



**EU POLICY LAB & DG RTD**

MAY 17, 2017

LAB CONNECTIONS KICKSTARTER

**Multi-level third space**

**for systemic urban research and innovation**

V0.1



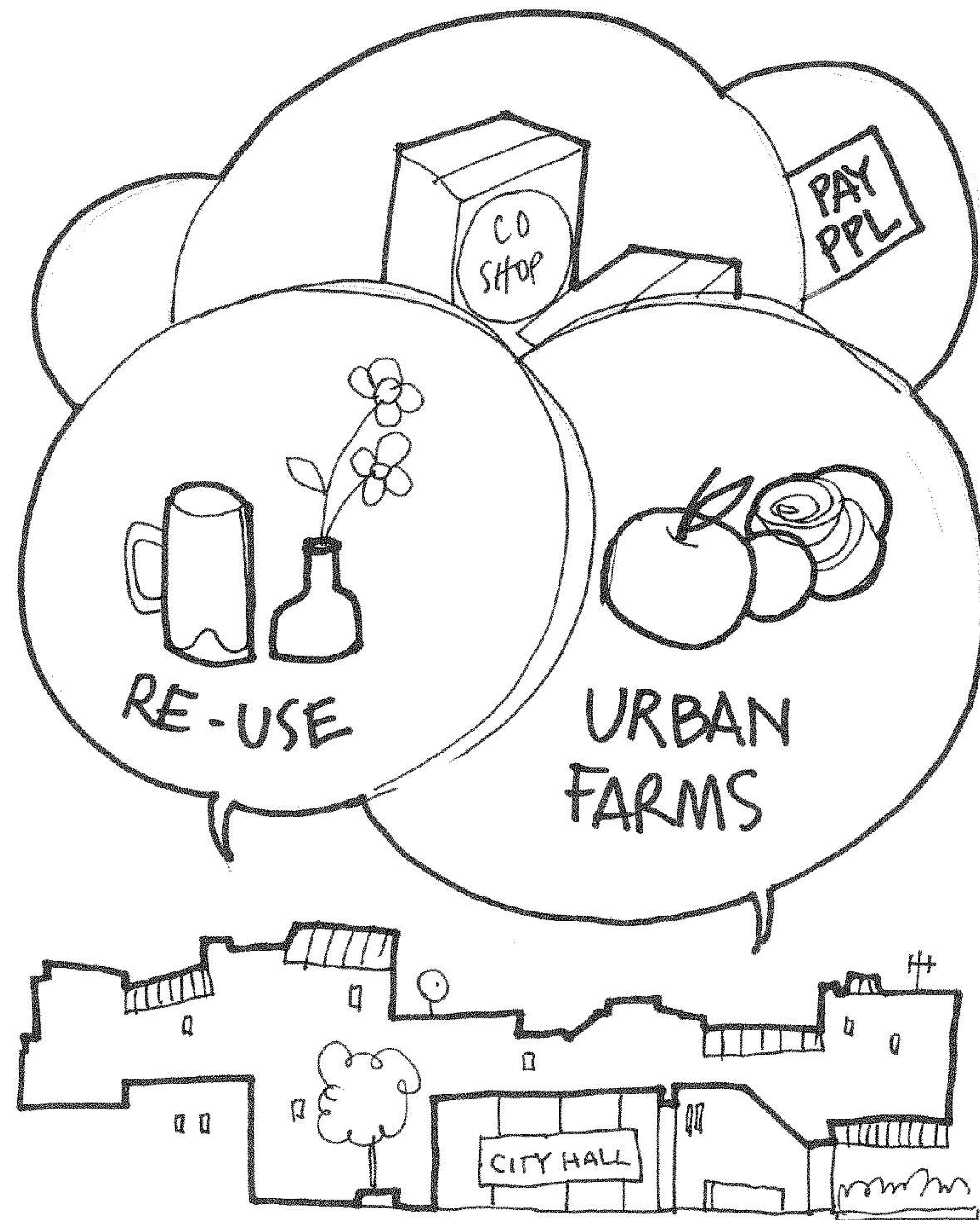


# CITIES AS COMPLEX ECOSYSTEMS

**MULTI-LEVEL, MULTI-DIMENSIONAL, MULTI-DISCIPLINARY, MULTI-SECTORIAL APPROACH**

**SILO BREAKING**

**A PHYSICAL AND CONCEPTUAL PLACE WHERE MULTIPLE POLICIES TAKE EFFECT**



# INNOVATIVE THINGS HAPPEN IN CITIES

**HOW CAN WE DETECT THEM FAST**

**HOW DO WE LEARN FROM THEM**

**HOW CAN WE SHARE THEM**

**HOW CAN WE MAKE THEM POLICY RELEVANT**

**HOW CAN WE MAKE POLICIES RELEVANT TO THE URBAN ECOSYSTEM**

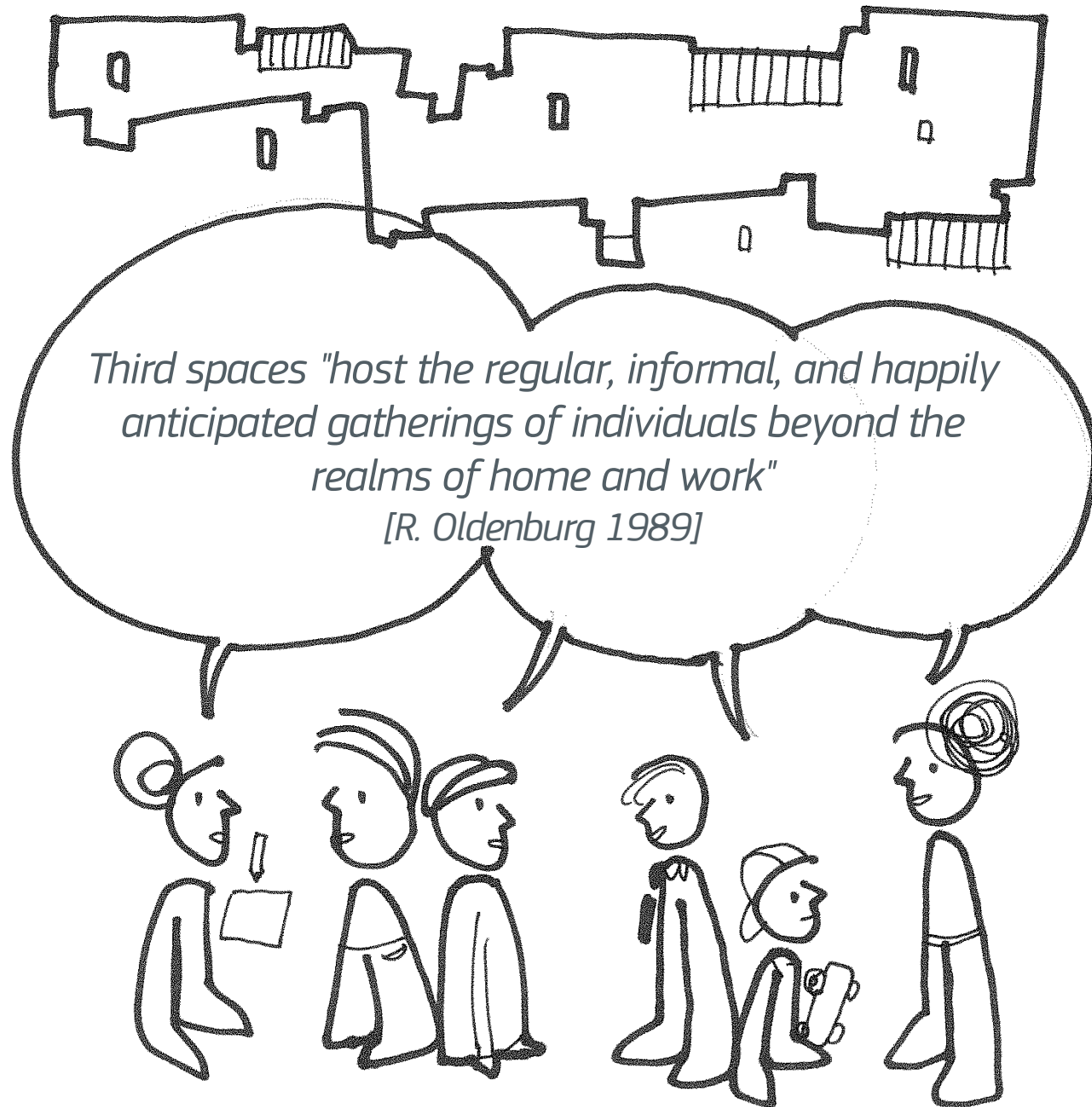
# THIRD SPACES ARE MICRO-ECOSYSTEMS

**THEY HAVE THE CITY'S DNA**

**THEY ATTRACT INNOVATORS**

**THEY ARE SAFE SPACES OPEN TO NEW IDEAS,  
NEW APPROACHES**

**THEY OFFER AN EQUAL FOOTING TO ALL  
PARTICIPANTS**





## OUR CHALLENGE: A MULTI-LEVEL THIRD SPACE

**VERTICAL: OPEN TO EU LEVEL,**  
national, regional, metropolitan and local levels

**HORIZONTAL: PAN-EUROPEAN RELEVANCE**  
silo-breaking at multiple levels

**BUILDING ON PRINCIPLES EXTRACTED FROM  
LOCAL PROTOTYPES**

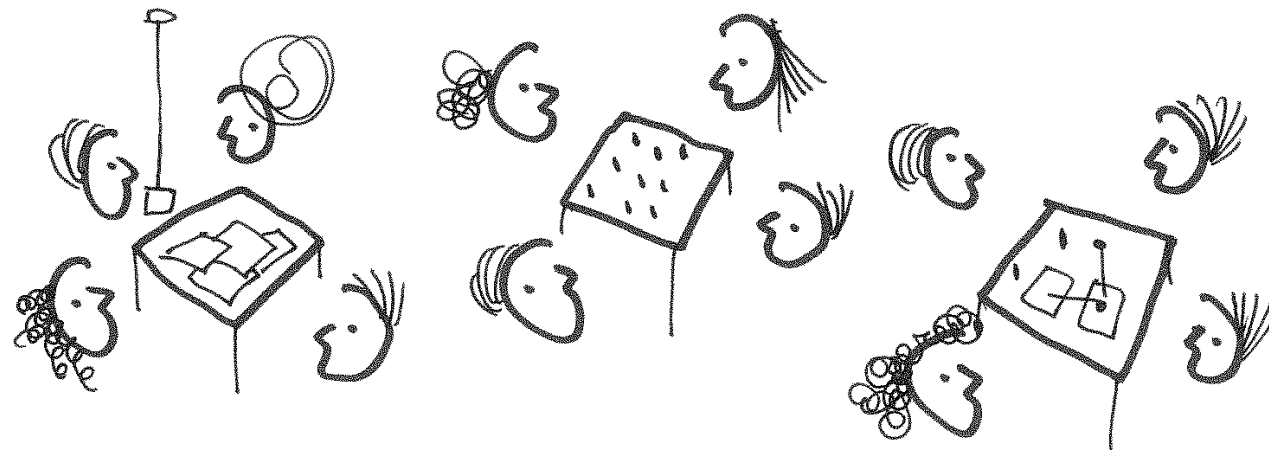
**FACILITATING INFORMAL CONVERSATION**  
participation by EU official both formal and  
informal, official and personal

**FROM LOCALISED PROTOTYPES TO EU  
PRINCIPLES**

# REQUIREMENTS

A multi-dimensional 3rd space should:

- PROVIDE INCENTIVES TO PARTICIPATION, HAVE LOW ENTRY BARRIERS & ALLOW OPEN PARTICIPATION.
- HAVE A PLURALIST APPROACH TO MODELS OF COLLABORATION (EVERYONE CAN CONTRIBUTE)
- HAVE A MANUAL FOR COOPERATION & COLLABORATION (BEHAVIOURS, EXPERIENCE, QUALITY OF RELATIONS & PROCESSES)
- BE A FLEXIBLE AND ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC SPACE 'THE COMMONS'
- ENGAGE TRANSITION ACTORS, BE OPEN TO BOTH NEEDS AND DESIGN DRIVEN APPROACHES
- PROVIDE LINKS TO EU/GLOBAL NETWORKS
- PROVIDE LINKS TO (NETWORKS OF) LOCAL ACTORS
- SUPPORT MULTI LEVEL COLLABORATION
- CAPITALISE ON BEST PRACTICES
- HAVE A LIBRARY OF TOOLS AND MATERIALS TO SUPPORT BEST PRACTICE
- HAVE ACCESS TO MULTIDISCIPLINARY AND CROSS SECTORIAL-SKILLS
- TAKE PART IN POLITICAL PROCESSES AND DEBATE
- BE MANDATED TO TEST PILOTS /POLICIES AND TEMPORARY OVER-RULING LEGISLATION
- HAVE A CLEARLY DEFINED BUSINESS MODEL
- PROVIDE LINKS TO FUNDING
- HAVE A VISION FOR A DESIRABLE URBAN SYSTEM/CITY



## PROTOTYPING A MULTI-LEVEL THIRD SPACE

**PARTICIPANTS FORM GROUPS AND BRING A  
TOPIC OR A PROJECT**

**CONSENSUS ON URBAN CHALLENGES  
RELEVANT TO ALL**

**DEFINITION OF NEEDS**

**PLENARY DEFINITION OF REQUIREMENTS**

# BUILDING A MULTI-LEVEL THIRD SPACE

## COMMUNITY

Accessible for all interested and active person

Connect and amplify established local communities

Public services

Catalysts

Temporary community, depending on the challenge

City-makers, Kids 8+, Students, Urbanists, Civil servants, Designers,  
Architects, Policy makers

Network of local third spaces

## OWNERSHIP

Co-ownership

Owned by the community - Common

Run by citizens

Based on personal engagement

Frontrunners – transition group

Supported by the European Commission (not owned by institutions)

+/- 10 members – can grow over time: e.g. consortium with DG RTD & JRC  
policy lab, Civic labs, cities, etc.

## ACTIVITY

Test new rules of engagement

Real world challenges – larger societal challenges

Exchange programmes – Sharing information

Get to root cause of the issue(s) – understand who can  
solve the issue (local-national-EU-global)

Experiment, create laboratories, from ideas to change

Process of reflection and change

Map actors and existing mechanisms

Systems analysis

ENABLE Agency – City maker community

ENSURE impact – Really making a difference

CATALYSE Involvement - "go with the willing"

Programs with a clear format (recurring activities,  
catalyse new activities, widen community)

Library of tools for vision building

## BUSINESS MODEL

Mixed financing

Need for a legal framework (to access funding)

Cooperative

Third space should function independently from topic  
discussion

Membership fee (co-ownership)

Small core of EU funding



# BUILDING A MULTI-LEVEL THIRD SPACE

## OUTPUTS

Better policies

Community of City-makers

Medium & long term solutions for local, Models, initiatives, pilot test solutions to expand and address across Europe, at EU level and in EU policy

Empowered citizens and communities

Practical action on the ground

Map of good practices

## LOCATION

City-level & EU-level

Temporary / Pop-up

Neutral, nearby, public, local places (e.g. libraries, art galleries, theatres, schools, businesses, etc.)

Brussels Centre, close to Berlaymont, core of the EU

Outside traditional settings

Physical space

Existing spaces and labs in Europe

Virtual?

## COLLABORATION

Co-creation and Participatory processes

Mixed bottom-up and top-down

European Commission could propose challenges

European citizens vision

Tool box (e.g. use of a citizen panel, workshops,...)

Speak as an individual person (not in function/'hat')

Trust everybody's knowledge – translate into policy

Manifesto – citizens co-create

Co-creating our common future

A continent of citizens

'Non-traditional' to encourage people to participate

'safe spaces' to make people feel comfortable and able to contribute

Multi-dimensional, multi-thematic, multi-level

Digital platform – network of existing third spaces

## ACCESS

Free

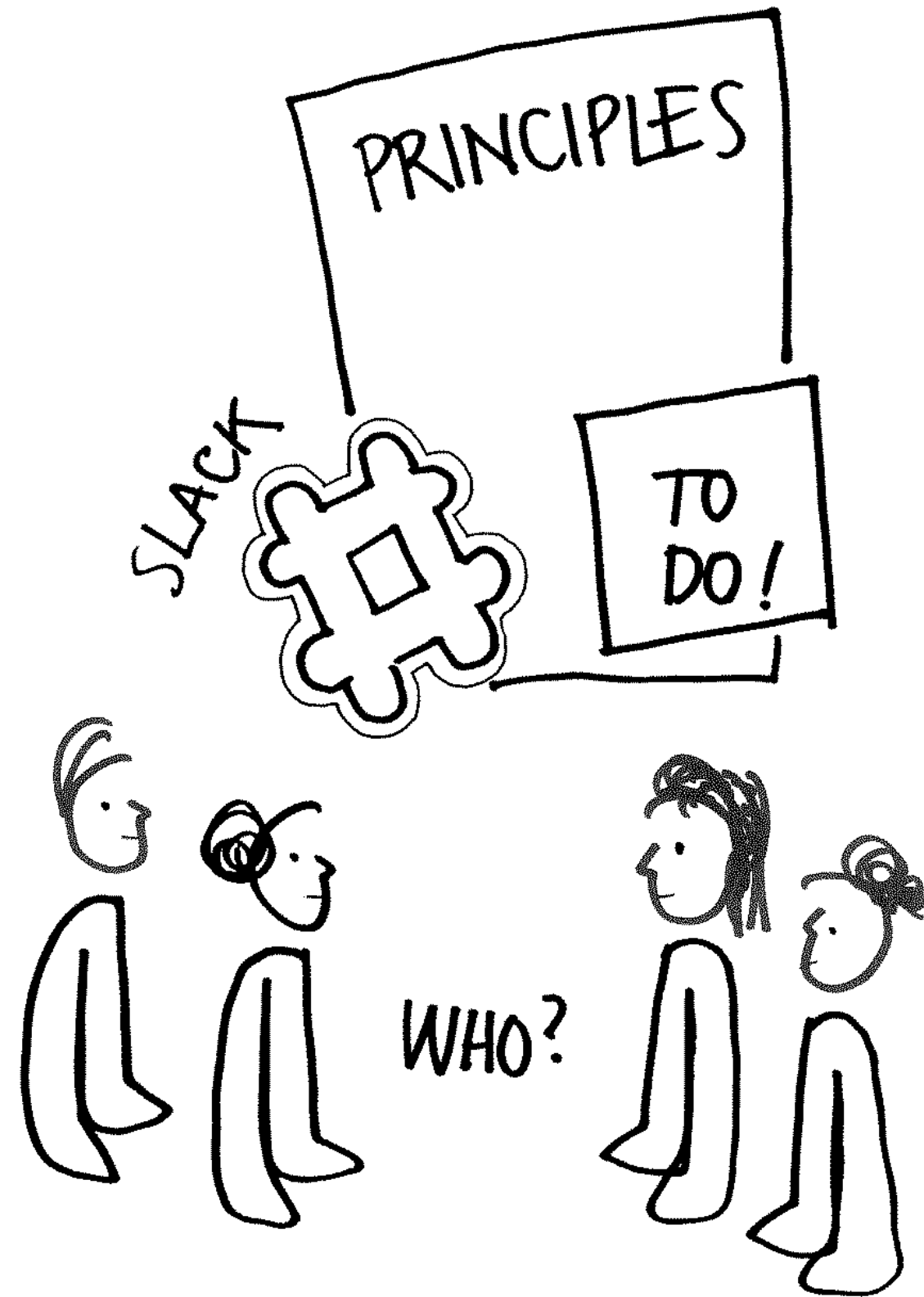
Visible

Open

Structured access







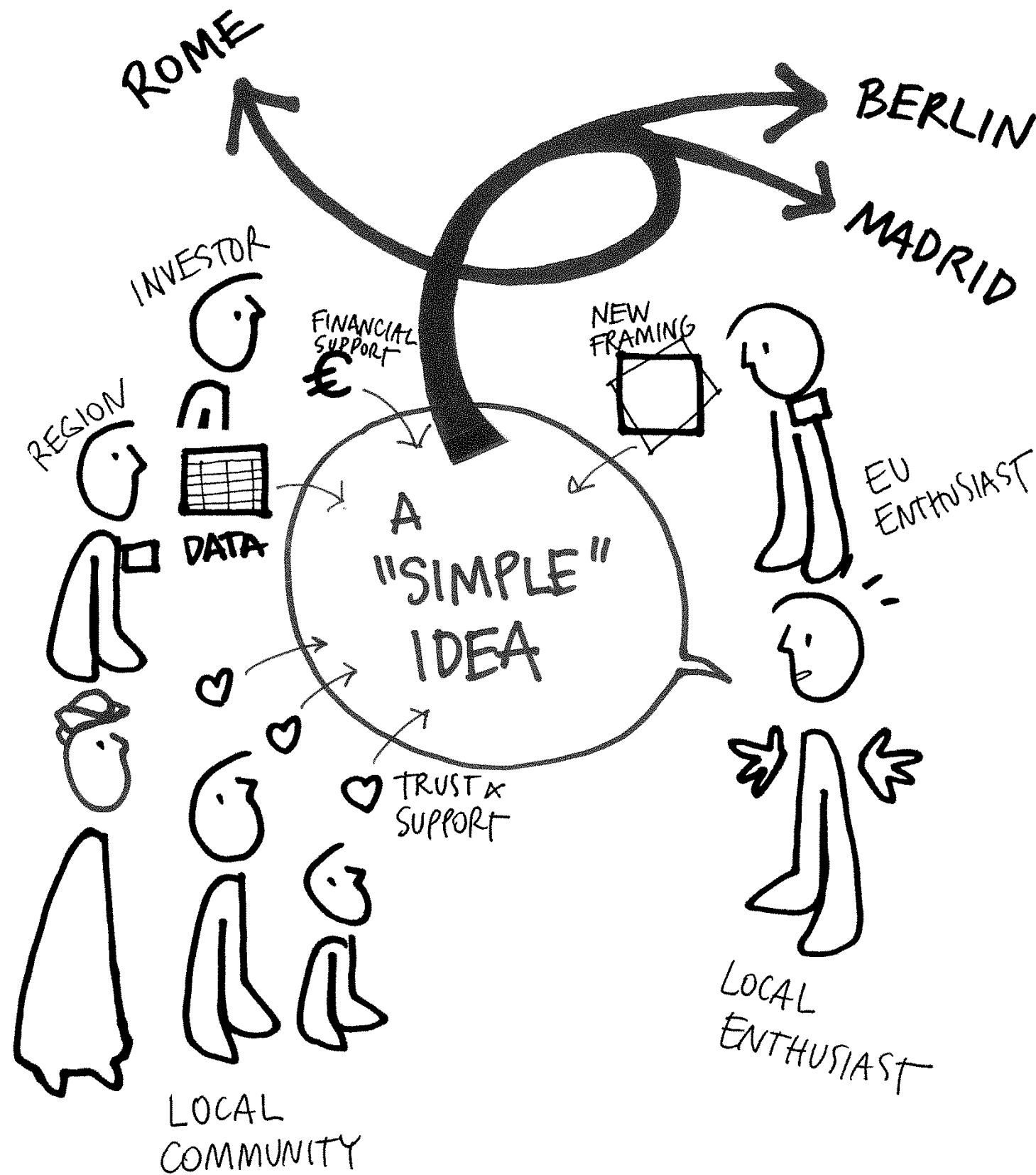
# BUILDING A MULTI-LEVEL THIRD SPACE – WHAT'S NEXT?

WHO IS INVOLVED

KEY TASKS

OWNERSHIP

DEVELOPMENT PLAN



# A MULTI-LEVEL THIRD SPACE for SYSTEMIC URBAN RESEARCH & INNOVATION

This report frames the set-up of a multi-level third space for systemic urban research and innovation. It is the result of a lab-session held with urban stakeholders in Brussels on 4-5 April 2017 with the purpose to simulate and prototype an urban third space that also includes the EU-level.

## Objective

The challenge "How can digital, physical, natural and social solutions for cities be connected in a systemic way?" was the starting point of this work. This challenge, brought forward by the 'Innovating Cities' unit of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD), was explored in the [Lab Connections](#) event organised by the Joint Research Centre's EU Policy Lab in October 2016.

A systemic approach in this context entails open-systems thinking and helps the development of an innovation ecosystem. Through this perspective one approaches cities as systems of systems. This approach stimulates multi-level, multi-dimensional and multi-sectorial interactions, incorporating multi-stakeholder processes and creating integrated solutions. In the Lab Connections exploration session we concluded

that we lack structures and processes to interact across all sectors and levels (from citizen to EU level) on systemic urban research and innovation.

One of the ideas to move forward was the co-development of a *multi-level third space* for systemic urban research & innovation, in order to stimulate interactive processes to discuss and develop systemic urban research & innovation. *Third spaces* "host the regular, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the realms of home and work" [R. Oldenburg]. They are places where "everything comes together, a public space, an urban space; everyone's space; a space where people can feel free to be themselves" [E. Soja]. The multi-level (and multi-dimensional) third space is intended as a neutral physical and/or virtual space where multiple actors meet to prototype innovative solution to common issues. The space is co-owned and stimulates engagement at all levels (citizen, civic, middle ground, local, national, European level).

## Recap – 2-day lab-session 04-05/04/2017

The 2-day lab-session structured a dynamic interaction of a team of 18 European Officials and 30 participants of different profiles working on urban challenges and urban innovation.

On Day 1 the lab-session developed proposals for the following questions:

What types of urban challenge projects would be discussed in a third space? - 5 from 50 proposals were further developed per table (cfr. annex)

- European Centre for Public Space
- Civic Innovation Network
- Urban Design Lab
- Open Design Lab
- Sustainable Food for Growing Cities

What should the requirements for a Multi-level Third space be in order to develop these projects? -Summary of General Requirements for a third space (cfr. annex)

- Provide incentives to participation - have low entry barriers & allow open participation
- Have a pluralist approach to models of collaboration (everyone can contribute)
- Have a manual for cooperation & collaboration (behaviours, experience, quality of relations & processes)
- Be a flexible and accessible public space, following the principles of 'commons'
- Engage transition actors, be open to both needs and design driven approaches

- Provide links to EU/global networks
- Provide links to networks of local actors
- Support multi-level collaboration
- Capitalise on best practices
- Have a library of tools and materials to support best practices
- Have access to multidisciplinary and cross sectorial-skills
- Take part in political processes and debates
- Be mandated to test pilots /policies and temporary over-ruling legislation
- Have a clearly defined business model
- Provide links to funding
- Have a vision for a desirable urban system/city

On Day 2 we discussed different models of how a Multi-level third space should be organised and what the next steps are to set up such a Multi-level third space.

## Multi-level Third Space - Models

Different types of third spaces can be envisaged: a unique urban third space in Brussels, several (thematic) Pop-up third spaces in Europe, a network of urban third spaces in Europe, etc.

Key dimensions of a multi-level third space for systemic urban research and innovation:

COMMUNITY	BUSINESS MODEL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessible for all interested and active person</li> <li>• Connect and amplify established local communities</li> <li>• Public services</li> <li>• Catalysts</li> <li>• Temporary community, depending on the challenge</li> <li>• City-makers, Kids 8+, Students, Urbanists, Civil servants, Designers, Architects, Policy makers</li> <li>• Network of local third spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed financing</li> <li>• Need for a legal framework (to access funding)</li> <li>• Cooperative</li> <li>• Third space should function independently from topic discussion</li> <li>• Membership fee (co-ownership)</li> <li>• Small core of EU funding</li> </ul>



<p><b>MODALITY OF COLLABORATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-creation and Participatory processes</li> <li>• Mixed bottom-up and top-down</li> <li>• European Commission could propose challenges</li> <li>• European citizens vision</li> <li>• Tool box (e.g. use of a citizen panel, workshops,...)</li> <li>• Speak as an individual person (not in function/'hat')</li> <li>• Trust everybody's knowledge – translate into policy</li> <li>• Manifesto – citizens co-create</li> <li>• Co-creating our common future</li> <li>• A continent of citizens</li> <li>• 'Non-traditional' to encourage people to participate</li> <li>• 'safe spaces' to make people feel comfortable and able to contribute</li> <li>• Multi- dimensional, multi-thematic, multi-level</li> <li>• Digital platform – network of existing third spaces</li> </ul>	<p><b>TYPE OF ACTIVITY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Test new rules of engagement</li> <li>• Real world challenges – larger societal challenges</li> <li>• Exchange programmes – Sharing information</li> <li>• Get to root cause of the issue(s) – understand who can solve the issue (local-national-EU-global)</li> <li>• Experiment, create laboratories, from ideas to change</li> <li>• Process of reflection and change</li> <li>• Map actors and existing mechanisms</li> <li>• Systems analysis</li> <li>• ENABLE Agency – City maker community</li> <li>• ENSURE impact – Really making a difference</li> <li>• CATALYSE Involvement - "go with the willing"</li> <li>• Programs with a clear format (recurring activities, catalyse new activities, widen community)</li> <li>• Outside comfort zone</li> <li>• Share best practices</li> </ul>
<p><b>OWNERSHIP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-ownership</li> <li>• Owned by the community - Common</li> <li>• Run by citizens</li> <li>• Based on personal engagement</li> <li>• Frontrunners – transition group</li> <li>• Supported by the European Commission (not owned by institutions)</li> <li>• +/- 10 members – can grow over time: e.g. consortium with DG RTD &amp; JRC policy lab, Civic labs, cities, etc.</li> </ul>	<p><b>OUTPUTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better policies</li> <li>• Community of City-makers</li> <li>• Medium &amp; long term solutions for local, Models, initiatives, pilot test solutions to expand and address across Europe, at EU level and in EU policy</li> <li>• Empowered citizens and communities</li> <li>• Practical action on the ground</li> <li>• Map of good practices</li> </ul>
<p><b>LOCATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City-level &amp; EU-level</li> <li>• Temporary / Pop-up</li> <li>• Neutral, nearby, public, local places (e.g. libraries, art galleries, theatres, schools, businesses, etc)</li> <li>• Brussels Centre, close to Berlaymont, core of the EU</li> <li>• Outside traditional settings</li> <li>• Physical space</li> <li>• Existing spaces and labs in Europe</li> <li>• Virtual?</li> </ul>	<p><b>ACCESS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free</li> <li>• Visible</li> <li>• Open</li> <li>• Structured access</li> </ul>

## Next Steps

The following operational steps have been discussed in order to launch the setup of the Multi-level third space:

- Start with small and immediate actions to start the process of implementing a multi-level third space.
- Set up a Slack team (<https://multilevelthirdspace.slack.com>) and wiki to further develop the multi-level third space.
- Make a mapping of stakeholders and initiatives in Brussels and Madrid (ongoing)
- Make a mapping of European Commission projects on Cities (ongoing) & map existing European Commission stakeholder engagement initiatives (ECAS European Citizen Action Service, EU direct, citizen's dialogue,...)
- Bring in practical examples of what it looks like to work in a third space
- Identify (one or multiple) physical space(s) where lab-sessions and (preliminary) meetings can take place.
- Engage European Commission officers to participate in both officially and informally (as engaged individuals)

Opportunities on how the third space can influence agenda setting:

- Multi-level Policy development
- Improving the transposition of national law (min 2 years) - link to ongoing transitions
- Implementing and monitoring of the New Urban Agenda.
- Contribute to evaluations

## CONTACT

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## ANNEX

- Participants list 4-5 April lab-session
- Agenda 4-5 April lab-session
- Lab-session outcomes: Projects for the multi-level thirdspace
- Lab-session outcomes: Requirements for a multi-level thirdspace