in our planning process for the indoor makerspace at H20 upper secondary school, the youth had the idea to make a 'generations wall' with tips and quotes from the youth that are in their final year at the school, so that younger youth coming in each year would

have ideas on how to use the space and to understand that it was co-created and valued by former youth at the school.

By embedding recognition into the space itself, the Visual Visibility of Co-Creation approach promotes transparency and accountability while reinforcing the value of collaborative placemaking. This visible acknowledgment serves not only as a marker of collective achievement but also as an invitation for other community members to engage with, and care for, the space.

TARGET GROUP

Young people (15-25 years).

DURATION

Calculate approximately six to eight hours for brainstorming sessions, design and co-construction processes.

APPLICABLE IN

Phase 4 — Hands-on placemaking,

PROJECT PHASE

Phase 5 — Reflection, showcasing and celebrating.

MATERIALS AND

Workshop materials with brainstorming questions for co-creative design and planning; digital screens or paper, canvas, painting materials and printing facilities for the final display.

RESOURCES

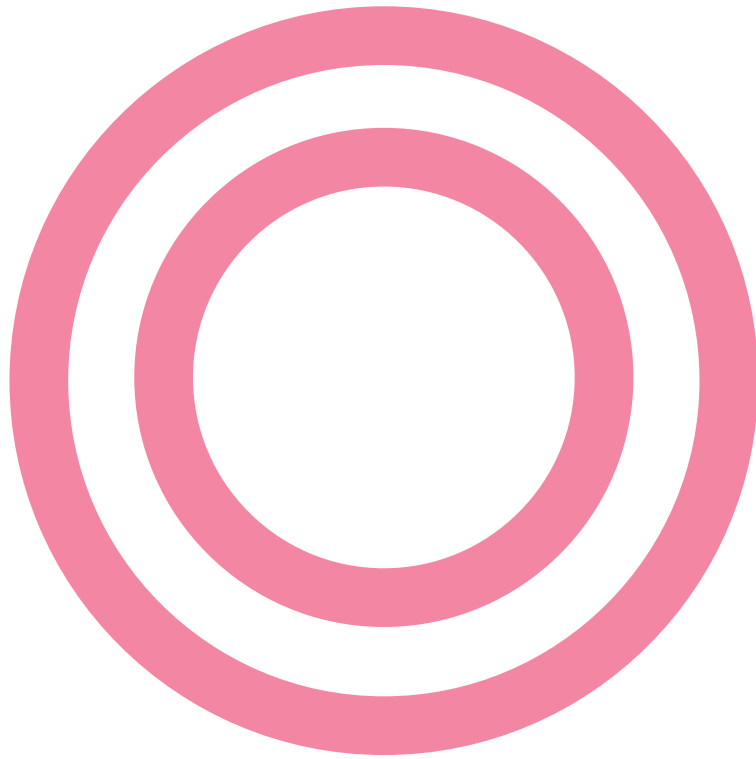
TESTED BY

ULL Oslo, ULL Vienna.



*III: Urban Living
Labs – Four Ways
of Trustmaking*

Urban Living Lab Oslo, Norway



Connect, Create, Build – Youth Work for Placemaking!

Kamran Surizehi and
Kimberly Weger

The Context of the Urban Living Lab Oslo

The Oslo Urban Living Lab (ULL) of the Trustmaking project takes place in the district of ‘Bydel Gamle Oslo’, or the Oslo Old City district. The Old City district is one of the most culturally rich and historically significant areas in the city. Located just east of Oslo’s city centre, it spans the sub-district neighbourhoods that include Grønland, Nedre Tøyen, Vålerenga, Ensjø, Kampen, Enerhaugen, Etterstad, Kværnerbyen, and Bispevika. The district holds historical importance as the original medieval heart of Oslo, and before 1945 the area had many neighbourhoods that were attractive areas with proximity to the sea. After 1945 however, the main railway, freight railway, and main highway were all routed through parts of the Oslo Old City district. This led to the area falling into recession and decay. In the 1980s and 90s, much of the Oslo Old City was considered a slum area, followed by revitalization efforts beginning in the 2000s.

The neighbourhoods in the Oslo Old City district have since developed into diverse and vibrant communities, often celebrated for their multicultural atmosphere. Grønland, for instance, is known for its bustling food markets and its lively immigrant community, which has introduced a rich array of international food, markets, and cultural festivals to the district. Tøyen, once considered one of the more overlooked areas of Oslo, has been revitalized in recent years, becoming a hub for contemporary art, trendy cafés, and Tøyen Park, which houses the Oslo Botanical Garden and the popular Natural History Museum. The area’s demographic profile reflects

a high percentage of long-term residents with immigrant backgrounds, with around 38 per cent of residents in the Oslo Old City district either immigrants or with foreign born parents. Residents come from a wide range of cultural backgrounds, with prominent numbers of immigrants from Poland, Somalia, Pakistan, and India, bringing with them a variety of cultural influences that are visible in local shops, restaurants, and festivals.

The Oslo Old City district also faces several social challenges. The area houses a much higher population of children and young people compared to Oslo as a whole, and the neighbourhoods of Grønland and Nedre Tøyen have three to four times higher levels of low-income families with children than the average for Oslo, and higher rates of unemployment compared to other districts in Oslo. These challenges are exacerbated by the rising cost of living in Oslo, which has put pressure on many residents in these traditionally affordable neighbourhoods to move to other parts of the city. The area has also experienced issues with crime, especially drug-related incidents.

Housing affordability is another significant concern in the Oslo Old City district, particularly as parts of the district, like Bjørvika, undergo rapid development. New luxury apartment buildings and modern infrastructure have led to gentrification, which have pushed up housing prices and threatened to displace long-term residents, particularly because of the high numbers of long-term residents who do not own their residences – as is common in Grønland – with over 50 per cent of residents renting rather than owning their residences. Correspondingly, these neighbourhoods have comparatively high

percentages of social housing, with the Nedre Tøyen neighbourhood containing the highest percentage of social housing in Oslo per capita (17 per cent). This dynamic creates a unique tension in the Oslo Old City district, as it seeks to balance growth and modernization with social inclusion and accessibility. To address these issues, the municipal administration has launched initiatives such as the neighbourhood uplift programme (områdeløft), which invests in urban regeneration and social opportunities for young people in the area, aiming to foster more equitable communities.

Within this context, the needs of children and young people are highly prioritized in the Oslo Old City district, especially in areas with socioeconomic challenges and through the ‘områdeløft’ (area ‘uplift’) programmes. However, in terms of identified needs, cultural and voluntary actors highlight the need for both indoor and outdoor premises in the local area for their activity offerings. For outdoor premises, a recent assessment of park spaces carried out by the municipal administration highlighted the need for renovation of some, maintenance of others, and a need for winter programming for many of these outdoor leisure spaces. The renewal of outdoor spaces also goes hand in hand with requirements on universal design, attractiveness, accessibility, biodiversity, and climate adaptation. Persistent challenges with cleanliness and sanitation, and maintenance of green spaces in addition to safety are ongoing challenges the Oslo Old City district administration has identified. The city has detected a need to strengthen collaborations between the neighbourhood police, businesses and the municipal administration and to adapt neighbourhood

projects within the neighbourhood improvement efforts to ongoing initiatives for safer public areas. Another identified challenge is the high demand for summer and part-time jobs among youth in Tøyen and Grønland. The municipal administration works to develop methods and collaboration with employers in the public and private sectors to provide more young people with meaningful work experience. Another identified challenge is civic participation, which has been prioritized through the creation of advisory committees in the district such as the Youth Council, the Council for the Elderly, the Council for Persons with Disabilities, and the Council for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, along with training for youth in summer jobs through the Young Urban Farmers programme. In terms of civic participation, Bykuben (the Municipal Centre for Urban Ecology in Oslo) has also prioritized connections with the public and participation in the planning processes for municipal changes.

Despite the prioritization of participation in municipal decision-making structures, and some very successful programmes, Bykuben and other municipal actors continue to face challenges of how to get Oslo residents to participate in city-making and change processes. Particularly with youth, the municipality faces the challenges of:

1. Lack of engagement to create change in the neighbourhood: this lack of active citizenship is particularly visible in Bykuben's programmes where they want to facilitate citizens' own ideas but are struggling with a lack of participation and/or interest;

2. Fragmented participation processes which create confusion for youth: there are many youth projects in Oslo but it is often not visible to youth how these projects are connected to municipal departments such as the planning and building department (PBE);
3. Lack of visibility of participatory input: youth that are involved in participatory processes often complain that their suggestions are not implemented or they are not given any input on how their suggestions are fed into the decision-making process.

Due to this prioritization of participation by the Oslo municipal administration and particularly within the districts and municipal entities such as Bykuben, it is worth understanding the governance structure¹ in Oslo as a way to understand how the municipality has prioritized youth engagement, and what entry points exist for youth to access decision-makers within the municipal administration.

Bykuben works independently within the Agency for Planning and Building (PBE – which is itself under the Department of Urban Development) in Oslo Municipality. Bykuben states that their goals are to make Oslo a 'city where it is easy to get involved and participate in the local community'. To achieve their aims of citizen engagement, Bykuben strives to make tools and meeting places available to support increased democratic participation in the development of neighbourhoods and communities, develops work programmes for youth in summer jobs in collaboration with the districts, and understands residents' perspectives by strengthening local participation and use of the city. One of the ways that the Oslo municipality encourages youth participation

is through municipally-funded youth job programmes. A particularly successful example of this collaboration has been the youth ‘Bybønder’ (young urban farmers) summer job programme as a collaboration between Bykuben and the Oslo Old City district administration. Although they are a city-wide municipal entity, Bykuben has their office in the Oslo Old City and a stronger physical presence in this district is warranted.

The Hersleb Upper Secondary School Schoolyard: An Urban Living Lab for Creative Co-Design

The Oslo ULL takes place at Hersleb Upper Secondary School (H20), an inner city high school within the Oslo Old City District. Hersleb Upper Secondary School offers academic specializations such as Art, Design and Architecture (KDA), and Health and Social studies, as well as preparatory education for minority-language youth. The student body is highly diverse and represents a wide range of cultural backgrounds. Many students come from low-income families and face both social and economic challenges that can make it difficult to succeed in school and participate actively in society. However, the school has also in recent years transformed itself from an undesirable to an innovative school, with many students choosing to come to the school from all over Oslo.

The school emphasizes that learning happens in more places than just the classroom and has therefore partnered with various external organizations that contribute to learning activities in the city at large and within the local

community in particular. Through this, H20 aims to empower students as active citizens by increasing their understanding of how democratic processes work and how they themselves can be heard. Correspondingly, the City of Oslo aims to use public buildings outside of daytime hours to create more efficient, multifunctional use of these public properties. In the school sector, this takes the form of the ‘local community school’ and ‘urban public space’ concepts. However, these concepts were created at the municipal level, and we need an understanding of young people’s own perceptions of the potential for using these spaces or how they might reinvent these concepts. The proximity of the municipal Planning and Building Department (PBE) to H20 provided an untapped opportunity to allow youth not only to provide input on the decisions made by municipal planners but also to begin building relationships with these agencies, and fostering mutual trust to create long-term changes in current operational procedures. Due to this outward focus and the proximity to the municipal PBE office, the Oslo ULL created a partnership with H20.

The physical site of the school was not immediately chosen as a site for the Oslo ULL, but was later chosen together with the youth in the project. We conducted a workshop with five classes from H20 (approximately 45 students), where we worked through a mapping exercise in groups to understand their ‘loved and hated’ spaces in the neighbourhood (Activity: initial contact and mapping with Bykuben). Through this we attempted to spark a discussion on the youths’ interests and needs in public spaces. We then presented a variety of public spaces in the district where we could work on a placemaking

intervention together, and the high school courtyard was among these. From these possibilities, the youth chose the high school courtyard for the ULL site. The H2O courtyard is a large outdoor space enclosed by an iron fence, with two gates that are open throughout the day. On one side of the schoolyard there is a green space, but closer to the school there is a large area of asphalt separated by a small treed area and a basketball court. There is also a covered outdoor space with ping pong tables, which are a popular local hangout for a variety of urban space users.

The Oslo ULL work aimed to build on previous projects in which H2O upper secondary students helped identify students' needs for the schoolyard, summarize them, and develop the schoolyard according to those needs. One key gap that we discovered early on in the process was that the youth were not familiar with previous placemaking projects that had taken place in the schoolyard. We therefore aimed to take this past work further by shifting the long-term goal from the built environment to the process of building trust with and towards youth, creating a contact zone where youth could meet municipal decision-makers from PBE, and giving today's students the opportunity to build their skills for public participation and have their voices heard in municipal planning processes.

While Norwegian society is characterized by a high level of trust, youth are more likely to distrust participatory processes. Despite this strong municipal focus on participation described above, there continues to be a gap in youth perceptions of their abilities to influence

decision-making processes. Youth often feel that their suggestions are not implemented or they are not given any input on how their suggestions affected the final decision-making process. Due to this, there is often little active engagement by youth to create changes in the city. Therefore, although young people have the right to participate in decisions that affect them, city governments and departments must continue to work to integrate mechanisms for youth participation in the design and implementation of initiatives.

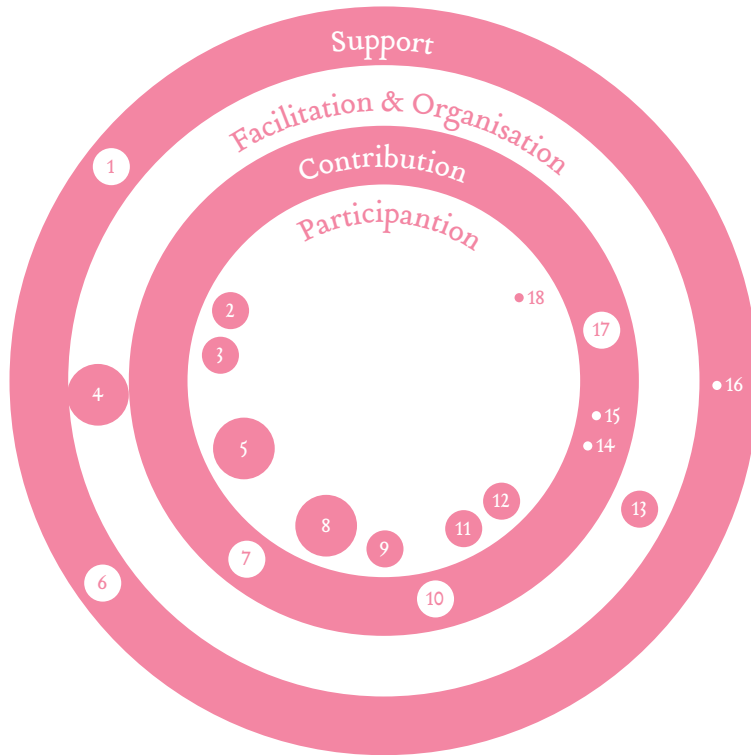
Building Trust Through Placemaking: Co-Research and Co-Design Activities

A Youth-to-Youth Co-Research Phase

In the case of the Oslo ULL, the co-research phase was integrated into the general activities of the ULL, using a placemaking approach. Placemaking conceptualizes co-research as a part of the design and implementation phases. The initial phase of the project however, was more focused on gaining an understanding of how we can understand youth needs in the wider community in the local context in relation to green infrastructure, and how to build trust with youth in Oslo.

The initial co-research phase was led by Christina Wong and Juleda Fetsi. Juleda had worked previously in a youth job programme whilst a student at Hersleb (H2O) Upper Secondary School, and Christina Wong was one of the

FIGURE 1: Stakeholder map



RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

- 1. Herslebs upper secondary school
- 2. Social studies class
- 3. Art, Design and Architecture class
- 4. H20 students
- 5. OsloMet

PUBLIC SECTOR

- 6. Bykuben - Centre for urban ecology
- 7. Planning and Building Department of Oslo Municipality
- 8. Oslo Old City district
- 9. Forandringshuset

NGO

- 10. Sparebankstiftelsen DNB
- 11. Byverkstedet
- 12. UngOrg

PRIVATE SECTOR

- 13. Natural State
- 14. Njokobok
- 15. Jamals Falafel
- 16. Lloyd Winter
- 17. Ombygg

RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

- 18. Residents of the Old City District

FIGURE 2: Map

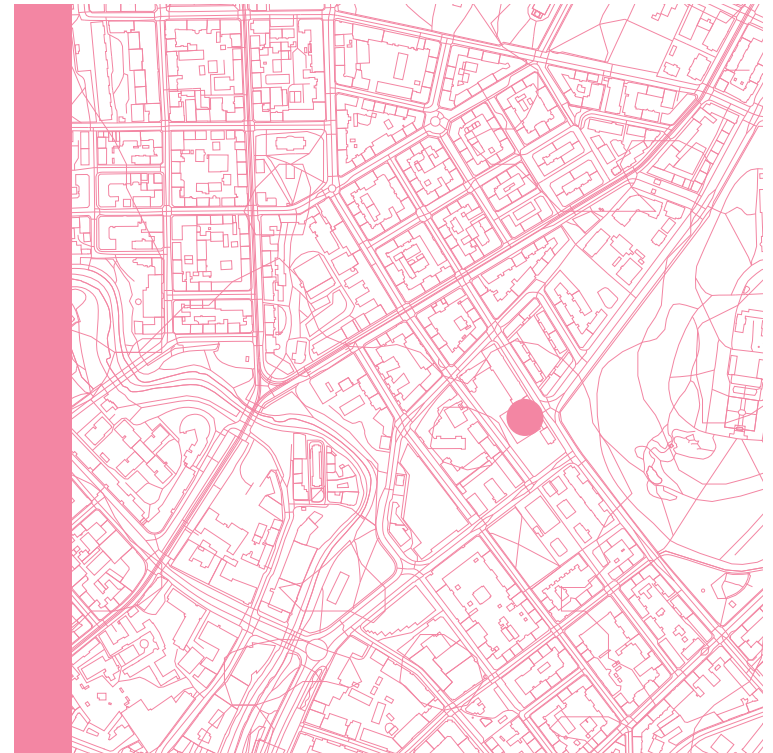
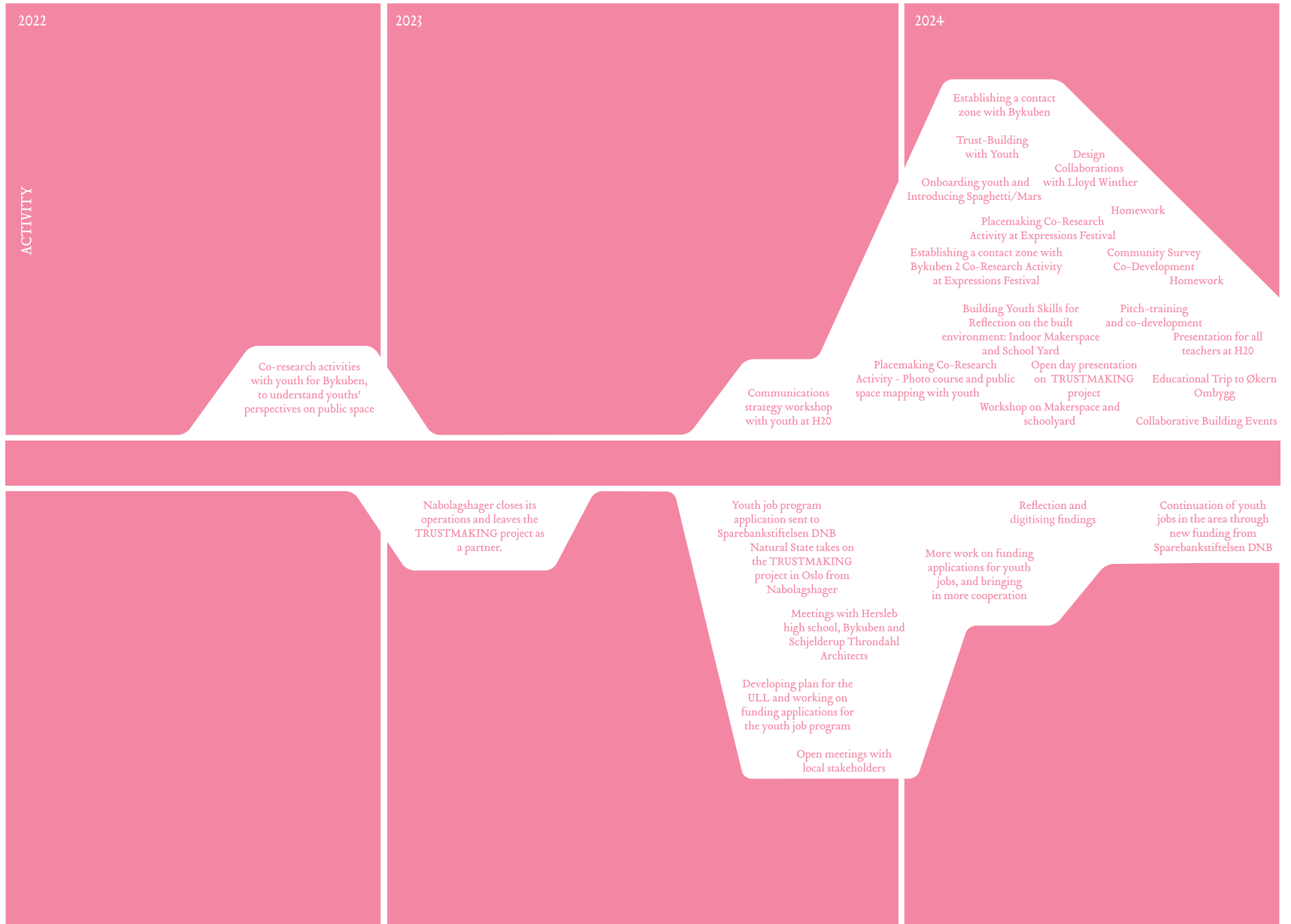


FIGURE 3: Timeline



youth job programme leaders at the social entrepreneur Nabolagshager in Oslo. The co-research phase included workshops with the public sector, youth workers, non-profit organizations, and urban developers. The goals of these workshops were to understand the status quo of youth trust and to map the barriers and opportunities to building trust between youth and decision makers. The stakeholders that we reached out to are included in the stakeholder map, and from these, we narrowed our focus to working with Bykuben, H20, and local youth.

The co-research phase, conducted in cooperation with Bykuben, combined multiple qualitative research methods to explore the experiences of youth with temporary urban life initiatives in the Grønland neighbourhood of the Oslo Old City district. The co-research involved desk research to understand the context of the urban changes and walking interviews, where the participants (youth aged 15-21) were interviewed while walking through the streets. This allowed for real-time feedback on their experiences and interactions within the urban space. Additionally, we included photovoice in our methodology, where participants took photos to express their perceptions, highlighting what they liked or disliked about the area. For the interviews, 20 youth participants were recruited through local organizations such as H20 upper secondary school, Forandringshuset (municipal community centre) Grønland, and OsloMet University's YouCount project.

The main interview questions were: how do youth perceive the temporary urban changes, including the street closures and the urban forest? How have these

changes affected their sense of safety and the overall atmosphere of the area? What improvements would they suggest for the space? The interview analysis was based on the seven urban life factors from the Handlingsprogrammet for Økt Byliv (Action Plan for Increased Urban Life)² and complemented with photographs taken during the interviews. The main findings from the interviews were that the youth expressed a mix of appreciation and concerns about Grønland's urban features. They praised the expanded shopping areas and outdoor seating for enhancing the street's aesthetics and activity levels, although some found the area occasionally 'messy'. Cultural activities were perceived as limited, but the urban forest was celebrated for its 'fairy-tale' ambiance, adding a unique cultural touch. Mobility in the area improved with reduced traffic, making it safer and easier to navigate, but noise and car presence, particularly at night, remained issues. Grønland's multicultural atmosphere fostered a sense of safety and community, though girls felt less secure at night compared to boys. Architectural features like the expanded sidewalks and urban forest were visually appealing, yet maintenance issues such as litter and worn infrastructure detracted from their charm. Suggestions for innovation included adding more seating, reorganizing spaces, and implementing traffic barriers in pedestrian zones, alongside more activities catering to children and youth. Finally, the urban forest and green spaces were cherished for their aesthetic, environmental, and calming effects, with trees notably improving air quality and creating a serene environment.

In terms of analysing the research method itself, the combination of walking interviews and photovoice

provided valuable insights, allowing youth to express their experiences creatively while reflecting on the changes in their urban environment. Further co-research was then conducted with youth throughout the project with a focus on better understanding youth needs in terms of trust-building, achieving active municipal administration involvement, and to foresee and manage emerging risks associated with the project.

Placemaking practice has also been integral to the Oslo ULL. We approached trust-building from a placemaking perspective in the Oslo ULL due to the inherently participatory nature of placemaking practice in combination with the hands-on physical act of ‘doing’ that is an integral part of placemaking. According to Kelkar and Spinelli³, placemaking means working together on the ideas of the community and turning them into a physical realization. Similarly, Ellery and Ellery⁴ note that the key aspect of ‘making’ in community involvement in placemaking, sets placemaking apart from other participatory practices. Accordingly, we hypothesized that relationships of trust between youth and professionals in Oslo can be promoted through joint participation in the planning of urban spaces, particularly if this planning is in combination with the physical aspect of ‘making.’ Placemaking practice in our view also requires an iterative process of co-research to enable participants to reflect and build ownership in the wider community throughout the journey. Co-research was therefore integrated into the co-creation process: for example in the case of the ‘building youth skills for reflection on the built environment’ activity, the youth brainstormed their ideas for the space but also had survey questions that they subsequently asked their

classmates to gather ideas for the space, and then regrouped to present and reflect on the ideas together. Finally, working with youth also requires behind-the-scenes or ‘background’ work to keep the project running effectively. In order to maintain trust, it is necessary to maintain transparency in the process, but this does not necessarily mean that every participant is involved in every aspect of the process; background work is an essential part of ensuring that the youth activities are able to be executed smoothly.

Youth Job Programme

In the Oslo context, hiring youth to be a part of the core project team was an essential part of building trust. This decision followed from municipally-identified needs, previous research and youth job programmes that the local Oslo social entrepreneur Nabolagshager had executed based on the needs of local youth. As one youth expressed to Nabolagshager in a 2021 interview, ‘What do we need murals for when the biggest problem is finding a job?’ By hiring youth in paid positions to be a part of the core project team, we demonstrate to them that we value their work, and enable them to have a greater sense of pride in what they are doing. We also show youth in a practical way the types of jobs that exist in the urban sector.

Creating youth jobs requires background work to plan the job programme, get relevant partners on board, and apply for external or additional funding if necessary. Receiving this funding from the local Sparebankstiftelsen DNB

charity in Norway allowed us to hire an additional staff-youth mentor Juleda Fetsi.

General Planning Work and Meetings with Stakeholders

Keeping a youth project running smoothly also requires background and individual work by both staff and youth. Individual work done by youth and staff for this project included seminars, project promotion to people in the field, finding experts to join and onboard, meetings with the Youth Mentor, and stakeholders and potential partners. In addition, other activities included developing mood boards, planning documents, preparing maps, contracts, questions/surveys, and constant adaptation of the process based on youth feedback to ensure resources and permissions were in place to execute the project. Youth were often included in some of these meetings, but not always. Due to time constraints, there was a necessity to have ongoing planning meetings or email exchanges with school staff, the municipality, and other partners to initiate contact and plan ongoing processes.

Trust-Building with Youth through Reciprocity

This activity focused on meeting youth in the spaces that they use on a regular basis, in order to foster trust between them and the project lead of the Trustmaking project,

Natural State, as facilitators. The ultimate goal was to pave the way for building trust between the youth and the municipality. By supporting youth with their own projects, we attempted to build reciprocal relationships, acknowledging that youth are often asked to contribute to participatory decision-making without receiving similar support in return. Natural State staff member Kamran Surizehi, a trained architect, used his expertise to assist art, design, and architecture (KDA) students at H20 with their individual projects. This interaction followed a presentation of the Trustmaking project, which helped introduce the initiative to the students.

Establishing a Contact Zone with Bykuben

In this first interaction with Bykuben, we opted for a traditional lecture and workshop format. Around 45 students attended, providing a platform for Bykuben to explain its role in the city. Maps of the district were provided for the students to mark ‘loved and hated’ spaces, sparking discussions about their needs in public spaces. The session concluded with a vote on potential locations for the Oslo ULL. While many students chose ‘it doesn’t matter to me’, the second most popular choice was the schoolyard, a space described as unattractive. When asked about their ambivalence, some students explained that they would be happy to contribute to improving any space, regardless of its location.

After introducing Bykuben staff to youth at the school, the next step was to bring the students to Bykuben’s

office to build familiarity with the space and its staff. Around 50 to 60 students from H20 attended as part of their classes, including youth from the Oslo Trustmaking core team (youth job HUB programme), who acted as facilitators. Bykuben staff presented their role in the community. Following this, youth and staff participated in a fun ‘marshmallow game’ activity, where teams used spaghetti sticks and marshmallows to create structures under changing rule sets. This activity brought joy and helped break down barriers between the youth and staff. However, the smaller number of staff compared to youth reduced opportunities for meaningful connections for all of the students.

Building Youth Skills for Reflection on the Built Environment

One of the activities to foster skills on the built environment was an effort to teach, reflect and discuss the schoolyard. The aim was to understand how young people perceive the schoolyard and envision its use. By gathering insights together with the core youth team, we sought to capture a broader perspective on their needs and aspirations for this shared space. We walked around the schoolyard, stopped at different zones and reflected on its use. In another workshop, we focused on the indoor school environment in the new ‘Makerspace’ room and explored youth ideas for illustrating their role in public space development. Creative tools like mood-boards and brainstorming sessions were used to spark discussion. The youth were unfamiliar with past



FIGURE 4: Plaque showcasing youth co-creation. Photo: Severin Døcker
→ See page 246.



FIGURE 5: Youth-to-youth surveys at H20. Photo: Severin Døcker
→ See page 248.

participatory projects initiated by high school students, which led to the innovative suggestion of a ‘generations wall’ in the makerspace to illustrate youth co-creation. This wall would allow former students to pass on tips and advice to future generations, fostering a sense of continuity and shared purpose. For the outdoor social green infrastructure in the schoolyard, youth came up with the idea to showcase their co-creation with a sign on the furniture.

Placemaking Co-Research Activities

At the Expressions Festival at H20, youth-to-youth surveys were introduced as a tool to promote honest and open expressions of needs regarding the schoolyard. Youth employees from HUB enhanced their skills in conducting surveys and learned to use placemaking analysis tools, including behavioural mapping. This activity helped build their confidence and technical expertise. In another activity, youth were introduced to local criteria for a quality public space, a framework for evaluating and improving urban spaces as set by the Norwegian Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development. In light of these criteria, they visited several public spaces in the district to reflect on these spaces. This hands-on experience was paired with a workshop on photography, equipping them with new skills to document and analyse their surroundings effectively.

Community Survey Co-Development

Youth worked to co-develop a survey aimed at the wider community. They were trained in survey implementation and subsequently carried out the survey in the community. The questions focused on understanding how residents use public spaces and their impressions of the area around the schoolyard. This step empowered youth to engage directly with the broader community and gather valuable insights.

Design Collaboration with Lloyd Winter

Urban designer and craftsman Lloyd Winter joined the project to help youth turn their ideas for a social green infrastructure (a tiered seating and planting boxes for the schoolyard) into reality. Through collaborative design workshops, the youth explored the design process and worked together to decide on the final concepts for their creations.

Educational Trip to Ombygg

Youth participated in a trip to Ombygg, a company specializing in reusable construction materials. The visit introduced them to sustainable building practices and the history of materials. During the visit, we explored the purpose, advantages, and challenges of our design, engaging

the youth in discussions about which materials would best support the tiered seating structure among the proposed alternatives. The main material, sourced through an online marketplace, consisted of large, naturally rot-resistant logs originally crafted in Australia by prison labor in the late 1800s. These logs were first used as railway ties in England before being sourced for the youth's social infrastructure at the high school, giving them a renewed purpose within a sustainable design framework.

Collaborative Building Events

Youth and Bykuben staff came together over two community events to construct the designed social green infrastructure. These hands-on sessions involved using tools like saws and measuring instruments to assemble the furniture pieces. After the planting boxes were completed, the youth decorated them with a wood-burning tool to showcase their participation. A metal sign featuring the names of the youth involved was also created, emphasizing their role in designing and building the project. This final touch aimed to inspire future students and to highlight the significance of youth participation in the co-creation of the schoolyard.

What did you like about the process? Youth Voices on the Oslo ULL

'What I liked about this project was planning how we were going to carry out the process. But we don't meet so often during the week, so sometimes you forget when we only meet one to two times a week.'

'I liked that we got to decide for ourselves what we wanted to do. That we participated in the entire process and how long it takes to make different things and how to plan.'

'The research, when we went to different places, talked to people in the neighbourhood, and built the tiered seating.'

'What I liked most about this job was the collaboration between us. We learned from each other how our projects should work.'

'What I improved on with HUB [Oslo ULL job programme] was how to present my ideas clearly.'

'I liked how the municipality plans various facilities/public spaces.'

'I learned how we could create something from several different ideas.'

'I learned a lot when we started building the tiered seating to assemble it into a seating area. I also learned

how to build planter boxes with wood. I will take this with me into the future.'

'I learned methods for dealing with challenges that arise during projects.'

'I learned the importance of giving and receiving constructive feedback for continuous improvement.'

Cross-learning at the Oslo Summer School

The Summer School provided a valuable opportunity for consortium members to reflect on past activities and urban living labs, ensuring alignment with project goals and outcomes. Through a mix of presentations, workshops, and excursions in Oslo, we gained a better understanding of each other's local contexts. The first excursion unfolded at the picturesque Linderud Manor in Oslo's Bjerke district, home to the Edible City Network's Living Lab and the Linderud community garden. We learned about job training, outdoor teaching for local school children, summer job opportunities for teenagers, and urban food entrepreneurship from Jorge Balarezoll, Maiike Lahaise, Kristian Berntssen, Linderud farm staff, and youth from the past job programme (Issa and Lana). An introduction by Kim, a project veteran from Nabolagshager (now working with the Trustmaking Oslo project lead Natural State), along with words from a local city farmer, and viewing on-site initiatives, offered us valuable insights into the project's significance. Witnessing firsthand the impact on the

youth, one participant expressed gratitude for the chance to work, learn, and forge new relationships, particularly in a district with low-income families and low job opportunities for youth. To cap off the day, the local chef, Jorge, crafted a delightful veggie/halal wrap using hand-picked vegetables from the garden.

On the second excursion, our journey led us from the office to a nearby playground and skating park, a creation of GSF – Gamlebyen Sport og Fritid (Old City Sport and Recreation). Established by local neighbours in 1999, this grassroots organization has been in operation since then, with the primary aim of offering free activities for the local community. Currently, they host complimentary graffiti courses, painting classes, skating workshops, and various other activities tailored for children, youth, and adults, aligning with Oslo's changing seasons. After strolling through this vibrant area, we hopped on the bus to Grønland, just a six-minute ride from Gamlebyen. Here our focus turned to Olafagangen, an activity and playground space designed for children, youth, and families. This initiative, a temporary project funded by the Oslo municipality and developed by stakeholders, was crafted by locals, volunteers, and youths through a job programme. It offered the community the chance to borrow bicycles, footballs, and table tennis equipment for free, providing access to multipurpose courts. A quick metro journey away brought us to Tøyen, and our third adventure where we explored an entertaining playground, attempting to reconnect with our inner child. Positioned between the Metro, Tøyen elementary school, and Tøyen Square, we observed various projects funded by the Oslo municipality and local initiatives,

closely clustered together. A common thread among these projects was active participation and engagement involving neighbours and youths, often in collaboration with youth clubs. Our third adventure unfolded with Anne Beate Hovind, a visionary urban developer and placemaker. Her captivating talk centred around the Future Library and Losæter. The Future Library is an artistic project by Scottish artist Katie Paterson. Each year, a different author is invited to contribute a manuscript, and these manuscripts are kept sealed and stored in a specially designed room in the Deichmanske public library in Oslo, for 100 years. Losæter is situated in the Bjørvika neighbourhood. It aims to explore and promote sustainable urban living, agriculture, and cultural initiatives. Losæter is a great project that showcases the importance of collaboration between different disciplines and stakeholders.

We first met Anne Beate at Deichmanske library, where she guided us through the project's narratives and challenges. At first, no one wanted to invest in the project, but her effort and ongoing drive managed to implement the project as part of the Deichmanse library. Following this enlightening talk, we embarked on a stroll from the library to Losæter, traversing the new Bjørvika area, passing iconic landmarks like the Munch Museum and Oslo Opera House. At Losæter, Anne Beate explained the project's core concept, the collaboration with Futurefarms, and the Flatbread society, and how it is organized now. The venue hosts a multitude of events throughout the year, including school programmes for youth. Beneath the blue sky and radiant sun, our involvement began under the guidance of the city farmer at Losæter. Every Wednesday

is an open day, allowing everyone to participate in and contribute to the community garden. It was an enriching experience, fostering learning, connections, and shared efforts. Some were engaged in outdoor tasks, while others prepared a communal feast using the garden's produce. The day concluded with a delectable meal, a testament to the success and vibrancy of the community at Losæter. Thanks to all the participants: Anne Beate, Jorge, Maiike, Kristian, Issa, and Lana, and the amazing people from Losæter for making this Summer School unforgettable.

Reflection and Lessons Learned from Oslo ULL

The main objectives that the Oslo ULL set for the Trustmaking project were to:

- Increase capacities in public service for integrating youth perspectives in the urban green transition. We aimed to achieve this objective through: creating change in contact and routines between PBE and H20 as well as facilitating traditional meetings and more 'joyful' activities where youth could connect with municipal employees.
- Foster confidence and environmental knowledge in youth to co-create green infrastructures. We aimed to achieve this through: engaging youth in co-creation processes and building their skills for reflection on urban spaces. Also, increasing youth capability of 'control over one's environment' by applying theoretical understanding to real-life activities that are valued by the city

administration, and demonstrating to youth that their work is valued by employing them.

- Reveal a framework for co-creation processes for green infrastructures through trustmaking. We aimed to achieve this through: making youth input visible through placemaking. Using the placemaking principle of ‘lighter, quicker, cheaper’, we went from youth ideas to physical changes in the local environment in a short time frame, and then created tools for how to make this process visible for future youth.

Based on these objectives, the Oslo ULL aimed to create consistent opportunities for contact between youth and city employees at PBE/Bykuben, while building youth capacity for reflection and interest in creating changes in urban spaces, through research on their schoolyards as a ‘Byrom’ (multi-purpose public living space). The main activities that we executed towards these aims were working with youth as employed staff in the Oslo ULL through a grant from Sparebankstiftelsen DNB, as well as students from the H20 KDA and geography classes. Using placemaking methods, we worked on building youth skills for reflection on urban spaces and increasing youth capability of ‘control over one’s environment’ by applying theoretical understanding to real-life activities and creating opportunities for contact between PBE and H20 youth.

The core team of youth for the Oslo ULL completed a survey prior to joining and after completing the youth job programme, to enable us to have a better understanding of any changes in their perspectives towards the municipality

and their own abilities for creating change in urban spaces through participation in the Trustmaking project. The surveys were conducted with self-assessment questions using the survey instrument ‘Mentimeter,’ and individual responses were anonymous. Despite the short timeframe and small group of respondents (seven youth working in the core team), we made some interesting conclusions based on this case, for future research and recommendations. The survey revealed several key findings regarding the impact of the youth job programme. Following their participation in the programme, youth demonstrated greater awareness of instances when they had interacted with public administrators, even in situations unrelated to the project. Their reflections on these interactions became notably more positive, with many expressing improved perceptions of their experiences with municipal authorities. However, while more youth acknowledged having spoken with municipal officials, there was only a slight increase in familiarity with organizations such as Bykuben and PBE after their involvement in the Trustmaking project. Despite these improvements, youth continued to report feeling uncertain about how to initiate changes in public spaces, even after the project’s completion. After the youth job programme was completed, youth did however have many more ideas of who to contact if they wanted to make a change. Listing Natural State’s staff member Kamran as one of the responses, illustrated how trust is built through individuals, particularly those with whom youth are in regular contact.

We are able to take away some key lessons learned from the Trustmaking experience in Oslo. These include aspects of communication and consistency, the acknowledgement

and strengthening of youth needs, capacity building and the use of quick placemaking methods.

Communication and consistency in contact with the H20 youth by meeting them in their own spaces, and having flexible hours was one of the most important ways to build trust. As described in the survey analysis, youth seemed to perceive the person with whom they had the most direct contact (Kamran) as the most likely person to help them if they wanted to make a change in a public space in the future. Having a small core youth group for more consistent interactions – for example through the youth job programme – was essential to building relationships. Supporting the youths' own needs was another important way to build trust. Reciprocity in giving input on their school projects, or offering a short photography course were viewed as valuable to the participating youth.

Building a physical object together through 'lighter, quicker, cheaper' and 'fun-based' placemaking methods (such as building the tiered seating as social infrastructure) is an effective way to build trust with youth. Co-designing and then co-construction demonstrates to youth that their ideas are valued, and builds trust when they see that their ideas have been turned into a physical reality.

Capacity-building as a way to promote trust: placemaking methods include analysing and mapping exercises to reflect on public spaces before the design and intervention stages of physically 'making' a change in public space. As a part of this process, we created an activity where

we presented youth with the municipality's definition of what makes a good 'Byrom' (publicly accessible urban spaces or private urban spaces made available for public use), and then together with youth we explored different places in the neighbourhood and analysed them to see if they aligned with these criteria. In this way, we were working to build youth skills for reflection and analysis of public spaces. We found that youth were very positive about this activity, demonstrating that skills-building and co-reflection on public spaces (rather than only the physical act of making something) can also be an important part of how placemaking practice can promote trust.

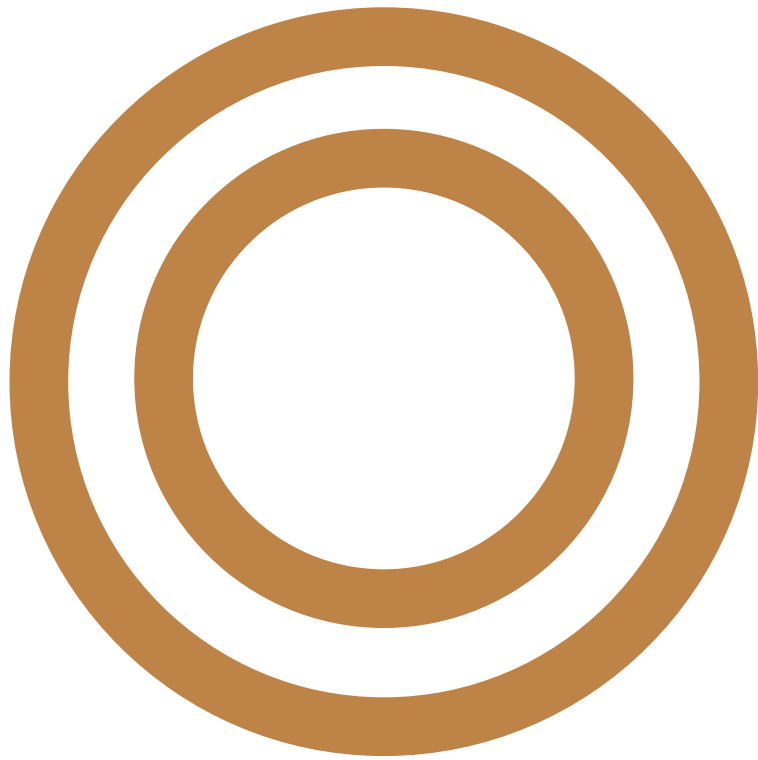
The trust that was built through these consistent interactions with the facilitator did not seem to result in higher levels of trust with others such as, for example, the Bykuben staff that participated more infrequently. Despite two staff members being active participants in co-construction with the youth and taking the time to come work on the weekend, Bykuben staff were not seen as key contact points for future change. This finding points to the need for hiring specific municipal employees with more flexible schedules in order to work with youth more consistently on different projects in the municipality. A good example of this is the Oslo Old City's young urban farmer's (Bybønder) job programme, where a municipal employee from that district works directly with the youth in the summer on urban cultivation. From our experience with Trustmaking, we would recommend expanding this programme to other districts in the municipality, in cooperation with Bykuben and their programmes 'Oslo Trees' and projects like the former 'living streets'

programme. Concurrently, building some flexibility into the schedules of a handful of chosen municipal employees would also provide valuable opportunities for trust building with youth. This could, for example, take the form of two to three hours per week of flexible hours where an employee from PBE could choose to work paid hours in the evening or weekend on community projects to build trust with local youth and the wider community.

Through placemaking practices and having a core youth team hired to work on the project, the Oslo Trustmaking ULL worked towards creating connections between youth at H20 Upper Secondary School and the neighbouring municipal office for Bykuben. Through building youth skills for assessments of local urban spaces, co-creation of social urban infrastructure in a space that the youth use on a daily basis, the physical act of building, and physically documenting this co-creation with signs, we created a process for building awareness of youth agency in the built environment.

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Urban Living Lab Panevėžys, Lithuania



Create Your City

Eglė Vitkutė, Paulina Budrytė,
and Žemartas Budrys

The Context of the Urban Living Lab Panevėžys

The Lithuanian Urban Living Lab (ULL) of the Trustmaking project is taking place in Panevėžys, the fifth-largest city located in the north of Lithuania, known for its industrial past and cultural life. Historically, Panevėžys has been a centre of industry, particularly in textiles and food production, contributing significantly to Lithuania's economy. This legacy has left the city with a unique architectural landscape, where historical factories stand alongside modern buildings, creating a distinct urban environment that reflects its rich past.

Today, Panevėžys hosts numerous cultural events and festivals throughout the year, including theatre performances, art exhibitions, and music festivals, attracting visitors from across the region and the country. The city's cultural scene is further enriched by its educational institutions, museums, and theatres, such as the renowned Juozas Miltinis Drama Theatre and the recently opened Stasys Museum, hosting a collection of artworks of renowned artist Stasys Eidrigėvičius.

Panevėžys has been implementing several youth-related programmes through its municipal initiatives and private sector collaborations. One of the key municipal programmes is the Panevėžys Youth Affairs Council, which actively involves young people in policy-making and urban development processes. Through this council, the municipality organizes youth forums to discuss various issues, ranging from education and employment

to mental health and social inclusion. Additionally, the city runs the Youth Summer Employment programme, which provides temporary job opportunities for young residents, helping them gain work experience and develop new skills. Youth from 16 years old can also propose their ideas to the city's participatory budgeting programme 'Community initiatives' or to the city's financing programme dedicated to the project ideas of youth-oriented NGOs.

In Panevėžys there are several active youth groups and organizations. Panevėžys Open Youth Centre is coordinated by the municipality and focuses on supporting, involving and empowering youth from vulnerable backgrounds. Panevėžys Union of Youth Organisations 'Round Table' which is the non-funded partner in the Trustmaking project, unites many youth-oriented organizations across the town. The union is particularly active in organizing various training activities for youth-oriented NGOs, as well as organizing a yearly youth festival.

Yet, even though the youth scene in the town is quite rich and active, youth participation in urban planning processes is underutilised. Although there are several municipal instruments that fulfil this function (e.g. participatory budgeting and the Youth Project Ideas programme), young people do not actively participate in these programmes. One of the possible reasons for this non-participation identified during the co-research phase of the ULL is the lack of accessible and attractive communication and engagement formats for young people. This possibly leads to the limited involvement

of young people in urban planning as well as other youth participation processes. The main stakeholders of Panevėžys ULL were the representatives of the Critical agency, Kaunas University of Technology and the already mentioned Panevėžys Union of Youth Organisations 'Round Table'. Over the course of the project, many other collaborations – from individual professionals to public institutions – were established and enriched the stakeholder map of the ULL.

The Manifest Locations of Panevėžys Urban Living Lab

The main location of the Urban Living Lab is Pragiedruliai, a recently opened centre of culture and open-minded creativity in Panevėžys. The space is a community-oriented creative hub and a community space that hosts numerous art residencies, workshops, performances, and exhibitions. This place was the main meeting point for the youth involved in the Trustmaking project.

The Pragiedruliai Culture Centre is located in Skaistakalnis Park, the oldest park in Panevėžys, with its territory dating back to pagan times, (hence the name of the park itself from the words 'chaste' and 'holy' denoting the sacred meaning of the place). Skaistakalnis park is unique due to the change in its culture during different historical periods (from being a sacred place in pagan times to its more recent use in the 1990's as a meeting place of criminal groups), and it is therefore characterized by a multifaceted and contradictory identity. The users of

Skaistakalnis park are very diverse. First and foremost, the park is used by the inhabitants and visitors of Panevėžys as a recreational space. The neighbourhood is also home to various businesses, organizations, and associations, and the park is adjacent to residential areas and the industrial area of the city. Interestingly, the park itself has a previously fenced industrial area where various businesses and organizations operate.

This diversity makes it a suitable space for the ULL, which aims to foster interactions between different community groups, including local businesses, residents, and cultural institutions. Throughout the project, several city-wide green spaces were utilized for activities that invited youth to take an active role in revitalizing the city's infrastructure and fostering connections between the municipality, local institutions, and citizens. Even though the ULL started off from Skaistakalnis park and Pragiedruliai cultural space, throughout the project, several other city's green spaces were used for activities with invited youth, such as the following places.

The E. Mezginaitės square next to the Gabrielė Petkevičaitė-Bitė Library was chosen for the project workshop because interests of three parties are clearly intertwined in this place: the Panevėžys City Municipality, which has the expectation to improve the area adjacent to Laisvės Square; the Gabrielė Petkevičaitė-Bitė Library, which occasionally organizes events in this space; and the library's youth visitors who often pass by the square, but due to the lack of infrastructure have not had the opportunity to spend time here until now.

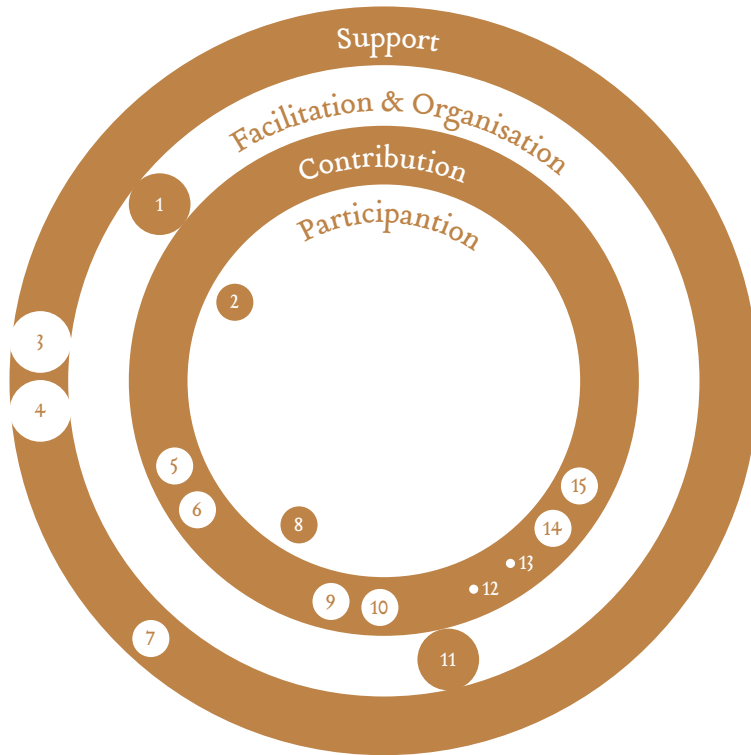
Marijonai garden, during soviet occupation was called the park of youth. It is a green space where each year a city-scale youth festival is organized by the Panevėžys Union of the Youth Organizations 'Round Table' and partners. The team of Panevėžys ULL was invited to join the annual youth festival in this green space and integrate ULL activities in the festival programme (see section description of ULL activities).

The square connecting Statybininkų and Parko street near Sauletekis pro-gymnasium school was another location of activities. As mentioned previously, during the period of the ULL the local team has been always searching to intervene in green spaces where youth and municipalities interests overlap. This was the case of a square underused and adjacent to the Sauletekis pro-gymnasium, which was identified as one of the priority locations in city's participatory budgeting programme.

From Co-Research to Co-Design: An Explorative Journey of Panevėžys Urban Living Lab Participants

In the case of Panevėžys ULL, the co-research phase was integrated into the general timeline of the ULL and was ideated as a set of activities, dedicated to both young people and city administration (separately) to explore their relationship, needs and expectations to the city and in particular, the city's green infrastructure. The activities aimed to encourage reflection on young people's situation in the city from both sociocultural and infrastructural perspectives. In this phase most of the activities for the two

FIGURE 1: Stakeholder map



RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

- 1. Erasmus University
- 2. Sauletėkis pro-gymnasiumium

PUBLIC SECTOR

- 3. Panevėžys municipality
- 4. Pragiedruliai Culture Centre
- 5. Panevėžys County Gabrielė Petkevičaitė-Bitė Library
- 6. Youth study of Panevėžys Theatre Menas, Dovilė Klementjeva

NGO

- 7. Panevėžys Union of Youth Organisations 'Round Table'
- 8. Aukštaičiai-Žemaičiai community

- 9. Ugdančių patirčių namai, Kristijonas Žickus
- 10. Kultūros dirbtuvė, Evelina Šimkute

PRIVATE SECTOR

- 11. The Critical
- 12. Justas Ingelevičius
- 13. Džiugas Karalius
- 14. Samanoja, Aušrinė Benediktavičiūtė
- 15. Samanoja, Eglė Letukaitė

FIGURE 2: Map

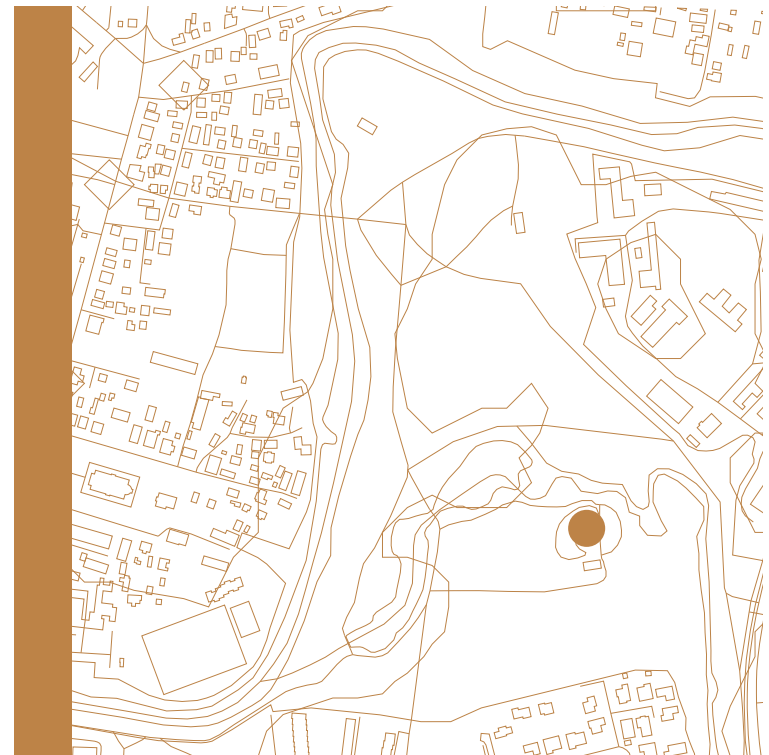
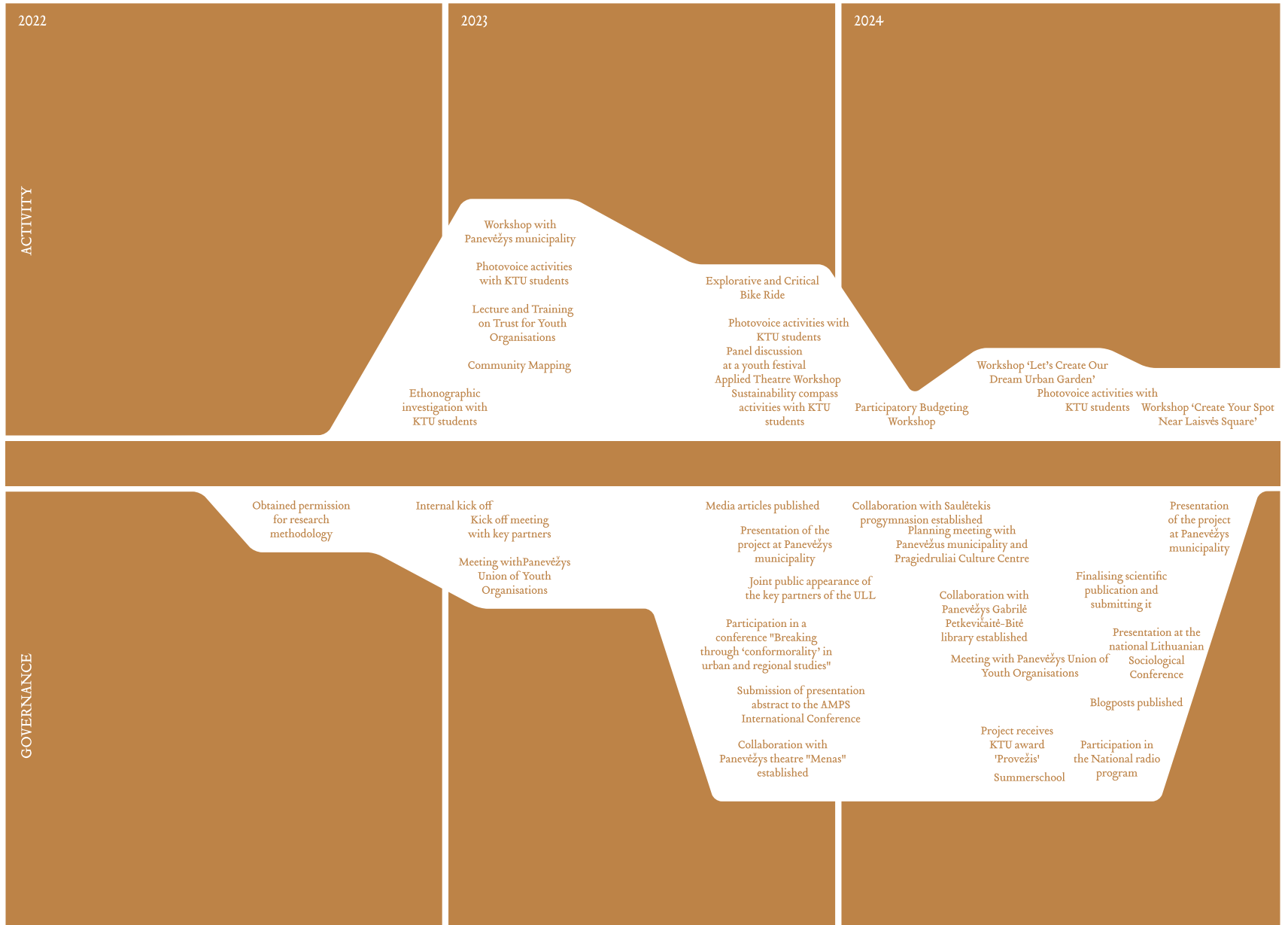


FIGURE 3: Timeline



groups (young people and the administration) were taking place in parallel, foreseeing first touch points between the administration and youth that occurred during the online meetings of the main ULL stakeholders and a public discussion during a youth festival. The following paragraphs outline the co-research activities, methodologies and results achieved with each single activity.

Youth Situation and Participation in Panevėžys City: Workshop with the Employees of Panevėžys City Municipality

A workshop was held with the employees of Panevėžys municipality, focusing on the Trustmaking project. The participants included representatives from various departments of the municipality, such as administration, youth affairs, cultural international projects, architecture, and planning. This workshop took place at the municipality and began with a project presentation, that introduced the aims, target groups, leading principles and planned activities of the Trustmaking project. The presentation was followed by structured discussions and mapping activities. The result of this workshop provided valuable insights into the municipality's perspective on the youth situation in the city and identified potential green public spaces for inclusion in the project.



FIGURE 4: Panevėžys ULL take off: discussing youth situation and public space related needs with the representatives of Panevėžys municipality and Pragiedruliai Culture Centre. → See page 272.



FIGURE 5: Participants mapping the city's spaces that they love, hate, would like to preserve or transform. → See page 274.

Community Mapping: Understanding Youth Needs and Expectations

The community mapping activities involved dedicated events where youth could express their opinions on the city's public spaces. Participants, mainly young people attending events like the youth festival, contributed to creating a map that highlighted places they liked, wished to transform, protect, or even hide. During these activities, a map of Panevėžys was created, reflecting the views of Panevėžys municipality employees who took part in the workshops and the young people who took part in the various mapping activities. The map highlights places that are attractive to young people, as well as places that young people think should be developed and places that they would like to see hidden or changed. This youth-generated map was later integrated with the municipality's perspective, creating a more comprehensive understanding of the city's public spaces.

Panel Discussion 'Youth in urban planning: How can young people contribute to the development of Panevėžys urban spaces?'

During the annual youth festival in Panevėžys, a panel discussion was co-organized with the Panevėžys Union of Youth Organizations 'Round Table'. The participants included representatives from Panevėžys City Municipality, The Critical (project partners and main coordinators of the ULL) and the Panevėžys Union of

Youth Organizations 'Round Table'. During the panel discussion, the participants discussed these questions: Do young people care about the city of Panevėžys, how it is changing, and what its prospects are? If so, how does this manifest? To what extent are young people already involved in co-creating the city and participating in decision-making for the development of urban spaces? What urban co-creation initiatives and tools already exist? How important is trust in creating an attractive and inclusive city for young people? What helps or hinders the development of a culture of trust in the city? How can trust between the municipality and young people be built and strengthened in the development of urban spaces? What is needed to further involve young people in decision-making for urban development, and how can these activities be made more interesting, attractive, and accessible to them? How can young people contribute to enriching the city of Panevėžys? The panel discussion strengthened the partnership between funded and non-funded partners, provided more visibility for Panevėžys ULL, and generated valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities related to youth participation in city development.

The activities of the Panevėžys ULL were developed along three streams: coordination, co-research and co-design. Coordination activities were transversal for all the phases of the ULL and were carried out with the aim to ensure the quality and continuous involvement of all the main stakeholders of the ULL: The Critical, young people, the Panevėžys Union of Youth Organizations 'Round Table', Kaunas University of Technology, Panevėžys City Municipality and Pragiedruliai Culture Centre. Even

though The Critical was leading the overall coordination of the activities, each of the partners were encouraged to take the lead in different phases of the project according to their interest and competences.

Lecture and Training on Trust in Urban and Organizational Settings

The Panevėžys Union of Youth Organizations ‘Round Table’ held an annual training for the members of the union. During this, The Critical was invited to hold a training workshop on how the members of the union could promote, grow and employ trust in organizational settings. In order to enrich the programme and integrate it better to the ULL, our team proposed not only to talk about trust not only in organizational settings, but also in urban settings. With this in mind, an ad-hoc workshop framework was created with the aim of guiding the participants of the workshop from understanding and analysing a chosen organizational/urban context, to identifying clear means of cultivating trust in it. The workshop functioned as teambuilding for the members of the participating youth organizations as well as resulted in a greater awareness on the strengths and weaknesses of their organizations and on the ways cultivating trust can help to make them stronger. Meanwhile, participant groups, who worked on the topic of trust in the urban settings, had a chance to explore the ways that applying the principles of trust may help the city spaces and their planning processes become more inclusive. The workshop also fostered stronger connections with non-funded



FIGURE 6: Representatives of Panevėžys city municipality, The Critical agency and the Union of Youth Organisations, rou at the pannel discussion during the annual youth festival ‘Youth Picnic’. → See page 276.



FIGURE 7: Experimenting participatory budgeting as a tool to build trust between the municipality and young people. → See page 280.

Explorative and Critical Bike Ride

Led by an architect and sustainable mobility expert, this bike ride involved youth in discussions about public spaces and sustainable mobility. First of all, based on the results of previous co-research activities, a biking itinerary was identified by the workshop leader and The Critical team involving bike lanes that connected various green spaces of the city (parks, squares etc.). The aim of the workshop was to encourage a critical reflection of both the city's cycling infrastructure and the quality of green spaces that the group meets along the way. The itinerary had planned stops, at which the workshop leader would encourage youth discussion and critical reflection. Moreover, the participants were invited to take pictures of the critical aspects that they noticed. The bike ride concluded with a pizza party in Pragiedruliai culture centre, during which the participants shared their pictures and discussed the problems and the opportunities regarding the city's cycling infrastructure and public spaces. This bike ride was considered an unusual and fun activity for youth, also they felt their voices heard and enjoyed an informal dialogue with a professional architect. This exploration activity clearly showed how three main ingredients: fun/joy, physical activity and critical reflection can unlock the critical and creative potential of young people and engage them in a rich dialogue on the city's public spaces.

Conducted by a professional actor, this workshop allowed participants to get to know each other better, gain more confidence and trust, and explore their relationship with city spaces using theatrical means. By exploring the relationship between the immaterial (relationships, feelings, sentiments) and the material (urban settings) this enabled the participants to gain new perspectives on their views, needs and expectations for the city's urban environment. The workshop consisted of two main parts – ice-breaking and teambuilding. For these we used mostly exercises which helped to build trust among the participants; exercises such as the collaborative design of a living sculpture which encouraged the reflection and discussion on the identity and image of Panevėžys city and how young people would like contribute to shape it.

The insights from the co-research enabled the parties involved to identify two main aspects. The first being the relationship, needs and expectations of youth towards the urban spaces, and the second being the overlapping interests of city administration and youth related to sustainable urban space regeneration. Most of the activities of the co-design phase were designed in collaboration with experts from different fields of activity: artists, architects, environmental protection and urban gardening in order to enrich youth experience through interdisciplinarity, play and experimentation.

The main activities of the co-design phase were:

Participatory Budgeting Workshop 'The Park of Our Dreams'

Participatory budgeting was identified as an important touchpoint between youth and the municipality, because people from 16 years old can submit their ideas to be implemented through the participatory budgeting framework. Yet, until now there were very few youth-generated ideas proposed for this competition. The ULL methodology was seen as an opportunity to inspire and facilitate youth in proposing ideas for the green spaces near their schools. This workshop introduced schoolchildren to participatory budgeting and involved them in the exploratory and ideation activities that resulted in concrete ideas that they could submit to the participatory budgeting programme.

First of all, an open call was launched to those schools located close to the locations identified by the municipality as the priority for the participatory budgeting programme. One school – Saulėtekis Pro-gymnasium – invited the team of Panevėžys ULL to organize a participatory budgeting workshop for the club of young leaders (aged 12-15). Since the age of this target group was lower than the medium age of young people involved in other ULL activities, a suitable engagement methodology was developed and consisted of an informal, theoretical introduction on what participatory budgeting is, followed by a treasure hunt activity during which the participants had a chance to explore the green space by searching for and implementing simple, fun tasks, such as 'Take a selfie in the place where you would like to have fun with your

friends'. After the exploration phase all the group came back to the school, where the ideation activity took place. In this, the participants were encouraged to imagine all the fun activities that could take place in that green space and what infrastructural solutions would be needed in such spaces. The session concluded with a symbolic voting on the ideas, and selecting those with the most votes helped to explain the voting process of participatory budgeting programme.

In the case of this workshop, Panevėžys ULL functioned as a bridge between the municipality and an educational institution, increasing the chances that youth from schools will in future submit their ideas to the participatory budgeting programme.

Workshop 'Let's Create Our Dream Urban Garden'

This was an intergenerational workshop exploring urban gardening and civic participation, fostering dialogue across age groups, and building partnerships with ongoing projects. During this workshop, mixed groups including young people and elderly people from one of the city's communities collaborated in co-creating their dream plant beds that could be installed either in their personal gardens or in the community garden of Pragiedruliai.

The workshop was guided by The Critical team and by two urban gardening experts, and initiated by a theoretic introduction on what urban gardening is

and what role does it play in strengthening local urban communities, democratizing city's public spaces and contrasting climate change. This part was followed by a practical introduction on the main elements of an ecological plant bed and principles of its ecologic design and maintenance, including the live demonstration of the basic tools and materials used for this purpose. Following the introduction and forming of groups, the ideation phase took off, inviting the groups to imagine the design of their dream plant bed and the plants that would grow there, studying carefully if the plants would fit together according to various criteria. They also brainstormed on what additional features for the green space would be needed in order to make it a vibrant community space – maybe a bench, a book sharing station or a roof giving shade during spring and summer months. It was interesting to notice how young people were more confident of designing/drawing plant beds, while the elderly people had a lot more knowledge on choosing and matching the plants.

As a conclusion, the workshop not only gave both elderly and young participants necessary tools and knowledge on how to take-up gardening activities in the cities, but it also facilitated intergenerational dialogue; a useful exchange of experiences and ideas related to the common interest of both youngsters and the elderly.

Workshop 'Create Your Spot Near Laisvės Square'

This two-day co-design and co-construction workshop 'Create Your Spot Near Laisvės Square' was led by a professional architect, a professional educator and the team of The Critical.

Around 15 young people participated in the workshop, mostly from the Gabrielė Petkevičaitė-Bitė Library Youth Club. The aim of the workshop was to give young people the opportunity to get actively involved in the improvement of one of the green spaces in Panevėžys and to create a place-making object that met the expectations and needs of young people and other citizens of the city for this particular space.

The square next to the Panevėžys County Gabrielė Petkevičaitė-Bitė Library was chosen for the project workshop, as the interests of three parties are clearly intertwined in this place: the Panevėžys City Municipality, which has the expectation of revitalising this particular green space, adjacent to the Laisvės Square; the Panevėžys County Gabrielė Petkevičaitė-Bitė Library, which sometimes organises events in this space; and the library's youth visitors - young people, who often pass by this square, but have not had the opportunity to spend time there due to the lack of infrastructure for sitting and spending time in this square.

First of all, a fun and informal setting was designed in one of the spots of the square which included blankets

for a picnic, snacks and drinks, music, and tools for ideas and construction. The activities were implemented over two days. The aim of the first part of the first day was to explore the green space from urban and social perspectives with a special focus on sustainability, and to identify strengths and weaknesses of the square. After this aim had been achieved, the group passed to the ideation phase and brainstormed ideas for the square using the brainwriting method. The brainstorming was followed by the idea selection and live sketching session. As a result, young people decided on creating a multi-functional urban furniture – a bench-bed-scene, which would be used not only by young people, but also by other citizens, including the Panevėžys County Gabrielė Petkevičaitė-Bitė Library. The day concluded with a shared pizza dinner picnic. The second day was dedicated to the co-construction of the co-design piece of urban furniture. Supervised by the architect, a youth educator and The Critical team, young people cut, assembled and painted pieces of wood, using various construction tools. The atmosphere of the workshop was vibrant as you could feel young people all motivated to reach the final result; a result built with their own hands that was large-scale and impressive to see.

In conclusion, the Panevėžys ULL focused on interdisciplinary placemaking activities that inspired and enabled youth to generate and implement urban design ideas for a green space of the city that they identified as being in need of a change. These activities were designed to foster trust and dialogue between young people and the city administration with the aim of making urban planning processes more inclusive. The workshops and events implemented during the ULL included explorative,



FIGURE 8: Representatives of Panevėžys city municipality, The Critical agency and the Union of Youth Organisations, 'Round Table' at the panel discussion during the annual youth festival 'Youth Picnic'.



FIGURE 9: Experimenting participatory budgeting as a tool to build trust between the municipality and young people.

experimental and design-oriented activities, which promoted creative expression, trust and environmental awareness. Participants were invited to contribute to urban co-creation projects by designing and constructing urban furniture that improved public spaces of Panevėžys.

Community Feeling and Creativity! A Youth Voice on the Panevėžys ULL

'It's great to find like-minded people who also want to bring new winds to Panevėžys. I remember with a smile our idea board (and there were so many ideas that we would probably have to work for weeks!) and how enthusiastically we all got down to work. The number of hours was no longer important, the laughter was not lost in the work, and the discussions flowed freely. For me, that workshop was not about the goal, but about community feeling and creativity... I got more than I had expected. Thank you!

P.S. I am now making a plan with others to paint a wall with graffiti paint in the same square. I believe that one day we will make it happen!' – Beatricė Štankelytė, a participant of the workshop who works in the Open Youth Space at the Panevėžys Gabrielė Petkevičaitė-Bitė Public Library

Lessons Learned from Panevėžys ULL

The co-research phase resulted in valuable insight's regarding youth relationships with the city's urban

spaces and their potential. One of the main outcomes of this phase was a map of places that young people currently appreciate, don't like, or would like to change. A similar map generated from the point of view of the city administration was produced to see which are the common interest zones for both the city administration and young people. This phase also resulted in a number of young people's insights on the public spaces and their development. According to them, limited youth participation in urban planning processes is due to two main factors: the lack of time and the lack of youth-friendly engagement methods. Youth think, that even though the centre of Panevėžys is becoming more and more beautiful, a few green spaces are under-used and not functional enough, as well as lacking biodiversity. They feel the need for more alternative spaces for leisure and artistic projects and more attention to bathing areas as these places attract quite a lot of youth during the warm periods of the year.

As mentioned in the previous section, during the co-design phase and prior to ideation the participants analysed the quality of the E. Mezginaitė square. According to them, the space is not actively used by residents, passers-by or the library and lacks infrastructure to encourage leisure activities such as benches, playgrounds, etc. The square's greatest asset is its trees, one of which seems to be cared for by the residents who live near the square. The landscaping and the network of paths create spaces with different characteristics. There are both open spaces and more enclosed spaces in the undergrowth of trees. The path that ends unexpectedly at one of the points looks strange. It is

welcome that the rubbish containers have been covered to stop rubbish spilling out, but the wall-like barrier partially covering them spoils the aesthetic appearance of the square.

Young people's ideas for Elena Mezginaitė Square were manifold and they suggested the following improvements:

- **Mural painting:** Young people feel that the square lacks colour and history. They propose to use mural painting techniques (e.g. graffiti) to paint the wall near the containers and/or the wall of the building behind the containers. The work could be related to the history of Panevėžys or to literature (e.g. the personality of the poet Elena Mezginaitė).
- **'Rain of threads':** Youth proposed that the spaces in the square could be shaped by threads, which could be attached to trees to create dynamic walls that float on the wind.
- **Urban furniture for sitting and/or squatting:** Rest and leisure areas for a comfortable stay in the square, such as benches, sun loungers, and hammocks. Next to them, a book house could be set up under the auspices of the library, where books could be shared between the citizens and the library. A swing could also be installed in the square.
- **More diverse landscaping with flowerbeds** to nurture biodiversity
- **Cosy lighting:** participants suggested installing cosy lighting sources (e.g. bulbs on trees and/or along paths) in the square, which would at the same time make the area feel safer.

- **Works of art:** The unexpected ending of the pathway inspired the idea that playful artworks could be created in the square. For example, a road sign at the end of the pathway that reads 'Sorry, out of bricks!' or a brightly coloured vintage door that could be opened. The walkway could also feature a quote from a literary work by E. Mezginaitė or another Panevėžys author. There could be more artworks in the square to arouse curiosity and attract people to visit the square.

Among many ideas, generated by young people during the workshop 'Create Your Spot Near Laisvės Square', it was agreed on constructing a multi-functional urban furniture. This would have a triple function: a bench to sit on, a bed to lie on and a scene for performances. The urban furniture was constructed from sustainable materials and ideated as a link to the public library, enabling its visitors to stop by in the square and read books or socialize. Ideas for the further development of the square were also outlined, and young people agreed to finish painting the furniture after the workshop. They were also motivated to search for the opportunities to produce a graffiti artwork on one of the walls facing the square.

The experience of the project taught us that through practicing placemaking based on the principles of trust-building, it is possible to create trust that activates security, community and cooperation. Building trust is necessary for placemaking, but placemaking also builds trust by showing youth that their ideas are valued and converted into tangible interventions in the public space.

Cross-learning at the Panevėžys Summer School

The programme of the Summer School in Panevėžys was organized around the main categories of team work on deliverables, excursions, explorations of local context, participating in local ULL activities and others. Knowledge co-creation, exploring cities and exploring local narratives were the leading themes for the week. Several activities around knowledge co-creation targeted the project team to create new knowledge. External experts joined for knowledge creation activities. During these meetings, the project team actively shared their insights achieved during ULL activities. Additionally, during the Summer School the trustmaking principles were identified. Exploring cities meant visiting project partners' locations in Vilnius and Kaunas as well as the ULL locations in Panevėžys, and the particular places and the local narratives of these cities.

Through the theme of exploring local narratives, three aspects emerged during the Summer School. One was 'city conflict as a development driving tool'. This narrative was very visible in visiting places like Snipiškės in Vilnius or public gardens of Šilainiai and Eiguliai in Kaunas. All these three locations presented the conflict between the existing traditional use of the area and the bigger city development vision (that is very top-down). The Snipiškės project team had to find various unknown objects in the neighbourhood. Snipiškės is squeezed between fast growing developments around it. These developments also constantly take small bites from

the outskirts of the neighbourhood. Moreover, public gardens of Šilainiai and Eiguliai have local activities considered as partly urban guerrilla-like. Here local communities usurped unused areas and started planning vegetables, fruits and flowers. Later, however, some actions were made to formalise these changes. Here discussions about the importance of local persistence and resilience took place. Another narrative was 'resistance against development, contemporary fast solutions'. While visiting the above mentioned places, as well as other places in the cities, the local activists presented the notion of questioning current practices and the requirement of deeper reflection about development, cause and consequences. The hidden history of sites was the third local narrative. 'History is hidden. Not everything always should be explained to the viewer'¹. The historical, even if it is very recent one, is still important for communities in the cities, such as Stasys Museum in Panevėžys or culture place SODAS2123 in Vilnius.

What's Next for Panevėžys ULL?

Throughout the project, significant effort was made to pave the way for the potential continuation of the ULL beyond the project scope, in a form that would be suitable for both the city administration and young people. Even though there was not enough time to fully integrate the ULL into municipal routines, the municipality of Panevėžys continues to show interest in incorporating youth perspectives into their existing participatory frameworks, particularly participatory budgeting and

thematically related international projects they are currently implementing. The young people involved in the ULL also expressed their interest in continuing the regeneration of E. Mezginaitė Square and in regenerating additional public spaces around the city. Since both parties are interested in continuing the collaboration, there is a possibility that, over time, the ULL will evolve into a more stable and enduring partnership between them.

1. UNESCO, ICCROM, ICOMOS, IUCN (2023). Enhancing Our Heritage Toolkit 2.0. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, p. 17. <https://doi.org/10.58337/CFZO9650>

Urban Living Lab Rotterdam, The Netherlands



Building Trust and Capabilities with Youth and Professionals

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The Context of the Urban Living Lab Rotterdam: Feijenoord Neighbourhood

The Hefhouse Urban Living Lab is located in Feijenoord, a neighbourhood in the south of Rotterdam. Rotterdam is the second biggest city in the Netherlands, famous for having the biggest harbour in Europe.¹ The neighbourhood is bordered on the west by the old harbour areas of the Binnenhaven and the old railway track (now underground) and on the north and east by the Koningshaven, and the Nieuwe Maas. Even though geographically the neighbourhood is located quite central within Rotterdam, the old harbours, railway tracks and river make it a relatively isolated area.

Most people associate the name Feijenoord with the well-known football club Feyenoord, founded in 1912 when two clubs from the neighbourhood merged. When the club became more successful a new bigger, and now famous, 'de Kuip' stadium was built in the adjoining neighbourhood IJsselmonde. Currently there is not a big connection between the football club and the neighbourhood anymore, other than the Feyenoord Foundation donating and organising sporting events in the neighbourhood.

Feijenoord was one of the first extensions of the city on the south side of the Nieuwe Maas river. Most houses built in the area in the late 1900's have been developed by private developers which often resulted in high densities and low quality² In the 1970's, many houses were renovated or demolished and replaced by social housing

developed by housing corporations. The neighbourhood has around 7,800 residents² living in 3,311 houses.³ The share of rental houses in the neighbourhood is very high compared to the Dutch average: 89 per cent of housing stock are rental houses, only 11 per cent are owner-occupied houses (as compared to 42 per cent in the Netherlands). A big share of the residents has a non-Dutch background: 85 per cent.³ Both the education and income levels lag behind the Rotterdam average.

In recent years, the neighbourhood has seen a significant influx of new residents with higher education and income levels, particularly around Feijenoordkade.⁴ Creating houses for these residents with a higher education means creating new, expensive and luxurious housing instead of the current social housing. The policy of the municipality of Rotterdam to create higher segment housing and create a pull for people with a financially strong position can, according to van der Tuin, be seen as gentrification.⁵ The research of van der Tuin can be confirmed by the increasing number of houses realised in Feijenoord as well as the quickly rising average property value of the houses in the neighbourhood from €91,000 in 2015 to €221,000 in 2022.⁶

Currently the neighbourhood faces the problem of scoring low on living experience and assessment of quality of life, in comparison to the city of Rotterdam in general.³ The current residents of the neighbourhood feel like they are being pressed out of the neighbourhood, contributing to a seemingly growing distrust between residents and municipality. (MM, NZ)

Description of the Hefhouse Urban Living Lab

Our urban living lab is situated within the Hefhouse — it is an initiative of Erasmus University Rotterdam, Hogeschool Rotterdam (University of Applied Science) and Albeda College, which is an organisation that provides secondary vocational education in the Rotterdam region. The educational parties all share the goal to strengthen the link between education and research while learning from and working with citizens. In other words, they try to align education and research with topics that are relevant to local residents and to carry out activities that have a noticeable impact in the neighbourhood. In the Hefhouse, students learn through real life experiences by engaging with stakeholders and local communities.⁷ The Hefhouse was set up with the help of the City of Rotterdam. It is a hub for innovation and learning as well as a place for local youths. The Hefhouse is named after “the Hef” (also known as Koningshavenbrug), an iconic old train bridge and listed as a national monument since 2000.

The urban living lab is based on a pre-existing collaboration between the above-mentioned educational parties and a foundation: Stichting L.E.S.⁸ an independent foundation run by local youth and residents. The aim is to support and strengthen local youth. The foundation was set up as a response to the difficult living circumstances in the neighbourhood and spurred by a series of tragic events. A group of community leaders concluded that the problems in the area could only be solved by the community itself. With the help of, and stimulated by a neighbour manager of

the City of Rotterdam, the foundation was able to rent space in an accommodation in the neighbourhood.

When the Trustmaking project joined the Hefhouse community, the collaborating parties were already sharing an accommodation in the neighbourhood. The basic wooden accommodation, formerly a facility to help drug addicts, is situated near the famous nineteenth century rail bridge, now defunct. The collaboration in the Hefhouse is a partnership between equals. This is reflected in the structure of the building: the educators and researcher occupy the eastern wing while the youths occupy the western wing. The two wings meet in the middle where common rooms including a large kitchen are situated. Also in the middle is a large open court, flanked by the two wings. The lay-out of the building and the way it is occupied represents the equal 'ownership' of the Hefhouse in a way that is easy to read and immediately understood by both recurring users and incidental visitors.

The governance and the organization of activities are based on this principle of equal ownership. Each of the parties is responsible for the management of its own wing, while the common rooms are managed collectively. There is no strict predefined timetable for the common rooms. Use of the common spaces is based on trust and respect for the needs of each other and lightly coordinated. Likewise, most rooms in the whole building, except for a couple of rooms with valuable equipment, are open to everyone. Here as well, trust and respect are important factors for using the building collectively in this way. The governance and building structures facilitate both organized (curated) and chance meetings. Even though

meetings are often organized for specific groups, due to the open character of the space and its people, they are open for others. There are no outsiders in the Hefhouse (well, that's a large statement to make, but let's at least say that once part of one of the partnering groups, one is part of the Hefhouse community). Local youths meet students who meet teachers who meet civil servants who meet community leaders; this is the obvious primary function of the Hefhouse.

But there is a secondary function of the Hefhouse that might be as important, which is that people that work at the same organization, but at different departments or projects, have an opportunity to meet and work together, in a more intensive way and in a more informal setting. It goes without saying that the city government consists of many departments. It is inevitable that people and projects are not always coordinated and, in some cases, even work against each other. The same is true for the large educational organizations, which have grown and become more complex in the last decades. Collaboration within and between these types of organizations normally takes place through functional meetings, focusing on efficiency, and taking place in formal settings and limited in time. Meetings mostly take place either at the 'home base' of one of these organizations, or, increasingly, in on-line environments. In other words, the setting of these meetings is either 'owned' by one of the parties or are abstract 'non-places'. In both cases the setting of the meetings will not be experienced as a collective space. These conditions inhibit the development of a shared experience or reality, of getting to know each other in an open non-biased way. In other words: the development of trust.

The Hefhouse governance structure shows the large number of organizations that are in one way or another involved in the Hefhouse community. It shows that a couple of educational departments of different institutions are already working together. It also shows there is a lot of potential for intensifying the collaboration and setting up new collaborations between the partners of the Hefhouse. As described above, working together in a 'third space' creates the opportunity to truly collaborate. (MM, NZ)

Description of ULL Activities

We have implemented several activities in order to build institutional, interpersonal, and self-trust amongst stakeholders.

Preparation

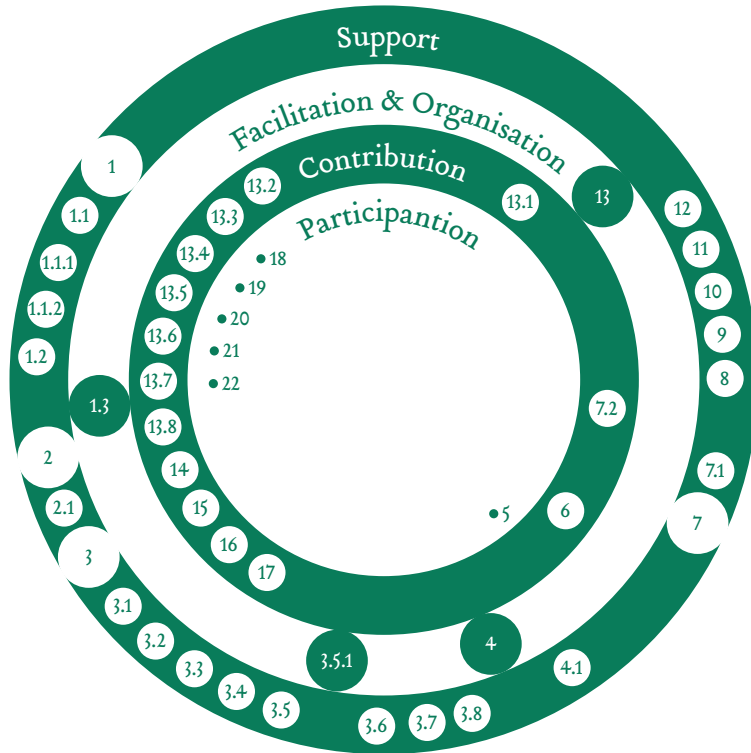
In order to set up an ULL in Rotterdam and start activities, we had two meetings. In the first meeting, an academic exchange between the project team and EMI op Zuid (part of the Hogeschool Rotterdam) took place. The project teams from Vienna and Oslo attended the meeting and presented their ULL activities. The contact person from EMI op Zuid also introduced its youth research in Rotterdam. Since the Hogeschool Rotterdam, one of our local partners, is involved in the Hefhouse, we could establish the partnership with other stakeholders working in the Hefhouse. The second meeting was held in Hefhouse.

The local partners, local youths and a resident joined this meeting to get to know one another and discuss what is going on in this neighbourhood. The Trustmaking project team proposed ideas for future ULL activities and invited them to join.

Group Activities

Four group activities took place during February and March 2024. The first group activity was a walk in the neighbourhood together with youths and young professionals. This gave us all a chance to get to know one another and the neighbourhood in detail. We had three small groups; in each group, young professionals were guided by youths who introduced the neighbourhood and showed different places that are meaningful for them. We then had a discussion altogether about why some places are meaningful, whether they want to see any improvement in the neighbourhood, and if so, how. A month later, we had the second group activity, which was an eating and bowling event where youths and young professionals met to have dinner and play bowling. The third activity involved a group of students from Baltimore University who stayed in Rotterdam for two weeks and did a field study in the neighbourhood. They presented the result of their field study to youths and young professionals who then shared their thoughts and opinions. The last event was the Iftar dinner hosted by youths with invitations to young professionals.

FIGURE 1: Stakeholder map



RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

- 1. Erasmus University
- 1.1 School of Social and Behavioral Sciences
- 1.1.1 School of Health Policy & Management
- 1.1.2. Impact Space
- 1.2 Rotterdam Arts & Sciences
- 1.3 Erasmus X
- 2. Albeda College
- 2.1 Social Work
- 3. Hogeschool Rotterdam
- 3.1 EMI@Zuid
- 3.2 Willem de Kooning Academy
- 3.3 Rotterdam Arts & Sciences
- 3.4 Institute for Social Studies
- 3.5 Institute for the Built Environment

- 3.5.1 Rotterdam Academy of Architecture & Urban Design
- 3.6 CoE HR Tech
- 3.7 Talentontwikkeling
- 3.8 Creative 010
- 4. Delft University of Technology
- 4.1 Faculty of Architecture
- 5. Morgan State University
- 6. University Utrecht

PUBLIC SECTOR

- 7. Municipality of Rotterdam
- 7.1 Social Domain
- 7.2 Urban Development
- 8. Municipal Health Service
- 9. Police Department
- 10. Ministry of Defence

FIGURE 2: Map



NGO

- 11. Samen Ondernemend Leren
- 12. Stichting Workshop
- 13. Stichting L.E.S.
- 13.1 Local Business Council
- 13.2 Youth Council
- 13.3 Sister Society
- 13.4 Social Media & Communication
- 13.5 Homework Guidance
- 13.6 Sport
- 13.7 Social Support
- 13.8 Film Crew
- 14. Legal Support

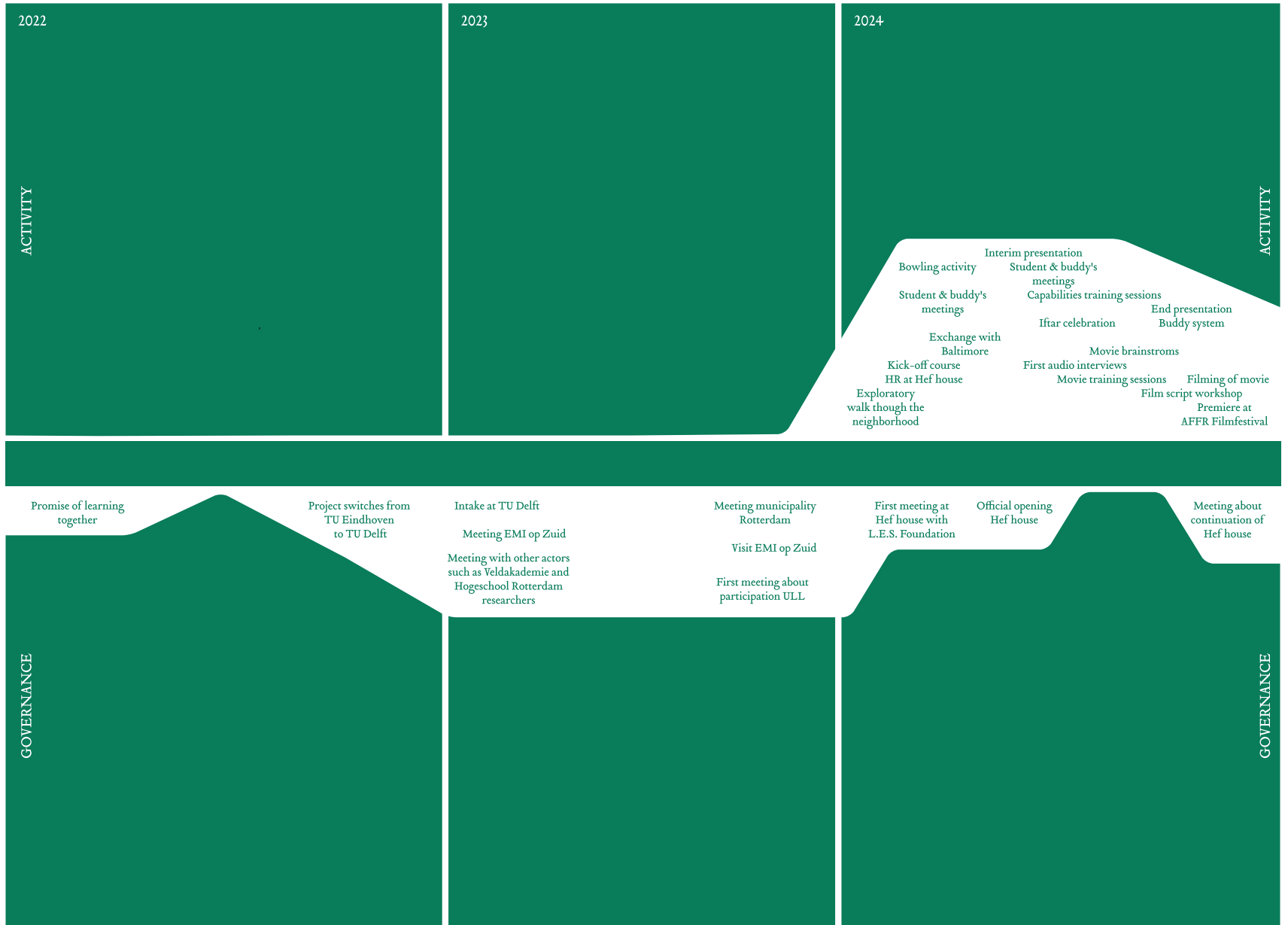
PRIVATE SECTOR

- 15. DNA Storytellers
- 16. Inclusiefabriek
- 17. Serious Film

RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

- 18. Hogeschool Students
- 19. RAVB students
- 20. Morgan State students
- 21. Neighborhood Garden
- 22. Local residents

FIGURE 3: Timeline



Buddy System

The buddy system ran between March and June 2024. There were six pairs of youths and young professionals who have different backgrounds in terms of their level of education, ethnic background, and socio-economic status, but who were from a similar age group (mostly 20s and 30s). Although some pairs had difficulties at least at the beginning, in general the buddy system was positively assessed in terms of building interpersonal trust. Each pair decided how often and for how long they would meet to discuss the improvement of the neighbourhood. The outcome of their discussion was presented on two different occasions (interim and final presentations) in the form of design posters in April and June 2024.

Training for General Communication Skills

Three training sessions were offered to youths and young professionals in May 2024. The aim of the training was to increase the general communication skills of co-creators. We believed that this would help youths to empower themselves, and for young professionals to effectively communicate with youths. Below, the content of each training session is described.

During the first training session, participants reflected on how they present themselves to others and how their first impression might create assumptions and biases. So, for instance, without knowing the background of the trainer,



FIGURE 4: Training session Photo: Noor Zaat. → See page 306.



FIGURE 5: Screening of the documentary film and follow-up discussion at the film festival. Photo: Francesca Ranalli. → See page 308.

participants described her solely based on her appearance. The important learning was the iceberg model which implies that the appearance represents only a small part of a person. They learned how having assumptions and biases affects communication. In the second training session, participants had a chance to practise the stream of consciousness dialogue, which is a dialogue method developed by the trainer. Participants had several rounds of one-to-one conversation where the speaker talked about their feeling for the neighbourhood for three minutes and the listener listened actively without any interruption. The purpose of this dialogue was, for speakers, to discover their own values as they explain the neighbourhood as home ground, and for listeners, to learn actively listening and to get to know one another more deeply. In the last session, participants learned how to collect their own stories and the stories of others. Also, storytelling was a topic so, after discussing what makes a good story and how to attract attention, they prepared and shared their own story with others.

Filmmaking as a Means of Communication

Films provide opportunities to tell stories you want to tell. As a means of communication with the wider public, the project team decided together with interested youths to co-create a documentary film about the neighbourhood. During July and August 2024, a series of meetings took place to discuss ideas for the potential theme of the film. In parallel, two training sessions were offered specifically

for building a film-scenario. To collect material for the scenario 14 interviews were conducted and audio recorded. Based on these extensive talks with old and new residents and with the help of a storyteller, a scenario was made. It was decided the documentary would focus on the disappearance of the Stampie square. The square was an important place for the local youths but was replaced by a row of seven houses. The disappearance of the square was a traumatic experience for many youths.

In September and October 2024, the actual film making took place. Four people that were interviewed in the first round were prepared to contribute to the film (two old and two new residents). Most of the people that were interviewed in the first round were hesitant to appear in the film. The topic was sensitive and was about their direct living environment. The film makers felt a lot of responsibility to make a balanced movie.

The documentary film was shown at the 2024 edition of the Architecture Film Festival Rotterdam. During the follow-up discussion, the film makers and panellists spoke about the current situation in the neighbourhood. The disappearance of ‘Stampie’ and the way the city organised the planning process was regarded as an example of the under-representation of a large proportion of residents. More representativeness and equality of residents in decision making processes were considered crucial to respond to the actual needs and interests of residents. The establishment of the L.E.S foundation by local youths is one of the first steps.

One of the purposes of our ULL activities was to develop communication skills of, and trust between, youths and young professionals. In order to monitor the development of this over the course of time, we did semi-structured interviews with both parties. Broadly speaking, interviews covered four different aspects: Institutional trust and its development: how is public participation currently done? What is your opinion? Interpersonal trust and its development: are your partners (for youths these are young professionals and vice versa) reliable? Are they capable to co-create urban spaces with others? Do you trust them? Self-trust and its development: are you confident in co-creating urban spaces with others? How good are you at communication?

Impact of ULL Activities on the Development of Different Types of Trust

We had interviews with six youths, four of whom did interviews at two different phases (thus, 10 interviews altogether). The first and second round of interviews took place before and after the general communication training sessions. Six young professionals were interviewed as well at three different phases (thus, 18 interviews altogether). The first round of interviews took place in March 2024 when we started group activities. The second and third round took place before and after the general communication training sessions. Having multiple rounds

of interviews allowed us to monitor the development of communication skills and different types of trust as well as how ULL activities (i.e., group activities, buddy system, training) played a role. The result of interviews was complemented by observations. (DL)

Statement of Youths Involved: From a Low Institutional Trust to an Improved Self-Trust

'I think you (the Trustmaking researchers) can be a bridge between the neighbourhood and professionals' (Intvw.5).

During our very first meeting with the local foundation and young people, we experienced a general scepticism towards our project's aim of involving youths, professionals, and researchers. Throughout the process, the interviewed youths expressed a general trust towards the project team and our 'honest characters' (Intvw.1). Yet, most youths involved expressed a low institutional trust. The main reason they provided for this is the difficult accessibility that comes by not getting invited by the local institutions to learn about plans in their neighbourhood (three interviewees out of six) or being simply reached through letters without a real interest in their opinion (Intvw.4) or through third parties, such as the foundation L.E.S. or local schoolteachers (respectively Intvw. 2 and 6). Except for the two young representatives (age 28 and 35) of the local foundation, none of the youth interviewees knew to whom they could ask questions about neighbourhood plans or address their needs in their

neighbourhood. Intvw.1 explains that ‘if one doesn’t have connections in the neighbourhood then his/her opinion doesn’t count; and the problems are never going to be solved, because the municipality does not listen’.

According to both the representatives of the organisation and other interviewed youths, in this context of low institutional trust, the local foundation L.E.S. serves as a mediator. According to all the interviewees, the young representatives of L.E.S have the potential to collect the opinions of local youths and work as a bridge between them and the authorities. Intvws. 3 and 4 explain that it is difficult to express their opinion as individuals, but as a group they can make the difference. As the representatives of the foundation also live in the neighbourhood and act as role models, they have the trust of the local youths and it was through them that we established our relationship with the local youths.

Along with the focus on analysing young people’s trust, we also explored their knowledge of city planning, communication skills, and attitude towards new themes. Youth showed a great interest in city planning, and thanks to the local foundation and the organizations connected with the Hefhouse, they all agreed that after the project they knew whom to ask for information. Through our project, they did not feel they improved their knowledge about planning in general, but they all improved their ability to understand the information and knowledge on how and whom to ask for help regarding neighbourhood planning. In particular, Intvw. 4, 5, and 6 became more confident and felt empowered because of their deep engagement in our project.

Building Trust Through a Different Range of Activities

From the interviews and the observations during the activities that we organized, we learned which key factors connected with local youths and ultimately gained their trust and commitment to our project. These were: clarity of intent (Intvws. 1, 3, and 4); a different range of activities for them to learn and improve their knowledge (Intvws. 1, 5, and 6); showing our ‘honest character’ (Intvws. 4 and 6); ‘kept our promises’ (Intvw. 3); and learned to see city spaces from a ‘different perspective’ through the buddy system (Intvw. 5). By offering a variety of activities, we were able to capture different interests. For instance, Intvw. 5 was actively engaged with the buddy system, while Intvw. 4 and 6 were only involved in the movie making activities. Regarding the training sessions on general communication skills, because of the choice of three different types of sessions on different communication practices, participants with different interests were more interested in (and satisfied with) some of them more than others. For instance, Intvw. 5 appreciated the first session, while Intvw. 6 was enthusiastic about the third session. However, they all failed to understand the connection between the three sessions and the overall goals. Only Intvw. 6 emphasises that it takes time and effort to open up to others and to build the knowledge to work together, thus more than one session is needed. A lesson learned is that in future the participants’ involvement in the organization and a clearer explanation of the potential learning skills might help them commit more to the overall project.

Regarding less formal activities to develop social ties and to get to know each other, these are essential for young people to open up and thus, commit to the overall project. 'It was nice to end with a fun bowling after the hard work' and it is also 'icebreaking' (Intvw. 4). By promoting positive relationship-building, empowerment, and supporting a safe, open, and non-judgmental space to co-learn, leisure can be a meaningful way of engaging youth, especially those caught in marginalization dynamics.⁹

Building Ties through Gender and Interests

Two of the organized activities had an unexpected and positive outcome. The buddy system revealed the role of gender in creating strong connection by bringing together the only two female young professionals (out of seven) with the only local young girl (out of six main participants). This positive connection relates to the focus of the buddy system in co-creating space in their neighbourhood by sharing knowledge of the young professionals with the experience of the local youths. The group of three young girls explored together the neighbourhood during the first walk (group activity) that we organised at the beginning of the project. The gender experience of safe and unsafe spaces helped them find common interests and goals and thus, commit to the project by defining together strategies for designing inclusive spaces. Youths can develop ways to use their neighbourhood strategically and to avoid unpleasant settings, especially in terms of dislike and fear.¹⁰

In a similar way, the film making sessions guided by one of the project team members through a bottom-up approach attracted the interest of five youths - two of them were actively involved and committed to the actual making of film. For one of them, it was thanks to his passion for film making that he took a key role in shooting and making the film, while for the other one, it was due to his interest in the process of looking at the neighbourhood from the perspective of the residents. The bottom-up approach and the flexible meeting dates and hours helped the group do the activities they wanted to do, feeling free to be themselves, relaxed because it was their own project, and therefore able to talk more fluently and openly (Intvw. 6).

Definitions of Trust and Takeaway Messages

The youths gave their meaning of trust ranging from being synonymous of justice and honesty (Intvw.1), honest with one true self and transparent despite political and religious beliefs (Intvw.4 and 6), respectful of each other's opinions (Intvw.3), and being able to truly listen to each other's ideas (Intvw.5). They felt that the trust towards the project increased over time as 'building trust takes time' (Intvw.6). The bonding activities, such as eating, playing and just being there at the Hefhouse, were essential for Intvw. 4 to slowly increase trust in the project and in the researchers. While all the participants admit their limited knowledge of urban planning, two of them believe that youth involvement in this is important, and one of them recognises the need to involve different

age groups as they all have different needs and visions. Regarding their communication skills, while one of them was already confident from the start, after our project, the other participants feel that they had learned to be more confident (Intvw.4), to have increased their communication skills in general (Intvw.5), and for one of them even being able to communicate with a more positive attitude and better understand other people's perspectives (Intvw.6). For Intvw. 1, the project helped young people to know better how to communicate and learn that it is possible, and it is their right to approach the municipality about projects in their neighbourhood. 'We can make an impact, but it's going to take a lot of energy and time' (Intvw. 6), and 'we need to work together' for it to happen (Intvw. 5). (FR)

Note: Interviewees 1–6 are local youth that were interviewed by Francesca Ranalli between May and July 2024.

The Dutch Winter School: From the Academic Exchange to the City Exploration

The winter school in the Netherlands took place in February 2024 after the winter and summer schools in Vienna and Oslo. In order to foster the exchange and cross-learning among the four urban living labs, we invited our consortium partners to several locations in Delft and Rotterdam – at Delft University of Technology, Academie van Bouwkunst, and Gemaal op Zuid. Apart from the internal project meetings and cross-learning sessions, we had an academic exchange with six colleagues

in the Netherlands: Prof. Dr. Ellen van Bueren, Dr. Celine Janssen, and Dr. Joris Hoekstra from Delft University of Technology; Prof. Dr. Catrin Finkenauer and Dr. Loïs Schenk from Utrecht University; and Dr. Angela van der Heijden from Hogeschool Rotterdam. The aim of this event was twofold: On the one hand, to have a discussion on how capabilities, capacities, trust, and co-creation are related as well as how urban living labs can foster the interrelationships among them. On the other hand, we intended to create an interdisciplinary network to promote knowledge creation and transfer on the related topics.

Another highlight of the winter school was a series of excursions in Rotterdam. The consortium partners had a chance to explore the beautiful city by visiting five different places that explain the socio-spatial context of our project: 1) the Niteshop; 2) Store Store Rotterdam; 3) Park 1943; 4) Rotterdamse Munt; and 5) Buitenplaats Brienenoord. Our website contains information of our visit to each place. (DL, FR)

Summary of Outcomes and Lessons Learned

In addition to the documentary film, we have a list of locally specific trust making principles as an outcome of the project.

1. **The Power of Regular and Physical Meetup:** Both the youths and young professionals mentioned that the ULL activities helped them build trust in each other as they met regularly through group activities, buddy system, and training. Also, since young professionals used some spaces in the Hefhouse regularly, some of them had a brief encounter with the youths. Such non-organised, small interactions (e.g., having a chat over coffee) appears to have a positive impact on building trust as well. In general, regular and physical meetups ideally with food throughout the whole ULL phases are useful. It may be even better for trust building if activities are self-organised by stakeholders as it would give a community feeling.
2. **The Role of Similarities and Differences:** Similarities help create trust. Gender played a role when building small groups for group activities, such as the first walk in the neighbourhood, as people with the same gender naturally came together. This was also the case when arranging the buddy system. Not only gender but also age had an impact on building trust as buddies with a similar age could easily find something in common and, thus, understood each other better. While having similarities help building trust, differences do not necessarily lead to distrust. Indeed, the two groups of youths and young professionals have many differences in terms of the level of education, ethnic background, socio-economic status, and the type of knowledge they possess (local vs. professional knowledge). Nevertheless, the latter specially created an interest towards each other which is the first step towards trust. If you have the right setting – including stakeholders respecting one another – both similarities and differences can have a positive impact on trust building.
3. **Boundary Matters:** Setting a boundary is important to prevent potential conflicts between the project team and other stakeholders. Promising too much and/or setting the expectation of stakeholders too high can lead to disappointment which affects trust negatively. Within the boundary, stakeholders may be given freedom to decide on, for instance, the content of group activities or training sessions. If, for any reason, there must be a change to the boundary, the project team should be transparent and communicate as soon as possible with the stakeholders.
4. **Stakeholders Should Be Able to See the Benefits:** The actual commitment from both sides appears to be crucial to build and maintain the level of trust between youths and young professionals. The contribution of stakeholders depends on several factors, one of which is the perceived benefits. In our urban living lab, youths and young professionals were compensated, for example, by food or training sessions. Moreover, we conveyed the direct and indirect benefits they would earn from participating in the ULL activities such as training. Yet, we had challenges to attract youths partly because they had to go to work. A more active form of compensation may be used so that stakeholders do not have to make a financial sacrifice. Another idea is to have a tangible and feasible goal (such as a film) set together with stakeholders which may have a small

but actual impact on their neighbourhood. This may increase the motivation of stakeholders, thus more commitments. By working towards it, they can earn trust from each other.

5. **The Role of Communication Skills:** As written above, the youths and young professionals had many differences which nevertheless can be appreciated if properly communicated and understood. Young professionals, in particular, believed that there is a positive relationship between communication skills and trust. Indeed, most of them perceived communication skills as a condition of trust. A number of local youths also raised issues with the way the municipality communicates with the residents in general and youths in particular. Communicating with youths requires certain skills, which was the reason why we invited both youths and young professionals to training sessions on communication skills.
6. **The Role of Intermediaries:** Intermediaries play an important role in trust building at least at the beginning. Thanks to the existing contact, the project team could connect with stakeholders in the neighbourhood who already have trust-based relationships with residents and youths. This allowed us to gain a certain level of trust from the youths. This also applied to young professionals. As they had trust in the project team, they joined our activities with an open mind.
7. **The Role of Facilitators:** According to our experience, in addition to intermediaries, facilitators play a crucial role in building and maintaining trust among stakeholders. In our urban living lab,

it was the project team who acted as facilitators. By organising various ULL activities, we tried to bring youths and young professionals together and help build trust and understanding. In case of conflicts, facilitators can mediate by facilitating communication between stakeholders. (DL)

What's Next

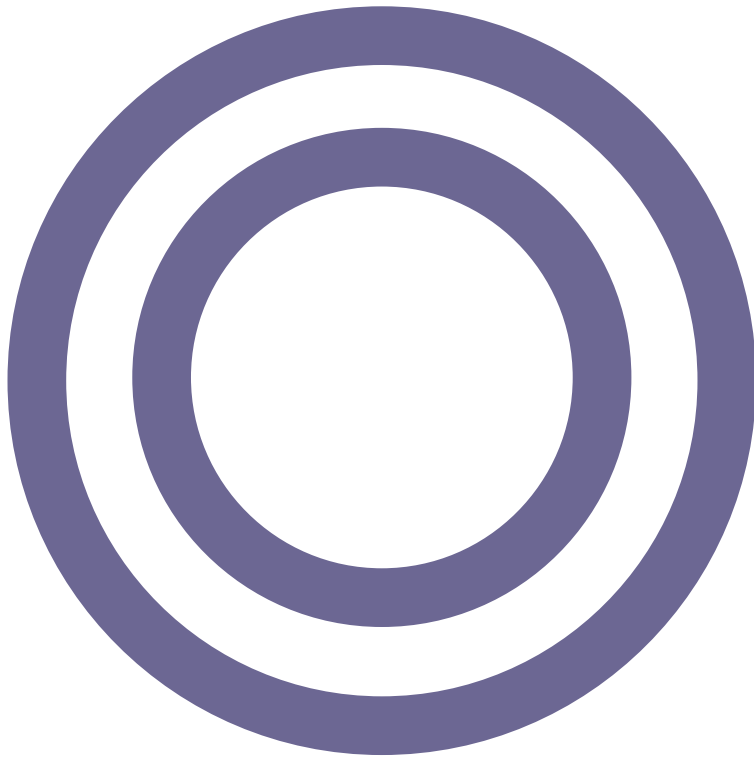
Trustmaking in the Hefhouse will continue with developing and supporting a team of young film makers. This team will continue to collect local stories and in the process develop skills and start a dialogue within the neighbourhood. The development of the film team will build on the experiences of the first movie. The team will seek the support of local film makers and storytellers to develop a more elaborate film making course. The ambition is that younger film makers will join and that a wide range of topics can be dealt with. One under-represented group is young women, and the women within the Hefhouse, organised in the Sister Society advocated for a movie about the life of young women in the neighbourhood. The aim of the film making project is threefold: to tell stories, initiate a dialogue and develop skills. When young film makers have acquired skills, they are expected to give back to the community for example by helping others to develop these skills as well.

Another way of continuing the Trustmaking project will be the continuing presence of the Rotterdam Academy of Architecture. The Academy will organise design studios that will build on the lessons learnt in the first studio.

Furthermore, as the governance structure shows, there is a lot of potential in intensifying collaboration between the educational and government and non-government organisations. The ambition is to develop a collective strategy in the Hefhouse. A first meeting with this aim already took place with a wide range of educators from different institutions in attendance. (MM)

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Urban Living Lab Vienna, Austria



Bringing Youth from the Sidelines into the City

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Thomas Romm (TR) and Theresa Schütz (TS)

The Context of the Urban Living Lab Vienna

In Vienna, the Trustmaking Urban Living Lab (ULL) is geographically embedded at the so-called Zukunftshof (future farm) on the southern fringe of the city. The Zukunftshof is a 100-year-old farming estate on the edge of the Viennese urban fabric whose future has been uncertain and in danger of demolition until 2019. Being situated in Rothneusiedl, a community with around 700 inhabitants in Vienna's 10th district, locals and a civil initiative successfully protested against the demolition of the publicly owned farm. Today, the Zukunftshof still finds itself surrounded by fields and meadows. However, within a mere 25 years, the area surrounding the estate will evolve into a densely built-up urban area of 124 ha, catering to the housing needs of a growing city.

With its rich agricultural heritage, Zukunftshof is foreseen to play a pivotal role in this transformation of Rothneusiedl into the new quarter that will be called RothNEUsiedl. Today, at the only historic site in this new development area, there are already various initiatives to pilot ways of shifting the urban landscape from one of mere consumption to one of active production, while at the same time making urban food cultivation tangible through inclusive social initiatives and educational programmes. In an initial phase of planning the development, key stakeholders from politics, city administration, the private sector, property owners, and experts collaborated to create a structural concept outlining guiding principles. This concept identified challenges and objectives for developing a model district focused on climate protection and climate change adaptation.

Within a year, the winner of an international urban and open-space planning bid developed the final urban design framework for RothNEUsiedl through a participatory process, which will then serve as the basis for the zoning and development plan of the district. Parts of this participation process are dialogue formats, an exhibition and info centre on the site of Zukunftshof as well as the involvement of a so-called Zukunftsteam (future team), made up of a representative group of citizens. Despite many efforts of participatory planning, the involvement of young people remains a challenge. One of the strategies of the City of Vienna to commit to children and youth participation is outlined in the Vienna's Children and Youth Strategy 2020–2025, which showcases extensive cross-sector collaboration and detail-oriented planning.

In contrast to other strategic planning processes, the first step here through schools or youth centres, was to involve the target groups of children and young people as experts for their concerns, interests and needs, before the specialized municipal departments would come in with their expertise to provide for these needs.¹ The preparations of a new strategy for 2025–2030 started at the end of 2024 with regular meetings of a children and youth parliament over several months. The Children and Youth Strategy 2020–2025 covered topics such as nature and environment, opportunities and future, health and well-being, community and togetherness, space and place, participation and opinion, safety and security, mobility and traffic as well as leisure and culture. Some of the measures facilitated under the strategy are the opportunity for every child or young person to plant one tree each year, providing for more green facades

and urban gardening projects, more legal graffiti walls, creating more public toilets and water fountains, and also providing more urban furniture along streets.

Measures mentioned above such as green infrastructures and climate-adapted public spaces are outlined in the Thematic Concept for Green Spaces, a part of the Urban Development Plan 2025 (STEP), where urban green and open spaces are described as vital spaces for leisure, recreation, and physical activity but also serve as key social and cultural meeting points, fostering interaction, cohesion, and a sense of belonging among citizens from diverse backgrounds.² Most of the proposed measures in the Children and Youth Strategy 2020–2025 however focus on tangible improvements implemented by the different authorities responsible within the city administration for children and youth as users, and not by young citizens as co-creators. Unexpected visions of how children and young people might proactively shape open spaces differently are missing; ideas that extend far beyond the current catalogue of public space improvements, such as sports fields, playgrounds, benches, and infrastructure. Common approaches tend to reflect a limited, built-environment-centred understanding of space and, from a relational perspective, reduce young people's role in shaping societal space to that of mere users. However, in light of pressing challenges such as climate change adaptation, it is crucial to develop innovative ideas and processes for designing the built environment. Empowering young people to move beyond traditional frameworks and actively participate as co-creators of urban space is key to fostering more sustainable and inclusive urban futures. As the Thematic Concept

for Green Spaces points out, an essential aspect of the success of green and public spaces is their inclusive planning, design, and management. Thus, engaging local communities – and children and youth – in decision-making, cities can nurture a shared sense of ownership, responsibility, and identity. (EK, JML)

Zukunftshof: An Urban Living Lab for Youth Co-Creation at the City Fringe in Transformation

The Trustmaking Urban Living Lab (ULL) in Vienna was designed to leverage the ongoing transformation process around Zukunftshof in RothNEUsiedl, with a specific focus on engaging young people in shaping public spaces and green infrastructures. While the farm estate of Zukunftshof no longer serves as an active farm, the initiative Zukunftshof Association, obtained a temporary lease from the City of Vienna as the owner of the plot. As the area surrounding Zukunftshof is yet to be developed, we reached out to youth partners in the surroundings – to bring the site and its transformation to young people’s attention, and even more importantly, bring their perspectives on urban transformation to the attention of planners, stakeholders and decision-makers of RothNEUsiedl. In this process, our ULL collaborated with different youth partners, from youth centres, to job training programmes and schools, to foster engagement of young people through various co-creative activities in this process.

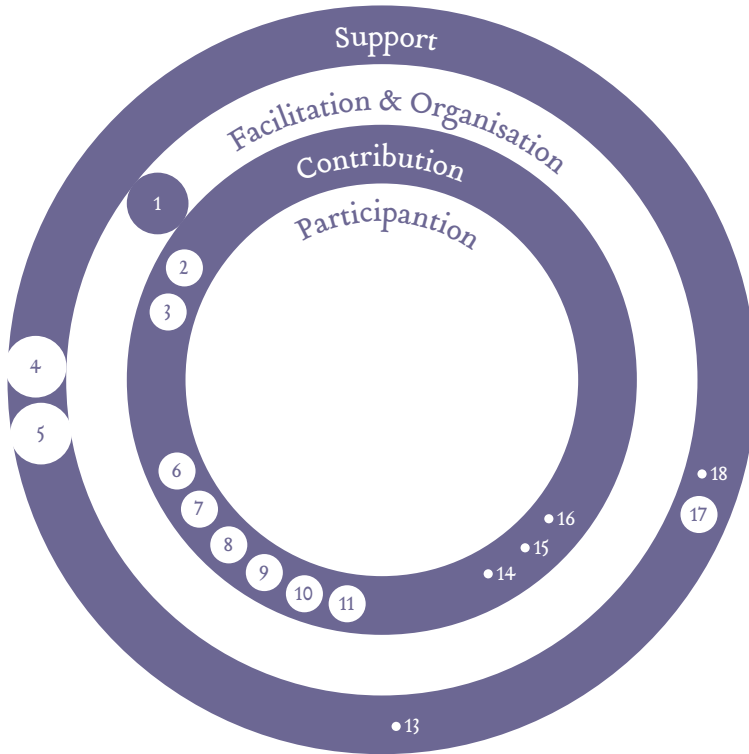
The aim of the Vienna ULL was to enable youth to become aware of and articulate their visions and

aspirations for open spaces and green infrastructures. In doing so, to create a contact zone to facilitate dialogue and collaboration among project partners, youth representatives, and municipal authorities, ensuring that the voices and perspectives of young people become an integral part of the urban planning and development process. It was therefore essential to involve a broad spectrum of stakeholders, ranging from young people and youth workers to entrepreneurs, scientists and civil servants. From early on, we identified and invited different stakeholders already working in the field, or being at the local site, who would increase the opportunities for the continuation of the ULL after the project cycle. Additional to the local setting of our ULL, surprising viewpoints and actions were brought in by international visiting artists and students of the Social Design Studio. This approach emphasized trust in the expertise and agency of stakeholders, including young people. (EK)

An Exploration of Transdisciplinary Co-Research and Artistic Co-Creation

The Vienna ULL explored a transdisciplinary and artistic co-creation approach to foster trustmaking. A central aspect of our ULL was its use of hands-on, artistic strategies combined with co-design methodologies. Moving beyond traditional participatory design, co-design here was defined as a process of collaborative creative work rather than a product-driven approach.³ Artistic strategies were employed not merely as aesthetic interventions but as open-ended processes that enabled participants to reshape their

FIGURE 1: Stakeholder map



RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

- 1. Social Design Studio, University of Applied Arts Vienna
- 2. HLMW 9
- 3. Campusschule Sonnwendviertel

PUBLIC SECTOR

- 4. Municipal Department for Parks and Gardens
- 5. Municipal Department of District Planning and Land Use
- 6. KunstHausWien

NGO

- 7. WUK work.space
- 8. Jugendtreff Sonnwendviertel
- 9. Jugendzentrum Hansonsiedlung

- 10. Jugendzentrum ComeIn
- 11. Local Business Council
- 12. Verein Zukunftshof Rothneusiedl
- 13. Brachiale Festival
- 14. Skateboardclub Vienna
- 15. St. Marx für Alle
- 16. LaaerBergBauerInnen

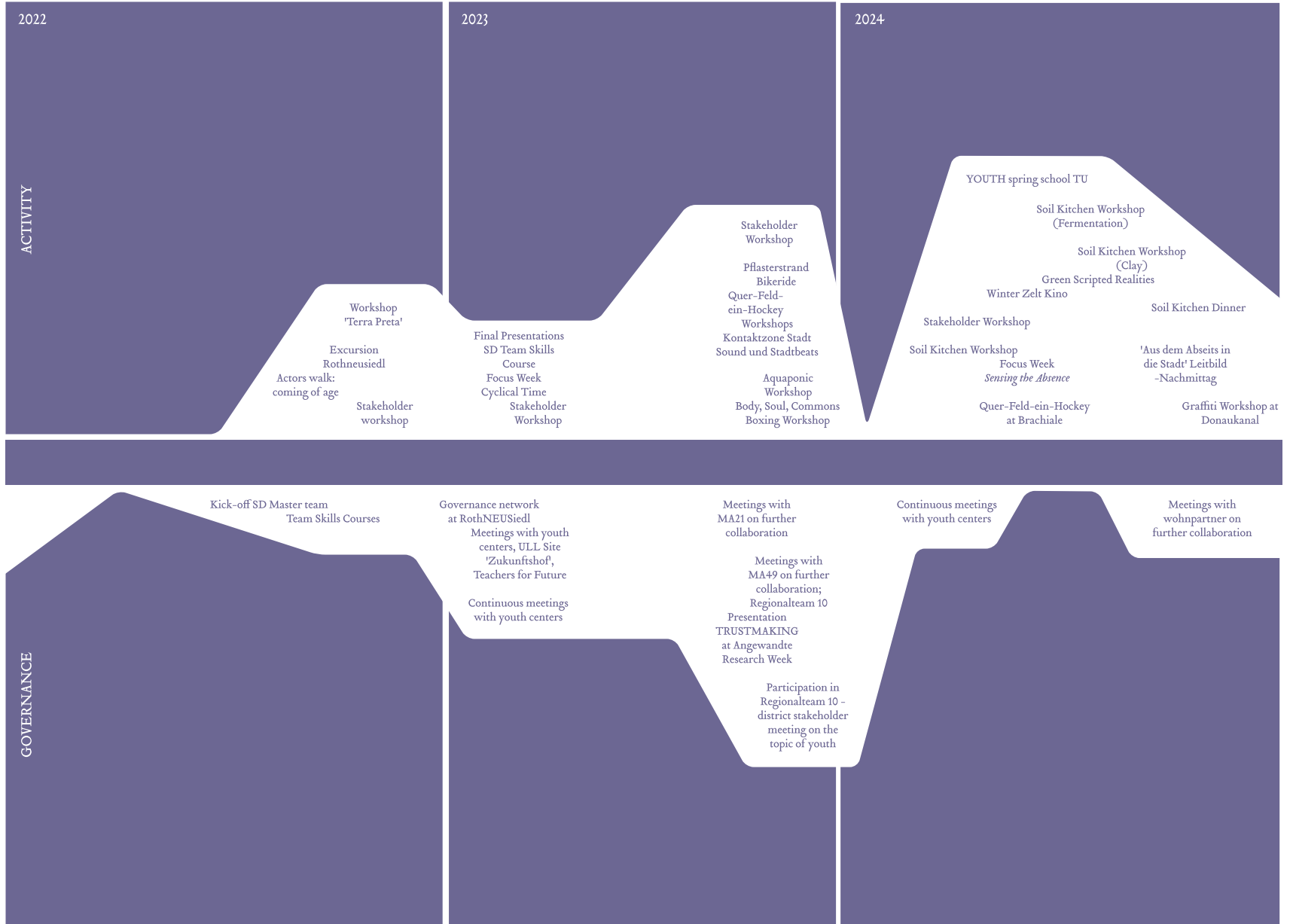
SME

- 17. forschen planen bauen DI. Thomas Matthias RommZT
- 18. Theresa Schütz and Moritz Böttjer

FIGURE 2: Map



FIGURE 3: Timeline



realities.⁴ These methods crossed traditional disciplinary boundaries between art and other fields such as urbanism, social work, and environmental activism, fostering inter- and transdisciplinary collaboration.

The ULL also adopted a playful *modus operandi*⁵, integrating elements of play into urban exploration and co-design. Play allowed participants to imagine and negotiate new possibilities for urban spaces. Drawing inspiration from situationist traditions, play became a medium to challenge hierarchies and foster creativity in a structured yet open-ended manner.⁶ Through playful activities – such as engaging with spaces in unconventional ways or experimenting with new rules – participants uncovered hidden dimensions of urban life, creating shared experiences that bridged gaps of experience and understanding of different (age) groups. This playful and participatory approach created ‘contact zones’ where people from diverse social and cultural backgrounds could engage on equal terms, fostering mutual understanding and trust. Drawing on Swain and Tait’s framework for addressing trust deficits in planning, the Vienna ULL emphasized shared experiences as a foundation for building collective values in increasingly heterogeneous societies.⁷

The following catalogue of activities unfolds in a chronological way, with explorations and co-research activities in the first half of our project, then continuing with hands-on co-design during the second project part. While at the beginning the focus was on gathering knowledge from experts and youth with diverse backgrounds, we incrementally build up exploratory activities with youth and in parallel initiated a knowledge

transfer with civil servants and planners on the topic. Eventually, co-designed activities by youth were also meant to invite stakeholders from the City of Vienna to meet in the so-called contact zone. There was a long way to go to establish this contact zone. (EK, JML)

Coming-of-Age An Actors’ Walk on Youth Perspectives in the Eco-Social Transformation of the City

At the very beginning, the method of a Walking Focus Group was used to start an in-depth exploration of Zukunftshof during the Urbanize! Festival 2022 – an annual festival of urban exploration. The walk included insights from various initiatives that are present at Zukunftshof, showcasing eco-social urban agriculture, social projects, and education focusing on urban (food) co-production. Andreas Gugumuck (Zukunftshof Association) discussed the revitalization of Zukunftshof as an eco-social centre, highlighting projects from urban agriculture to cultural initiatives that connect agriculture and social purpose. Magdalena Augustin (Gassen aus Zucker, URBAN, TU Wien) shared her research on how spaces creatively adapted and transformed by techno collectives, such as Kosmos Kuriosum at Zukunftshof, foster community and creative expression among youth. The treecycle team explained at their tree nursery how ecological farming and outdoor projects teach environmental awareness, build skills, and foster trust among young participants. Sociologist Korinna Lindinger (Cultural Studies, University of Applied Arts Vienna)

stressed the importance of using inclusive language when discussing youth to avoid generalizations and ensure participation formats that recognize diverse backgrounds and experiences. Isabella Steger (City of Vienna, WIENXTRA) highlighted the Werkstatt Junges Wien project, which gathers youth ideas to improve Vienna's public spaces, showing the importance of reflecting diverse perspectives in urban development. Landscape architect Irene Bittner (kapolerta – collective for landscape architecture, art and urbanism) emphasized the role of public space for young people, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, in providing areas for both learning and recreation.

Concluding with a collective mapping session, participants shared perspectives and ideas for Rothneusiedl's future development, urging that spaces remain open and flexible for young people's needs. The insights from the Walking Focus Group and the Collective Mapping both highlighted the relevance of today's urban planning decisions as a foundation for a city that values youth engagement, allowing them the freedom to shape their environments and create spaces that may prove essential in the future.

(EK)

Exploring Co-Research and Co-Creation Approaches

In the first phase of the Vienna Urban Living Lab, different approaches to co-research the everyday knowledge of young people's needs and wishes, but also dilemmas when it comes to public and green spaces,



FIGURE 4: Actors walk: Different stakeholders and participants during a Walking Focus Group at Zukunftshof. Photo: Gala Kuckhoff. → See page 335.



FIGURE 5: Cyclical Time: Erik Tlaseca and walking as an artistic strategy – from city centre to urban fringes. Photo: Veronika Hackl. → See page 340.

were tested. Pooling the knowledge and strategies, transdisciplinary teams of Social Design students developed and tested site-specific methods for researching and re-imagining youth perspectives on their urban environment. Which places of potentiality and niches for appropriation are granted to young people? What role do young people play in the design of green infrastructure? The aim was to provide Social Design students with the tools to identify skills, talents and interests for the analysis and handling of current issues of urban growth at Vienna's periphery, specifically the inclusion or exclusion of young people in urban development, and their role in the creation of green infrastructures. Applying and further developing methods of co-research and co-creation, students created for example 'Mind the Map', an auditive workshop combining mental maps and the production of a soundscape with everyday objects, or 'Tik-Tok is my Place-maker', a method to analyse public spaces through the eyes of young people in social media.

(EK)

Climate Gardening with Terra Preta and a Burning Ring of Plant Residues

In this workshop in the outdoor areas of Zukunftshof, the potential of biochar was explored with young people from the WUK work.space job training programme located at Zukunftshof, and students from the Social Design Studio, using a simple, low-tech approach to produce Terra Preta substrate. Biochar is produced by carbonizing tree and green cuttings. Instead of turning into CO₂ during decomposition, some plant residues become stable, poorly

degradable, pore-rich biochar that can be added to soil. Carbon is bound and made available to plants, leading to better harvests while reducing greenhouse gases – a win-win. One kilogramme of biochar absorbs three times as much CO₂.⁸ Additionally, biomass from tree cuttings and plant residues was collected and piled into a small, cone-shaped hole in the ground called the Kon Tiki. The biomass was ignited and covered to allow the charring process, or pyrolysis, to occur in the absence of oxygen. Afterward, we waited for the biomass to carbonize. During this time, we cooked potato goulash together. The warmth from the stew and pyrolysis was appreciated on that cold November day, and the Kitchen waste was then used to microbial-charge the biochar.

With the prepared biochar, we moved to the agricultural fields near Zukunftshof, where young people mixed the biochar with the soil to create a Terra Preta substrate. Together, we planted a fruit tree and filled a raised bed. This hands-on experience not only involved experimenting but also strengthened confidence in contributing to solving the climate crisis. The use of local material cycles, on-site biochar production, biomass utilization, and waste-heat recovery can already be scaled up for industrial use. These strategies were also incorporated into the urban planning competition for RothNEUsiedl, where planning teams embraced the concept. Imagine if all plant and tree cuttings, as well as kitchen waste, from the future urban development area were turned into biochar, making green waste a climate protection agent and nutrient store. Together with the young people, we translated this potential into the local environment, showing that small steps can make a big

difference. Gaining a sense of one's self-efficacy is an effective way to combat climate anxiety.⁹ Moving from small to large we aimed to make this connection visible in the Urban Living Lab. (SH, TS)

Cyclical Time: From the Soil to the Streets, and From the Metropolis to the Farm

What do we experience, when we collectively walk from the city centre towards Zukunftshof at the edge of the city? For two days we wandered between buildings and trees, crossed bridges and underpasses, to explore what the layers of the city tell us about its past, present and possible future. Mexican visiting artist Erik Tlaseca curated this exploration with invited Social Design students to experience Vienna through walking as an embodied, empirical practice, traversing diverse landscapes – from imperial architecture and dense urban infrastructure to rural landscapes where soil meets pavement. The itinerary revealed the city's distinct textures, rhythms, and soundscapes, allowing participants to feel the contrasts and connections of green and grey infrastructures. This focus on embodied practice underscored walking as a method to read and understand the complex interplay of planned and improvised spaces, supporting future explorations in community arts, urban planning, and youth engagement. Different rhythms and soundscapes of the city became tangible through this embodied experience, providing new insights into urban transformation from the centre to the fringes, putting the planned development around the ULL site at Zukunftshof

into a perspective that spans long periods of urban development without losing an interest in details and subjective narratives. (VH)

Workshop Series: Contact Zone and City Beats

Where do young people spend time outdoors? Is it green or rather grey there? How does this place feel, how does it sound? This workshop series centred around a tactile and audible approach to the city. Together with young students from the school of GTMS Bildungscampus Sonnwendviertel, the participants used their hands and feet to feel structures and sharpen the senses for the city. The project team learnt about favourite places of the participating young people, for example that within the park, they sometimes do not feel welcome as there are families with young children. Instead, they prefer meeting next to the tracks, some steps further away when they have the need to be amongst themselves. In the subsequent workshops, the sense of hearing was focused under the slogan 'Equipped with recorders and loop machines, we remix the sound of the street'. With the same group of young people (and other young participants through cooperations with the open park supervision of the Sonnwendviertel youth club) we met at the ComeIn youth club in Inzersdorf – yet another area in the periphery of Vienna – and at JuZe Paho youth club, where we captured the sounds of the environment. The sounds we recorded included children, trams, trains, cars, shopping trolleys, dogs, vans in the pedestrian zone, voices in Turkish and Arabic, howling engines, basketballs

and soccer balls, crows and the opening of a playground gate. The professional recording equipment immediately aroused curiosity. The value of the device and the quality of the headphones played a major role in this experience. The fact that we entrusted the young people we had just met with the device unaccompanied also played a role in building trust. We then transferred the collected sounds to a computer and used them to create rhythms and beats. After the workshops, we sorted all the collected sounds and one member of the Vienna Trustmaking team mixed a specific city beat for each location and for each group we held the workshop with. The beats would later contribute to the soundtrack of our bike tour. (VH)

On to the Concrete Beach!
A Collective Bike Tour Into the Future,
Across Vienna

Where can we find a beach in the city? How does asphalt sound? And when was the last time you were in a field? After practising riding safely in a group, the Trustmaking project team and young people from WUK work.space set off as a colourful and sonorous flock for a bike tour from the city centre to Zukunftshof. Together we experienced what it feels like to take back the streets as a critical mass and discovered new perspectives on a socially and climate-just future for the city along different stops on the route: we're heating up! Or cooling down?

Our first stop, KunstHausWien, a museum designed by eco-pioneer Friedensreich Hundertwasser, was

undergoing a hydrothermal renovation. Beneath the building, groundwater is tapped for sustainable heating and cooling. Stopping at Sophiengarten, we met people at the Schwimmverein Donaukanal (Swimming Club Danube Canal), who are reviving the long tradition of public bathing culture. The Danube Canal, once known as the 'riviera of the working class' was a popular spot for swimming and sunbathing until the early twentieth century – the new initiative aims to put the canal back on our mental map of public (swimming) space. The initiative Neu Marx für alle! and the association Skateboardingvienna greeted us at our next stop, showing how the concrete jungle can indeed be full of life. Several self-organized, non-commercial projects propagate how citizens can actively co-create public spaces – even when buried under a thick layer of concrete. Our next stop took us to Kurbadstraße, where a former parking lot is being transformed into a residential area with parks and green infrastructure. On the day of our visit, the soil and water conditions under the asphalt were being investigated, offering a glimpse into what lies hidden beneath the surface. At Zukunftshof, with a view over the vast field ahead, it was time to stretch out and relax. After cycling about 15km, we ended the tour with a picnic, sharing food, drinks, ice cream, and our thoughts.

The young participants reflected on their experiences in different ways:

'What I liked most about the bike tour was the stop at the free space in St. Marx (...) where there is a skate park, basketball court, event space and a community garden. I think it's cool that a lot of things were built

there from materials that others would simply throw away, that everything looks pretty simple and is self-built. I hope that this place stays as it is for a long time and is not replaced by a huge monster shopping centre.' (Lu)

'All but three of the stops were quite interesting. Personally, I wasn't interested in most of the stops. It was a nice idea to drive with music even if I personally don't like it. (...) It would have been more pleasant if everyone had ridden at their own pace.' (Robert)

'The climb up to the Löwygrube was almost unbearable. It was so incredibly hot and my thighs are still burning today!!! (...) 10/10 points to the great selection at the snack table. The music and conversation contributed to the pleasant atmosphere.' (Ray)

(SH, EK)

From the Side-Lines Into the City! Shadow-Boxing in Public Space

During the Urbanize! Festival 2023, the Vienna ULL organized a dynamic workshop where Social Design students, young participants from WUK work.space, and festival visitors joined to explore the basics of boxing in an open outdoor training session. Guided by curator and boxer Anne Zühlke and social worker and boxing coach Benard Faniku, participants practiced the sequence of foundational boxing moves – jab, cross, hook, and uppercut – and experienced public space as their gym in the surroundings of the old Vienna



FIGURE 6: Contact Zone: Participants deepen the understanding of their urban environment through the senses of hearing and touch. Photo: Veronika Hackl 2023. → See page 341.



FIGURE 7: Co-design process of site-specific goals and a unique hockey game in action. Playful surveys designed by Social Design students served as an icebreaker for further conversations about places for leisure activities in the city. Photo: Milena Nowak. → See page 346.

University of Economics and Business (Alte WU). Following an introduction to the potentials of boxing as an accessible, empowering and diverse sports practice, the group appropriated the public setting to consider the role of playing fields, gyms, and sports clubs as critical social infrastructure that support a socially just city. The session sparked reflection on the types of shared spaces accessible to young people in Vienna's evolving urban landscape. Together, through this street workout, participants sharpened their awareness of the social and athletic potential of streets and squares, highlighting how accessible public spaces can foster inclusion and engagement for young people in the city. (EK)

Cross-Country-Hockey

Building on the experiences of the co-research activities, it became clear that sport and exercise are important for all young people – regardless of whether they practise sport themselves or not. Young people working at WUK work.space collaborated with the Trustmaking team Vienna to organize a unique sports event: a three-round hockey tournament with fluid teams and alternative rules. Together, we transformed a barren field into a sports ground, designed individual goals, and created rules to adjust to the conditions of the landscape. The set-up, look and rules of the games were developed step-by-step. Introductory workshops used situationist methods such as cadavre exquis in text and drawings to get into dialogue on the subject of sport and sports grounds. Situationist football was then introduced to talk about how different

settings can completely reshape a familiar sport. What changes, if football is played with three goals instead of two? How does collaboration change competition without losing the spirit of sport? How do fans, players, ushers and referees strive for a win all together? To investigate these questions, hockey was introduced as the sport of choice, because it fulfils three important conditions: it is a team sport, the basic rules are easy to understand and yet it is not one of the main sports in Austria. The probability that everyone is a beginner is therefore higher. Moreover, two special characteristics were particularly suited for adaption to our needs: The speed of the sport, in which players constantly leave and return to the pitch, and how obstacles in the goal are used in hockey to practise scoring without a goalkeeper. Obviously, an even more important requirement was that the sport could be played on a field. Based on these parameters, three customised goals were designed and constructed using locally sourced materials and found objects. The field was cleared of undergrowth and animals. It was then mown and obstacles were swiftly integrated into the design of the pitch. In the end, a double pitch with four goals was created and special rules for changing pitches were added to the already agreed upon set of rules.

'The mowing work was very cool, I was allowed to work with the brush cutter the whole first day and work the "deer field" to perfection. I also thought the students were very cool and nice. The game itself was also fun, at least the try-outs. It was very chaotic, but still very entertaining.' (Felix)

'What I liked most was that you could talk to the students after the game and that there was a 'non-winner ceremony', meaning that there was no winner and no loser. What I didn't like was that there were too many people in my opinion, which unconsciously stressed me out.' (Phiebs)

'I generally liked the hockey game because I like to try new things.' (Tina)

'I liked everything about playing hockey, it was fun. I liked the boxing because I like boxing. It wasn't so great for me because I had to go home because it was so late.' (Furkan)

The Game was played on several occasions over the course of the ULL. By physically preparing spaces and negotiating their use through sports, participants engaged in playful interactions and fostered visibility for youth in the city's development plans – imagining an alternative sports field that could become a model for the future development area of RothNEUsiedl turning the fields into a dense new district at the edge of Vienna. The youngsters who co-created the game became experts in cross-country hockey and succeeded in getting more and more people interested in this newly developed sport. (VH)

Winter Tent Cinema

In the tradition of embracing the outdoors even in harsh weather conditions, a special screening took place at Zukunftshof in winter. The set-up consisted of several tents in reference to the public-but-private movie

experiences of a drive-in-cinema. Pillows, blankets and sleeping bags, as well as hot-water bottles allowed for cosiness even with low temperatures, while soft-drinks and snacks added to the original cinema experience. In preparation of this event, youngsters from two youth centres were asked about their movie preferences, favourite genres, and if they went to cinema or rather watched online series. It turned out that while many did not differentiate between a series or a movie (seeing both mainly as a home-activity), some actually considered going to the cinema as a preferred activity with friends or on dates. In order to cater to both of these needs, an outdoor fireplace was prepared to warm-up after or during the screening. On the day of the event, youngsters cuddled-up in the tents to watch Dungeons & Dragons. While some were caught up in the epic movie from beginning to the end, others walked in & out. The bonfire turned out to be a perfect spot to discuss imaginary horror movie scenes taking place at the eerily extinct former farm, as well as alternative uses of the site. The vastness and seclusion of Zukunftshof during the winter darkness was visibly intriguing to them. (VH)

Tangible Absence – the Senses Unfolded

What do we gain when we deal with absence? How can we create meaningful experiences engaging all our senses? What is the role of design in sensorial exploration, human connection and food? Can we bring a landscape inside us? The Social Design Studio Focus Week was facilitated by 'eating designer' Marije Vogelzang and took place in

collaboration with the Brachiale Festival that brought together international artists at a residency on the topic of the Brache (the empty or brownfield). Set against the backdrop of Zukunftshof on Vienna's fringes, this week-long exploration invited students to delve into sensory design, the theme of absence, and human connection. Food was introduced as a central medium for bonding and interaction, encouraging students to examine the less tangible aspects of sensory design. In a first exercise, students brought different kinds of foods to share to the studio and shared the special memories connected to them. Through a series of talks and practical sessions on site, participants were encouraged to think of absence as a sensory space to be filled with meaningful, embodied interactions. In response, the students designed sensory interventions, experimenting with ways to transform ordinary sensory experiences into powerful tools for introspection and connection. The exchange both with artists in residence as well as with young people working at WUK work.space allowed them to refine their projects in an interdisciplinary setting. Their work culminated in a public event, where they presented ten sensory journeys inviting the public to rediscover sensations often lost in daily routine, and therefore also rediscover Zukunftshof and its surroundings. These stations created immersive sensory experiences, from imagined flavours to tactile encounters, allowing participants a rare opportunity to pause and experience the subtle interactions between presence and absence. The interventions opened up ways to perceive spaces not only as physical places but also as settings that foster sensory experiences, personal reflection, and human connection offering as intangible resources of places. (EK)



FIGURE 8+9: sensing the absence: An attempt to bring the landscape inside us with Marije Vogelzang. Photo: Elina Kränzle 2024. → See page 349.

Green Scripted Realities

The scenography workshop offered young people, in the framework of their school theatre project week, a platform to creatively express visions of a ‘green future’. Ideating fantasy worlds and the mystic creatures that inhabit them, students designed and built costumes and stage sets from materials found on site, and transformed the landscape of the Zukunftshof into a Green Scripted Reality. Working hands-on and outdoors at Zukunftshof, a site they had had to discover, with its barns, courtyards, vast meadows and fields inhabited by snails and insects, the young people slipped into the roles of imaginative creatures inspired by science fiction films that had already been discussed in the preparatory course. In teams, they considered which abilities of humans, animals, plants and machines could be combined to survive climate change in an urbanized world. With the help of a wooden frame that we placed in the landscape, we marked out the stages for their scenes. On the second day, we used the framework to define perspectives and mentally transport ourselves to distant worlds. The young people sketched out their ideas, which came together to form a common storyline. On the third day, these ideas were implemented: costumes, props and the stage set for two fantastic worlds were created from simple materials such as waste paper and cardboard. In the first world, robotic creatures feed on energy boxes, while flying sky animals glide over wooded landscapes with tree-sized tulips. The second world consisted of a completely edible landscape. On the fourth day, the young people practised filming scenes and preparing the analogue sets for social media. They used



FIGURE 10: What would be your script for a sustainable future?
Photo: Theresa Schütz 2024. → See page 352.



FIGURE 11: The Vienna ULL team created a twist on the ‘farm-to-table’ concept and showed that urban exploration can be a feast. Photo: Zofia Jasinska 2024. → See page 354.

smartphones to test camera settings and produce short pieces of content. On the last day, they presented their worlds to the city administration and to another school class. The young people proudly performed their scenes and invited the guests to explore, film, and redesign the sets again and again. (TS)

Soil Kitchen

The loss of biodiversity, declining food sovereignty, and scarcity of resources, all of this is increasingly being described as a crisis of sensibilities, and as a state of lacking emotional capacities and sensitive registers for material and immaterial resources, for human and non-human actors.¹¹ But can art, culinary, food, design, handcraft and fashion be suitable mediators to restore these sensibilities? This was the idea behind the project 'Soil Kitchen' in cooperation with HLMW9 Michlbeuern, a secondary school in Vienna with a focus on gastronomy and fashion professions. The Soil Kitchen project brought together gastronomy and fashion students for an interdisciplinary collaboration to co-create a dinner experience as part of the Vienna ULL. The different skills of the students in terms of fashion, design, crafts and cooking were to contribute to making the material and immaterial resources of Rothneusiedl visible through a dinner experience that referred to the place in all its elements: From the menu plan (which was created by the pupils almost exclusively using local products from Rothneusiedl), to home-made pottery crafted from local excavated soil, as well as site-specific fashion and

decoration using a plant printing process. However, Soil Kitchen was less a one-off dinner event than an intensive and long-term engagement with the place itself. In advance of the dinner, the students were introduced to the site and its actors in thematic workshops and were able to work and experiment with the local products and materials. In this process, it was necessary to constantly mediate between desires and practical constraints and to negotiate ideas and their implementation. The search for and finding of compromises between all participants is ultimately also practising democracy based on respectful interaction and appreciation of different skills and the joint learning process.

In the preparatory workshops we worked on material and immaterial resources, hands-on, with the introductory phase characterized by the exploration of the location, and getting to know the players and their stories. Later on, students had the opportunity to work hands-on with local materials and products, pickling and fermenting vegetables from local farmers as well as screen printing self-designed service-outfits and a tablecloth that referred to the natural qualities of Rothneusiedl. The Wild Clay workshop emphasized the topic of soil in the most direct sensory way. Clay was excavated locally from future urban development areas around Rothneusiedl, prepared and used for on-site pottery of plates, dishes, decorative elements and abstract 'conversation pieces' made use of at the dinner. In this way future building ground was translated to a new sense and meaning: soil not only as a base for food production but also as a building material for the production of craftwork, art, or little pieces of architecture. Finally, the students presented their

from-farm-to-fork dinner at the Zukunftshof. The invited guests, among them teachers, representatives of the City of Vienna, housing developers, and neighbours, were presented a multi-course vegetarian menu that not only reflected the students' cultural background with recipes from their parents' homes, but also aimed to create a symbiosis with the local products from Rothneusiedl.

The young people were given responsibility for curating the evening in terms of the schedule, the menu, dramaturgy, localisation, organization, content, and aesthetics. To challenge classic role divisions during a dinner, the pupils developed a playful role-reversal game, with the result that during some courses the pupils were the ones being served whereas the guests could prove themselves in the kitchen or in service. In addition, the predefined distribution of roles between the fashion class and the gastronomy class were also mixed up during the joint project. Here the business class found creative expression in pottery, while the fashion class mastered table service as well as organizing and planning the dinner. When interacting with the guests, the students' initial insecurity and shyness quickly gave way to nonchalance, charm and humour, confidence and pride in their own abilities.

With the Soil Kitchen, the students created the necessary social and cultural infrastructure in a public space, which made it possible for different actors to come together. The contact zone was thus interpreted literally – a shared meal is a catalyst for social interaction between people from different backgrounds. When a communal meal fosters respectful encounters, idea exchanges, and

shared curiosity, it reveals that every small gesture carries something bigger within it. (SH, TR)

Graffiti Workshop

The graffiti workshop, organised at the special request of the young people working at WUK work.space, aimed at learning spraying techniques. The Social Design Studio's Trustmaking Team facilitated the connection to a young adult to lead the workshop at the public spraying area at Vienna's Danube Canal. This activity was an opportunity to show the young people the surroundings of the University of Applied Arts in Vienna and to create another contact zone between them and the Social Design students. It was also an opportunity to thank them for all their ideas, their openness and their willingness to exchange during the project duration of the ULL Vienna, as well as the access to their workshop that they also granted us for the realisation of other activities. Colleagues from the recently launched project 'Inclusive City' were also invited to the workshop to facilitate a handover and continuity from one project to the next – switching from green infrastructure to blue infrastructure. (VH)

Cross-Learning at the Vienna Winter School

For the Vienna ULL winter school, all European team members, representatives of city administration, students

and associates came together for five days of exchange, excursions and hands-on activities under windy winter weather conditions. The winter school took place at the Social Design Studio of the University of Applied Arts Vienna and at Zukunftshof in Rothneusiedl. Hosting a winter school brought with it a series of logistical challenges that we saw as part of our research topic. How do we survive urban public space in winter time? What does the city, what do its young people need in the cold season? How can we create a welcoming contact zone in harsh weather conditions? We challenged our guests to go beyond the university building and co-create winterly experiences. One focus of the Vienna ULL winter school was to reflect on the co-research and the upcoming co-creation activities in the four Trustmaking project urban living labs. Hence, a series of working sessions was dedicated to knowledge transfer on co-research methods and setting up the ULLs. Additionally, connections to placemaking initiatives in Vienna were established in excursions, such as a visit of the project area of Joint Programme Initiative EU-project PlaceCity in Floridsdorf, Vienna. Furthermore, we certainly spent time at Zukunftshof, where we also invited local experts and the city administration. The public programme of the winter school consisted of two days of workshops, talks and activities at Zukunftshof. Being located at a barely heated former farm estate, we needed to provide plenty of possibilities to get warm. Hence our collective activities were focused on preparing a bond fire in the outside spaces, distributing water bottles and blankets and cooking warm goulash. Once everything was set up, we enjoyed dinner and a movie for and about young women in Vienna, dealing with topics such as friendship,

belonging and religion. Additionally, the public programme focused on green infrastructure and circular soil with a workshop by the small enterprises treecycle and forschen planen bauen, as well as a fruitful exchange with a group of youth workers from Zukunftshof. (VH)

Reflection and Learnings from Vienna

By learning from Vienna ULL's experiences of its small-scale, incremental and hands-on approaches, various locally-specific principles stand out as central to our approach, which also feed into the general Trustmaking principles.

Vienna benefits from well-trained youth workers and a highly organized city planning administration. However, what is often missing is a contact zone – a space where these two worlds can meaningfully connect. Despite the existence of youth strategies and sufficient resources, routines and processes often operate in silos, limiting their combined impact. We worked towards this contact zone by bridging existing routines and creating formats in welcoming spatial settings to link youth, planning professionals and civil servants. Bringing together such diverse actors presented challenges, such as differing schedules, routines, and backgrounds. Given the strong reliance on routines within youth organizations, it is essential to adapt to their established routines to ensure smoother cooperation and engagement. Creating such routines and a contact zone required intentional effort, emphasizing collaboration and shared experiences of joy.

By centring joy in collaborative processes, participants were more likely to engage fully, bridging differences and creating shared memories that strengthened trust. Joy was positioned as a core principle of collaboration and understood not merely as an individual emotion but as a shared, collective experience that encompasses both the positive and negative aspects of daily life. It served as a foundational element in fostering meaningful interactions between.¹²

Working on the fringes of the city was another specificity of the Vienna ULL. Whether geographically, socially, or conceptually, this forced new perspectives and yielded surprising outcomes, yet also removed the pressure of predefined expectations on actions. The spaces of the farm estate and the plain fields around Zukunftshof reduced the overwhelming demands of formalized settings and provided room for unexpected outcomes. Organizing events centred around unexpected activities with sports and creativity can create a shared experience, placing all participants on an equal footing. The element of surprise, such as introducing a novel and creative format can be key moments in fostering trust and collaboration. At the same time the location on the fringe of the city also meant overcoming physical distances between the location of youth organisations or schools and Zukunftshof. However, we learnt that the root of the problem often lies in resource constraints rather than proximity. For instance, a school group might manage to reach the distant project site due to adequate resources, whereas others with fewer resources cannot. The ability to participate often hinges less on physical distance and more on access to time, funding, and organizational

support. Recognizing and addressing these disparities is also connected to the knowledge that in working with young people in urban development projects, it is crucial to identify motivated individuals early on, particularly those willing to contribute despite limited resources, such as youth workers or teachers. Establishing a longer-term process, with step-by-step workshops in regular periods, is beneficial to building relationships and to addressing complex issues effectively.

Within these longer-term processes and incrementally developed activities, empowering young people to take on different roles was critical. Allowing young people to not only be participants but also experts, hosts, and creators fosters confidence and ownership. Collaborative efforts with others, such as in the Vienna ULL with students of Social Design, further enriched this dynamic. For example, the young people of WUK work.space became the hosts of the field hockey game, acting as experts of their space and inviting city officials to play according to their co-created rules. This role reversal not only elevated their status but also demonstrated the value of their unique perspectives. Encouraging role flexibility nurtures empathy, strengthens relationships, and enables participants to see themselves and each other in new ways.

Finally, trustmaking in the Vienna ULL was developed through intensive care work, a crucial yet often overlooked component of collaborative processes. Much of the preparatory work required to establish trust remains invisible, such as organizing spaces, preparing snacks, and attending to participants' emotional and physical needs. However, this care work creates the

protected environments where actors, particularly young people, feel comfortable exploring and experimenting. By acknowledging and making this care work visible, we opened up spaces of possibility, where trust can be nurtured and sustained through everyday acts of care and attention. This attention hopefully lays the groundwork for joy in co-creation processes and for long-term, trust-based collaborations of the Vienna ULL in the future.

(JML)

Statements of Different Participants, Collaborators and Other Stakeholders in the Vienna ULL

‘As youth workers, we’re accustomed to engaging with young people within established frameworks, expectations, and standards. Partnering with professionals from different backgrounds, has given us a valuable opportunity to reflect on both the how and why of our approach.

Collaborating with Trustmaking has encouraged us to shift our focus and experiment with new methods, and we’ve been delighted to see how positively young people have responded. We’re excited to continue exploring these possibilities!’ Lukas Manzenreiter, Head of the Youth Centre ComeIn, Inzersdorf, Vienna

‘The Soil Kitchen project has shown that even an abstract topic like reclaiming open spaces through culinary arts, culture, crafts, and fashion can resonate with young people. A secondary school specializing in fashion and culinary arts, like HLMW9 Michelbeuern, is particularly well-suited for this. Its blend of practical and academic subjects helps students tackle abstract

concepts and develop strategies to bring them to life. Despite the school’s two branches being quite different, the project highlighted the value of collaborating across disciplines and professions. Looking beyond education, I believe creative trustmaking projects like this could also play a valuable role in local political initiatives and community work in the future.’ Nikolas Kurz, Teacher at HLMW9 Michelbeuern (BMHS), Vocational School for Business, Tourism and Fashion

‘Trustmaking is and was the programme! I see the invitation to participate with our young people as a great opportunity for many first personal encounters and contacts with the university and political actors. The programme was very creative and varied, and a mutually appreciative transfer of knowledge between young people, artists and urban planners took place in a playful way. We had a lot of fun exploring the city, cycling across Vienna, boxing training in public spaces and turning the fields where we usually work into a hockey field. A big thank you to Veronika, Elina and all the participants, we spent many wonderful, cold and sweaty hours together.’ Werner Altreiter, Youth Trainer at WUK work.space

‘Co-design activities can offer new approaches in the green transition that might not have been considered otherwise. They are also able to strengthen identification with specific areas among certain groups, such as adolescents. This identification can help reduce vandalism and generate broader positive impacts for society as a whole.’ Ursula Dominikus and Sabine Valerio-Baumann, Vienna Municipal Department for Parks and Gardens (MA42)

'We were able to contribute our vision of climate-regenerative urban development as a participating planning office in the competition for the RothNEUsiedl urban masterplan. Our work in the field as well as the impulses, formats and approaches (e.g. Terra Preta, Soil Kitchen) developed co-creatively as part of trustmaking was a distinctive feature that was received with particular interest by the jury. Socio-ecological challenges, the shaping of social transformation processes and social inclusion require transdisciplinary approaches. In this context, we see architecture and urban design as tools in the sense of a common-good-oriented practice. Applied research projects such as Trustmaking will continue to directly influence our planning decisions.'
Sebastian Hafner and Thomas Romm,
forschen planen bauen

'We must include the needs of youth in urban development processes in order to empower these young people. This means to advocate for the youth in every possible context: developing the projects, enabling their participation, supporting existing youth organizations but also teaching the city development in the schools. In everyday practice it often means not to forget to promote the topics and spaces of the youth. Thus, the responsibilities of political actors and administration lie in promoting the topics and the needs of youth in our city.' Amila Širbegovic, Housing Expert, Vienna Municipal Department for Housing (MA50)

What's next? Continuing Engagement by Bringing People and Ideas Together

On the question about how the Vienna ULL would continue beyond the project phase and what learnings will be taken on, we asked Raffaella Dorner and Lukas Lang from the Municipal Department for District Planning and Zoning (MA21) of the City of Vienna. This municipal department is currently in charge of the urban development of RothNEUsiedl and both civil servants were actively involved in our ULL for establishing a contact zone between city administration and youth (participating in the cross-country hockey game hosted by young people of WUK work.space).

Where do you see the responsibilities in urban development when it comes to empowering youth? 'As urban planners, it's our responsibility to involve everyone affected by urban planning. We take a broad approach, ensuring that anyone interested or impacted by a development has the opportunity to participate. This principle is reflected in our Masterplan Partizipation (Masterplan Participation)¹³, which serves as a foundation. Young people, of course, are a key target group within this framework. We currently use a variety of methods—direct involvement, newspapers, online information—to offer multiple ways to participate. However, we haven't yet found a specific format tailored to effectively engage young people. This is a challenge because, in later stages of planning, it's often difficult to allocate spaces where young people can truly express their interests. If we don't identify and discuss young people's needs and wishes early on, we risk that

they are overlooked during the realization phase. While we don't yet have a defined format for youth participation, we are open to testing and exploring different approaches – such as the ones developed in the Trustmaking ULL – to effectively engage this important group.'

Can you share some lessons learned from participating in the Trustmaking activities in RothNEUsiedl?

'The concept of 'trust-making' is very fitting. Building trust takes time – it requires meeting people multiple times and having real, approachable individuals behind the planning process. This personal connection is crucial for fostering the involvement of residents. For example, playing hockey with young people, shouting, cheering, and celebrating together, was an excellent way to break the ice and establish rapport. Understanding and empathy often emerged in informal, in-between moments. It was a small but vital step that bridged the game and more in-depth conversations about future plans, as well as the young people's ideas and wishes for the area's development. We also received feedback from district representatives about the importance of creating dedicated spaces for youth. Early involvement of young people is seen as crucial. Initially, we were skeptical, but experiences like eating pizza together after the game really proved to be game-changers. It broke down barriers between us as adults and the young people. Playful, exploratory and thus innovative projects like Trustmaking are essential for creating low-threshold opportunities to come together.'

What's next? How do you imagine integrating the insights from the established contact zone into the further planning process?

'We know that one of the basic needs of young people is to have spaces where they are neither disturbed nor disturbing. When planning public spaces in RothNEUsiedl, we can already identify areas where conflicts might arise, as well as spaces where young people could take ownership in the future. It's important to encourage more co-creation processes with all types of residents, but there are many constraints and pressures in urban planning. Within these limitations, putting co-creation into practice often remains quite complicated. Our ambition is to develop RothNEUsiedl as a New European Bauhaus (NEB) model quarter¹⁴ – reflecting sustainable urban development and aesthetic qualities – though not only as an outcome of planning but as a process that involves everyone.'

While we are still refining our approach, the ultimate goal is co-creation, so that future residents or those involved in the construction phase can identify a shared sense of Baukultur (building culture) and their relevance for their quality of life. For RothNEUsiedl, the site of Zukunftshof is envisioned as a social anchor, bringing together future residents with the existing neighbourhood. It will serve as a cultural and social hub, fostering connections between the past and future of the area. The newly opened Stadtraum (an urban showroom) at Zukunftshof, where the exhibition of the planning process for RothNEUsiedl is displayed, remains

open for community use – be it other exhibitions, yoga classes, or youth gatherings. We encourage everyone to utilize this space to bring people and ideas together.’

(EK)

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FIGURE 12-15: Film stills of Fringy Fields Forever – A short film by Sophie Böscker documented the summer activities of the Vienna Urban Living Lab in 2024: How can we learn about a place through eating its landscape? How can we re-imagine relations through sports and play? How can we understand youth's needs and desires by imagining an alternative future? Together with young people we turned meadows into a Cross-Country Hockey field, a former farm and soon-to-be neighbourhood center into a film set for Green Scripted Realities, and the fertile fields of Rothneusiedl into a Soil Kitchen. Fringey fields forever playfully explores open spaces in the city and takes a glimpse into the future.



FIGURE 16-19: Film stills of Fringy Fields Forever – A short film by Sophie Bösker.



Creating Trust?

Brigitte Felderer

How could there be an epilogue to the subject of our project, documented in this publication? Of course, there are no final words to a topic that does not refrain from asking what trust might mean in urban contexts that are under constant pressure and at the same time, being exposed to those materializing forces which constantly produce cities and metropolitan conditions of co-living. Trust should be regarded as an essential base of exchange and social relations. It provides us with a system of regulations which are not explicitly imposed but internally applied. To *make* trust could only mean to activate a wish, a need, a desire and apply those not in the sense of prescribing a rule.

To *make* trust forms a contradiction in itself: the more you *make* it the more you might lose it. Trustmaking is invisible, never outspoken; it describes a never-ending process and is as risky as it is unavoidable. Risky because we trust in each other without knowing each other in unexpected encounters, and unavoidable because we cannot avoid each other in dense and continuously changing cities. Trust is not asking for active participation, trust is accomplished when people and persons trust in themselves, and come to understand that the city they are living in is not only produced for them but by them.

It goes without saying that trust will not replace rules, regulations or laws but if trust is made, then regulations might only provide a system which comes into force when matters of urgency

arise, and not a system which would prevent anything happening.

The project documented in this book would have never been realized without trust. The bonds made throughout the project were not self-evident or easily accomplished across the many differing methods, approaches, and contexts used; each being respective of the diversities of each institution or non-institution involved.

The ‘young actors’ who became essential to the process of the project were not just participating or consuming, but became aware of their own impact on urban dynamics and their already happening future. Urban planning aims to guarantee the futures of upcoming generations of urban citizens and in contradiction to that horizon of time, such a planning process is exposed to definitions, calculations, and schedules which do not easily synchronize with unexpected needs or changes.

Therefore, our crisp questions were: is urban planning capable of empowering city dwellers and triggering notions of responsibility? How could citizens become aware of the fact that they are always actors? How could ‘the urban’ be produced before any construction took place? How could immaterial resources be strengthened before any construction started? How could many differing notions of city life – present and future – be understood, respected and even created? What comes beforehand – the social stock or the built one?

The Social Design Studio had the responsibility to bridge our consortium with the funding authorities and it pulled our multidisciplinary threads together. This multi-disciplinarity resulted in the project dynamics applying a methodology that linked a social design approach with urban planning. To create a relationship within a given local context, with particular groups of people, never imposing trust but just being trusted over a period of these three years, followed a complex and challenging process.


In that sense the procedure and its methodology also represent one of the main results of the project. These results are conditioned by a local context already under pressure from being thoroughly transformed and built, coupled with the need to be experienced as part of the urban fabric (and not just serving a need of housing and sleeping), the involvement of new generations of urban citizens who were not previously part of the decision making, and last but not least by the overall urgency of how such a development could be based and could answer to a future need accessed and utilized by as many as possible.

A green transition needs to be based on a developed democratic respect which presupposes that all involved would have an understanding about the importance of their fears, wishes, dreams and visions. *Trustmaking* in that sense also means how to express these wishes and fears and how to translate them to oneself and to others. Our project shows the urgent need to involve the unheard, the silent

voices in any further urban development, not only to meet needs but to guarantee that these needs could even be brought to the surface; that they could be formulated to also change something (or at least slow down any decision making), or even lead to unexpected outcomes.

If the city is designed, conceptualized, and planned, it goes without saying that what is also designed is 'the social'. How could this be done in a top down process? How could a methodology, which is not just coined as 'participation', be introduced? How could this methodology finally be regarded on an eye level with planning routines? How could participants find themselves in such processes? These questions apply particularly in cities which are all too well administered and maybe far too well regulated.

Trustmaking shows that any urban planning needs to adopt methods and processes which involve and reflect social design, which give time and therefore also funds to listen to people and places, to activate awareness, to rethink existing routines, to dig up the 'spirit of a place', to remain open to unwanted demands, and to make them possible. If we speak of trust we mean democratic involvement and such an involvement could only begin with the young creators. If any responsibility could be described as adult, it could only mean not just handing over, but guaranteeing and making space now, and taking responsibility now for a future that we, as well as young creators, need to trust.



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Lavrinc, J., The Perspective of Young People in Participatory Urban Planning.
Existing data: this study brought together existing research data obtained upon request and subject to licence restrictions from a number of different sources. Full details of how these data were obtained are available in the documentation available at the request to the author.
Ethical constraints: Due to ethical concerns, supporting data cannot be made openly available.

Krebs, R. & Karssenber, H., Rethinking Placemaking: A Critical Approach for Building Trust and Place in Urban Planning and Design
Existing data: this study brought together existing research data obtained upon request and subject to licence restrictions from a number of different sources. Full details of how these data were obtained are available in the documentation available at <https://placemaking-europe.eu/consortium-placecity/>

Budryte, P., Reframing Urban Living Labs: A Platform for Cultivating Trust between Different Stakeholders
Ethical constraints: Due to ethical concerns, supporting data cannot be made openly available.

Janssen, C., Hoekstra J. & Genitili, M., Strengthening Capabilities: Generating Trust in Inclusive Planning Processes
No data were used

Reutlinger, C. Corners, stages, niches: How young people appropriate and engage in urban spaces and the reactions they provoke
Existing data: this study brought together existing research data obtained upon

request and subject to licence restrictions from a number of different sources. The data have been published in the following publications: https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-658-24219-0_1 and <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-658-48329-6>

Schenk, L., Building Bridges: A Social Capital Perspective on Youth Participation in Urban Contexts
No data were used

Wall, E., un/der/represented: A Summer School as An Alternative Model of Learning
Existing data: this study brought together existing research data obtained upon request and subject to licence restrictions from a number of different sources. Full details of how these data were obtained are available in the documentation available at the Greenwich Academic Literature Archive repository at <https://gala.gre.ac.uk/>.

Musch, M.W. & Budrys, Ž., Trust, A Complex Phenomenon. A Conceptual Framework for Trust Making
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Trustmaking Collective, Trustmaking Principles
No data were used

Surizehi, K., Weger K. Connect, Create, Build – Youth Work for Placemaking! Urban Living Lab Oslo, Norway
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Vitkutė, E., Budryte, P., Budrys, Ž., Create Your City! Urban Living Lab Panevėžys, Lithuania

Ethical constraints: Due to ethical concerns, supporting data cannot be made openly available.

Lee, D. Musch, M.W., Ranalli, F. Zaat, N., Building Trust between and Capabilities of Youth and Professionals Urban Living Lab Rotterdam, The Netherlands
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Hackl, V., Hafner, S., Kränzle, E., Lehner, J.M., Romm, T., Schütz, T., Bringing Youth from the Sidelines into the City! Urban Living Lab Vienna, Austria
Existing data: The data on quotes from youth is available on the blog of the youth organization. Ethical constraints: the data that was collected via an interview is stored on the university cloud and cannot be published open access due to personal and sensitive nature of the interview data.

Felderer, B. Epilogue: Creating Trust?
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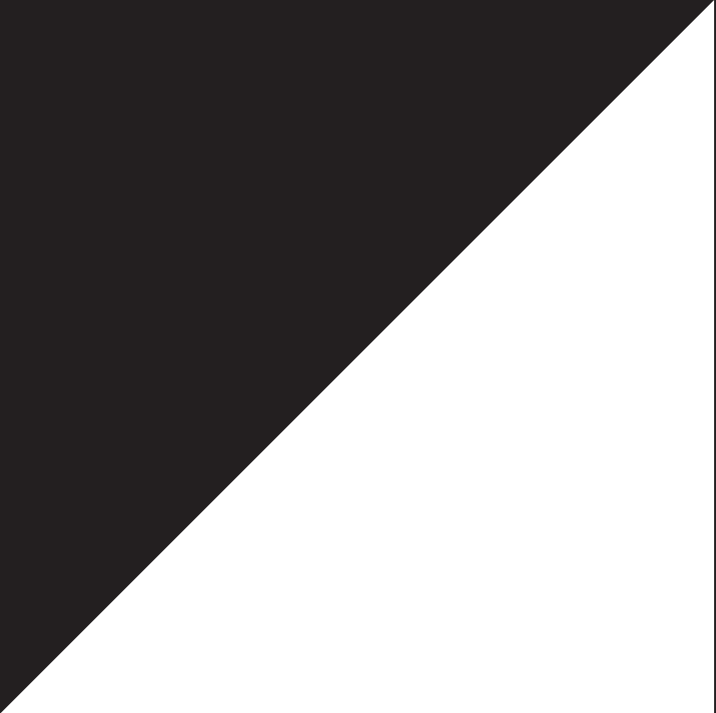
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How do we foster trust in our public spaces, communities, and each other? *Trustmaking* explores how the youth can lead the way in reimagining cities through collaboration and creativity. This book introduces trustmaking as an approach to inter-generational co-creation, grounded in principles that transcend conventional urban-planning paradigms. Featuring insights from four European Urban Living Labs, this guide offers strategies – such as arts-based interventions and placemaking – that empower young people to co-create inclusive, trust-filled urban futures.

For planners, policymakers, and anyone invested in inclusive cities, *Trustmaking* offers fresh perspectives and actionable, co-creative tools to bridge generational gaps, foster collaboration, and rethink the role of trust in a post-pandemic world.



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