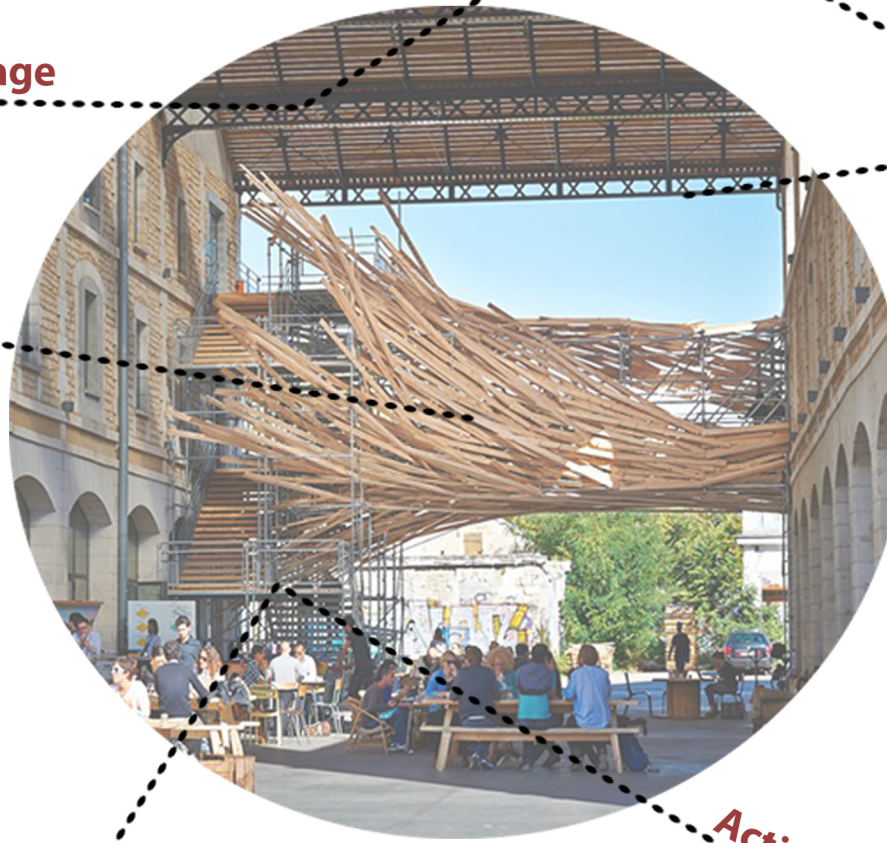
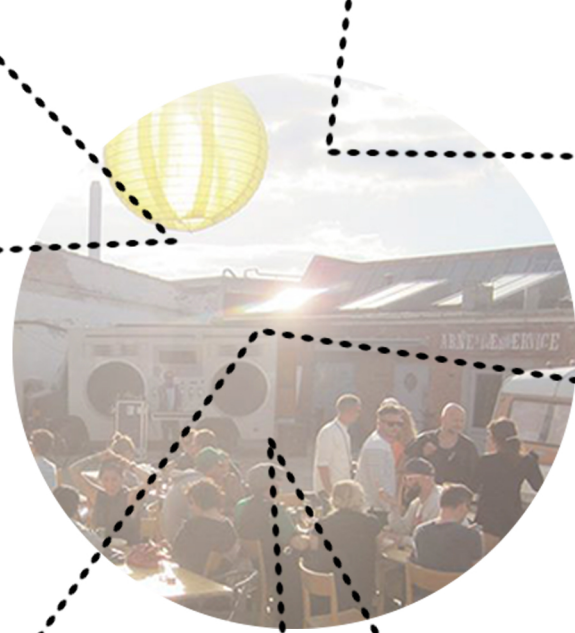


Linkage



Activities

Citizen

# European Placemaking Network

Attractive

Place

Social Network

Walkability

Safety

Comfort

Community











This is what  
we want to do

We want to start a **European Placemaking Network**. Building on our manifesto and goals (which we need to elaborate with you), we want to start working together now. STIPO and the Future of Places research centre are willing to take the lead, in close cooperation with partners such as Project for Public Space, UN Habitat and the various great partners that we have met and still will meet through our work.

We want to make  
this European network  
work together  
with you.



# The need for a European Placemaking Network

## **Placemaking is creating and designing places that people enjoy going to.**

How people connect to a place is fundamental for human scale, for interaction, for innovation, for a healthy and joyful life, and for a sustainable living environment.

Placemaking is fun. Placemaking is fundamental. Placemaking is quicker, lighter, cheaper. – Placemaking is a shared investment for the long term.

In addition to promoting better urban design, placemaking facilitates creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution. Strengthening the connection between people and the places they share, placemaking refers to a collaborative process through which we can shape our public realm in order to maximize shared value.

The momentum is changing. The UN's 2016 New Urban Agenda has deepened the focus on human scale, participatory and inclusive development, and the quality of public spaces and places that are high on its agenda. This renewed focus is a true paradigm shift compared to the ones that took place 20 and 40 years ago. For the first time the European Urban Agenda has highlighted public space as the most essential issue for our cities. Now, more than ever, we need to prioritize public space as we re-develop our cities.

The Placemaking Week that took place in Amsterdam in October 2017 welcomed close to 450 participants from 46 countries, proving once again that placemaking has become a worldwide movement and that there is a will among different actors to develop and spread their network throughout Europe.

Four worldwide themes were identified as a starting point for workshops and discussions for the international audience. The discussions focused on methods and best practices, but also on how the international network can cooperate to create better cities.

## **Streets as places & transportation**

1 For a long time, the mantra of traffic engineers was “faster and wider.” Nowadays, many cities have rebalanced streets to work better for pedestrians, bikes and transit, but they could still be so much more. How can we remake our streets into a series of multi-use destinations with many ways to move from place to place?

## **Place-led development & city making**

2 The top-down approach at the planning system is out of date and does not include all the urban actors (like politicians, citymakers, architects, citizens, private parties etc.). How can placemakers broaden the impact of their work on communities by engaging the entire machinery of city building?

## **Placemaking & Innovation**

3 In the era of growing innovation, marked by on the one hand proximity, openness, collaboration, and on the other by rising inequalities, how can placemaking help to accelerate the economic development, incubate new products, services and ideas, and provide economic opportunities in an inclusive way?

## **Equity, health & well-being**

4 A postal code can be a more reliable determinant of personal health than their genetic code. The diverse factors that determine our physical, mental and social well-being but again also aspects that can multiple the existing inequalities converge in the places we live. How can placemaking holistically improve the quality of life in our communities and ensure that every citizen benefits from it?

The **human scale** is deeply embedded in our European tradition and in our cities. However, developments such as the establishment of car as a mean of transportation, large-scale economic and urbanization processes, the need for large-scale planning and the standardization of construction reveal that the human scale is not evident in our living environment in our more recent environments. There is an urgent need to develop new ways of combining these developments with the establishment of human scale.

Many movements and networks are tapping into the paradigm shift in public spaces and places on the European and global level: the Placemaking Leadership Council (which was initiated by the Project for Public Spaces) and the City at Eye Level network (initiated by STIPO) have been working on connecting practitioners, academics and policymakers involved in placemaking and were the driving force behind the Placemaking Week. But there are many more networks and organizations that we associate with the context of the human scale, such as the Congress for New Urbanism, the Future of Places, AESOP Public Spaces, URBACT networks, New Europe – Cities in Transition (initiated by Pakhuis de Zwijger). These are just a few worth mentioning, but there are many more.

So, on the one hand, we have momentum on our side. However, if we look at how the majority of our cities have been developed in the past decades, and how our existing cities and their new parts are being developing now, **we still have an immense amount of work to do**. The importance of cities is rapidly increasing, so it is imperative that we join forces and step up our efforts in the coming decades.

By understanding the differences and similarities between countries, by exchanging successes and failures and by working together in pilot studies and later in projects, we can improve the quality of our work. With partners varying from KTH University, the Future of Places and Re:Kreators, as well as many others, we have been exploring the potential of **creating a European network that connects urban actors, universities and organizations**.

During the session about the European Placemaking Network we brought together partners from approximately 20 European and non-European countries to discuss the network's potential. The results have been incorporated into this report. Moreover, it also includes input from 29 people (practitioners and academics) that were interviewed to gauge their ideas about creating a European Placemaking Network.

This report is divided into six chapters with the following titles: the manifesto; the need for creating a European Placemaking Network; the goals of the network; concrete ideas that emerged during the workshop; the quicker, lighter, cheaper steps we want to take with you in the near future; and lastly, the list of people who were interviewed and participated in the workshop.

This report is a step in an ongoing process that we want to continue with European Placemakers (of course, those from other continents who want to join in are welcome too).

**Let us take the next steps together via online methods but most importantly in practice!**

# MANIFESTO

We need the network to foster an understanding of what makes a good PLACE and how we can help to create good places by connecting a diverse group of people and initiatives, from placemakers, practitioners, universities and cities to developers and other networks that influence urban development.





# Manifesto

## Why we need this network

#We share a common belief: A good public space agenda on a human scale with a sense of place and high-quality is crucial for an innovative economy, for healthy and inclusive urban environments and for the involvement of communities.

#We need a central and (in)formal place for urban initiatives related to the European public space agenda, where we can exchange different methods, approaches and experiences. A common node for gathering good practices will enable members of the network to use methods not yet present in their countries.

#The different actors and disciplines who influence the cities' development need to work together closely to avoid fragmentation in their cities and to ensure that they do not miss the opportunity to create great places. Looking at examples in other cities will allow placemakers to make better use of their own places with potential, which are not currently being fully exploited.

#We need to expand our scientific knowledge and improve access to information and research results on public space, placemaking, the city at eye level and related subjects. It is especially important to have open/shared access to new research conducted by academia and new case studies by practitioners in order to promote the exchange of resources between theoretical and practical knowledge.

#The network would benefit considerably from a mix of people from different generations. It is important to bridge the knowledge of young researchers and practitioners and senior colleagues, so that the network will have fresh and fruitful ideas generated by interchanges between the new and existing generation of researchers and practitioners.

#There is a lack of awareness about the importance of a European public space agenda on the European and local agendas, but also in the agendas of architects, urban designers, real estate developers and many other actors involved in citymaking. The power of a greater network has the ability to enhance the influence of good practices and hopefully make them more visible on a global scale.

## **What? The goals of the network**

### **Connect people and networks in Europe: placemakers, practitioners, universities, cities, developers, existing networks and other actors.**

**1** The Placemaking Week reiterated how inspiring it is to meet people with a shared passion, learn from what they do in their different contexts and become a part of a larger placemaking 'family'. Therefore, the first goal is to connect activists and experts in the world of placemaking in Europe in a network.

### **Exchange knowledge, experience, skills and best practices.**

**2** The more you learn about the human scale, the sense of place and the city at eye level, the more you realize we still have a lot to learn. To deepen our knowledge we need to tap into what all the activists, creators, professionals and enthusiasts of placemaking in Europe are inventing, both in the field of practice, work and research, and how this works out in the many different contexts in Europe. Indeed, an open source platform fed by a large and diverse network provides a way of sharing these diverse experiences of the processes, the case studies, the impact of places that have been created and any other kinds of knowledge arising from placemaking. Ideas can then travel through Europe without any physical change of place.

### **To organize training activities, learning by doing.**

**3** There is a major gap between theoretical knowledge and people working in practice. We need a system where people are interested in exchanging ideas in order to create a perfect place for them to feed their passion in a particular field of research, study or work. The network can provide opportunities to organize joint workshops. It can also function as a platform through which we can invite people to join in on our own activities.

### **To create, fund and implement European/cross-country/international programmes and projects.**

**4** Using the power of the network's members is a perfect way of starting initiatives and highlighting the importance of placemaking. Each of the members has his or her own connections, which when combined can give quick access to potential funding solutions. We need to look for the right motivation to find economic, financial and cultural resources to carry out activities within these processes.

### **To influence policymaking in European countries and cities.**

**5** There is a compelling urgency for creating a network that will have a real impact on the planning system. The network, once it is strong enough, could potentially influence governments and planning activities around Europe.

### **To connect with the international and other regional placemaking networks (Latin and North America, Australia and New Zealand, Africa and Asia).**

**6** Around the world, there are different networks and groups operating in the field of placemaking. The European placemaking network should be an open network, a place where all international stakeholders can collaborate to create initiatives and ideas in European urban areas and help set the global transformative agendas for placemaking and public space. There are no limits within the network and the network has no boundaries!



# The European Placemaking Network and our soulmates

The European Placemaking Network is not the first European network to focus on making better cities.

There are already networks that we can collaborate with and whose knowledge we can build on.

The aim of the European Placemaking Network will be to collaborate with these networks and create a perfect atmosphere for international exchange.

Following are some examples of networks we like, but there are many, many more.

## Some examples of worldwide networks currently involved in placemaking:

### #UN Habitat: the Habitat 3 Agenda

is an inspiration for how to work on good cities at eye level.

Congress for the New Urbanism: serves as a connector, convener, alliance builder and teaching platform to unite the New Urbanism movement. Its staff, members, partners, and allies are leading international thinkers on building better places, and CNU helps to bring them together.

### #Future of Places

(research network): is a collaborative platform for research, implementation, networking and advocacy, centred on the key issue of public space as a fundamental component of sustainable urban development.

### #Placemaking Leadership Council:

The Placemaking Leadership Council is a group of doers and deep thinkers at the forefront of the placemaking movement. Founded in 2013, the Council was formed by PPS to strengthen placemaking as an international movement and to establish a cross-disciplinary network for placemakers working in many diverse contexts.

## **Some examples of European networks currently involved in placemaking:**

### **#Academy of Urbanism:**

is a politically independent, not-for-profit organisation that brings together both the current and next generation of urban leaders, thinkers and practitioners. The Academy of Urbanism works with places to identify and reinforce their strengths, and help them recognise and overcome obstacles to greater success.

### **#Council for European Urbanism:**

started as a movement dedicated to promoting (and protecting) the qualities that make European cities, towns, villages and the countryside unique and humane. It believes that European cities, their environs and countryside are threatened by development trends which are causing the waste of natural and cultural resources, social segregation and isolation, the expansion of mono-functional uses/single-use zones, the loss of local, regional and national uniqueness, and cohesion.

### **#AESOP Public Spaces and Urban Cultures:**

explores the nature of urban cultures and public spaces and their potential for the planning and design community. For this reason it organizes mobile debates and workshops in collaboration with local organisers.

### **#URBACT:**

helps cities to develop pragmatic solutions that are new and sustainable and that integrate economic, social and environmental urban issues.

**#Re:Kreators:** aims to create a European platform that inspires local initiatives and highlights their value and strengths. Furthermore, its purpose is to help create a better understanding and relationship between local initiatives and institutional structures.

**#City Space Architecture** is an international non-profit organization based in Bologna, Italy. Its mission is to study, make, spread and share public space culture, through an interdisciplinary approach involving art and architecture.

We can start with a number of content-driven outcome goals that we want to achieve in the coming period (shall we say one year?)







# How do we start? Outcome goals

## **1 Develop a charter for the network**

In order to have a democratic network with dedicated values and principles, it is necessary to develop a charter for the European Placemaking Network. More specifically, the network's members should agree on the following points for the optimal operation of the network:

- We will work on realizing a better European Placemaking Network.
- We recognize that physical solutions by themselves will not solve social and economic problems, but neither can economic vitality, community stability and environmental health be sustained without a coherent and supportive physical framework. The physical, social and organizational approach go hand in hand and influence each other, as they cannot be separated from one another.
- We represent an interdisciplinary network that includes individuals and groups from academia, practitioners, other related networks, cities, private companies, non-governmental organisations and public authorities. We are dedicated to re-establishing a collaborative way of working on a better city at eye level.
- We are committed to reclaiming our space, our neighbourhood, our cities.

### **To do:**

- Optimise the charter in co-creation with our partners.

## **2 Make a toolkit**

Invite people to create one 'Let us make one together!'. People can work on different subjects on the toolkit and can search for funding in order to build the toolkit.

Via this network we can build a practical toolkit for placemaking that will influence placemaking approaches, but also the planning and designing processes of public spaces across Europe. This toolkit would provide guidelines on how to, in the first place, activate a community and ultimately how to develop a placemaking project.

### **To do:**

- Collect items for the placemaking toolkit;
- Search for funding to create the toolkit;
- Create the toolkit, share it via the website, book, article and the Facebook group.

## **3 Joint research/ask universities and others**

The European Placemaking Network can become a place where universities, and their students, researchers and professors, can engage in joint research, so that the study activities are shared and included in a dynamic and active context that will foster interaction between the different universities.

### **To do:**

- Create an open call for interested universities across Europe that would like to cooperate;
- Create a list of interested universities and institutions;
- Define research themes linked to placemaking, such as gentrification and placemaking, tactical urbanism, etc.

## **Peer-to-peer: How do you want this network to help you?**

An important input of the network is peer-to-peer learning, where everyone can learn from each other and discuss the difficulties that they face in their projects. For instance, researchers can engage in dialogue with practitioners and exchange knowledge, while academia can provide the theoretical and practitioners the practical side of placemaking projects.

### **To do:**

- Create a forum or a platform, where members can discuss issues they want to raise;
- Post issues in an announcement, so people can join forces with others;
- Find partners together.

## **EU Urban Agenda**

The main concern of the European Urban Agenda is to guarantee a real partnership for the growth of cities, in terms of urban and social challenges. This agenda envisages cooperation between the European Commission, its member states and cities to generate innovative ideas in European cities.

The European Placemaking Network should be aligned with the guidelines of the European Urban Agenda and encourage the exchange of innovative ideas regarding placemaking with the aim of sharing, but above all, putting ideas into practice in different cities. The European Urban Agenda will grant the network access to funding and highlight its ideas and projects.

Below there are mentioned relevant European programmes:

- Horizon 2020, which addresses all kinds of stakeholders, is the biggest EU Research and Innovation programme, and we could use it to already start pushing agendas for European funding.
- URBACT targets cities, municipalities, towns (with no size limit), infra-municipal tiers of government and metropolitan authorities. Other beneficiaries of URBACT are local agencies; provincial, regional and national authorities; universities and research centres. All beneficiaries shall be public bodies or the equivalent.
- INTERREG, which targets regional and local governments across Europe.
- JPI, a joint programming initiative that addresses municipalities, businesses, researchers, civil society and other stakeholders.

### **To do:**

- Understand which of the members can connect the EU agenda with the network;
- Collaborate and participate in the European Urban Agenda's funding programmes to develop projects in the cities and promote learning by doing;
- Understand which project the network can propagate to improve placemaking.



## How do we start? Outcome goals

### **Best examples**

**6** The network serves as a sharing platform for best placemaking practices, where we can share our experiences and knowledge, which would undoubtedly have a major impact on our work. Indeed, these examples would inspire our work and influence the way we think about placemaking, as it would enable us to identify with the great accomplishments that have been achieved in other places.

#### **To do:**

- Put out an open call for best practices, so that we can identify the best examples of placemaking across Europe and vote which one is the best.
- Set up a prize for best practices.
- Create articles, so the best practices can be shared through the social media and the website.

### **Share your agenda**

**7** In order to promote our work and create common experiences, it would be useful to create an agenda in which we can share our events. More specifically, after creating this agenda, we can then create a dialogue so we can help each other with our projects and ask for aid in matters such as of funding, attracting important actors and developing creative ideas.

#### **To do:**

- Create a calendar of the events organized by members;
- Find someone that is able to secure funding and help members to create their events;
- Create a system for advertising events.

Besides focusing  
on the content,  
we need to focus on  
how to disseminate  
the content and  
how to involve  
interested parties.

# How do we start? Steps in the process

## # Internal communication of the group

Create a group on social media such as a LinkedIn or Facebook group so we can exchange information.

### To do:

- Create this group with all of the involved people, so that we can keep in touch;
- Invite new members to the group and collaborate.

## # Make a list of (potential) members, open up the network

After identifying the first members of the network, we will make a list of who we are and how we can work together. The priority should be to share our projects, initiatives, knowledge and our passion for placemaking. The next step is to invite to new members.

### To do:

- Make a list of all the members. Invite them to write down information such as their name, the name of their company and its activity. In addition, perhaps ask them to mention an issue that they want to research.
- Members could identify their best placemaking practice and share their story with the network.

## # Define the structure of the network

It is important for a network to define its structure. The European Placemaking network is an open network.

### To do:

- Conduct research on the work, structure and rules of other networks in order to improve our understanding of how networks function;
- Organise a structure in which people can play the role that they want to play.

## # Website

One of the first things the network will need to do is to highlight the European project through a dynamic, interactive and appealing website. This website could have the URL of [www.europeanplacemakingnetwork.eu](http://www.europeanplacemakingnetwork.eu) or [www.epn.eu](http://www.epn.eu). The idea behind the website will be to develop a platform where we can draw attention to our activities. The website will include topics such as a calendar, an agenda, open-source articles, and in general it will be a space for sharing good placemaking practices. This will provide cities, decision-makers and all experts with an online platform where they can engage in dialogue and share ideas for building liveable urban places.

Another option, instead of creating a new website, would be to use an existing website as a host, such as the site of The City at Eye Level, or PPS, or another one. We can create a sub-page and connect it to other sites, so that we can be stronger through already existing networks.

### To do:

- Decide whether to use an existing website as a host or create a new one; an open website where everybody can collaborate by sharing information (like a social network);
- Try to find someone who can operate and maintain the website.





# We are reaching out to you. Please send us your comments and ideas.

## We will start the network on 1 January and will use the coming weeks to get preparations underway together with you.

Report October 2017, by:

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Initiated by:



Placemaking Week Amsterdam 2017 organized by:





Uses

Green Spaces

Liveliness

Proximity

Diversity

Identity

Neighborhood

Sociability

Sustainability

