



OPEN

PROMOTER

PLATFORM

ANTWERP

This is one in a series of 6 brochures about the project Euler. Euler took place from 2015 to 2017 in Antwerp, Barcelona, Berlin and London.

Euler aims to contribute to the development of cities by harnessing the skills, competences and capacities of local people. Through peer-to-peer, cooperative and solidarity actions citizens learn but also teach each other skills that will be crucial in the future of work. Euler looks at the different ways in which this sharing and exchange takes place, and tries to derive methods that will allow others to also benefit from these empowering and emancipating practices.

Euler is a project from Transit Projectes, ndvr and Tesserae and is coordinated by City Mine(d).

For more details contact City Mine(d)
at jim@citymined.org



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CHAPTER 1

1.1. INTRODUCTION

“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.”

Jane Jacobs

Euler is a cooperative explorative project of partner offices in London, Antwerp, Berlin and Barcelona, anchored in the domains of urban research, planning and development, and seeking participatory citizen engagement and social equity. The aim is to identify modes of learning outside formal settings and on the urban scale, by focusing on skills and competencies of local residents that tend to remain hidden from the official labour market but become visible particularly in community-based initiatives. For this joint action-research we organize regular get-togethers to interchange recently acquired ideas and practices manifested throughout processes of urban transition. The research is aimed at investigating alternative city making processes ascribed to citizen participation and the identification of local resources situated within cultural and social interactions. We want to accentuate the relevance of such approaches for political debates and urban regeneration and illustrate according effects for on-going transformations by directing our attention towards socially and economically disadvantaged urban areas.

Experience shows that residents are interested in their local urban development, while also being amenable to extend their know-how and contribute existing knowledge stemming from expertise, experiences and/or a plain passion for the subject's matter. We are testing the hypothesis whether and how far this diverse set of skills increases participants' agency in the labour market, enlarges transferable and soft skills and augments their personal development. Furthermore, we analyse what these competencies are, how they should be certified and how they can be promoted.

Thus, the topics in this booklet focus in principal on a. why the particular urban area was chosen; b. how involved and exploited skills were identified; and c. in what way the acquired competencies can be represented later on.

1.2. ENDEAVOUR

Antwerp's team, Endeavour, chose the Oudaan initiative as an experimental case to demonstrate how openness and transparent communication in *city making* entail local socio-economic improvements and therefore enhance chances of accessing and scaling the labour market for involved citizens.

//*WHO?

Endeavour is a platform of socially moved urban professionals, acting as activists-entrepreneurs, researchers-designers, and marketeers-planners assigned with socio-spatial research, the development of new methods and models, and experimental pilot projects like the ones presented in this booklet. At the moment our team of eight assembles expertise and experience from a broad set of academic domains, such as architecture, urban planning, sociology and international development, to name a few.

//*WHY?

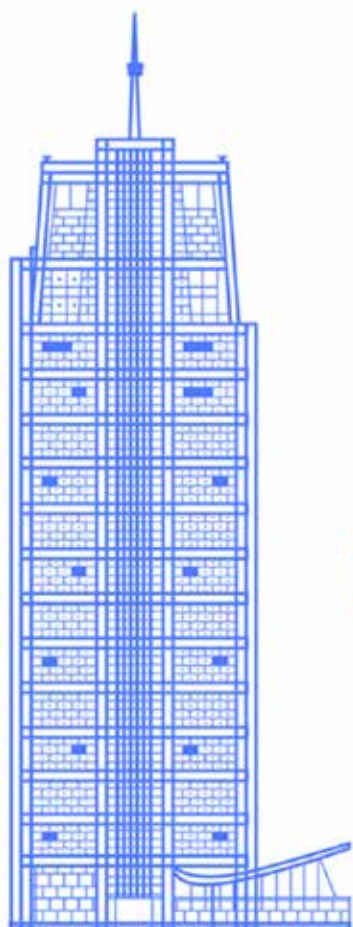
Our overall mission is to draw attention to and approach inequality. In the attempt to counteract on these issues we seek to increase the quality of life in cities in a democratic, co-creative and entrepreneurial way and make space more diverse. We discovered the need to fill the existing gap of processes, methods and systems and harmonise them with a co-productive and long-term orientation in urban change, following the philosophy of *commoning*, defined as “the social practice used by commoners in the course of managing shared resources and reclaiming the commons¹.” In doing so, we take into consideration questions of ownership, comprehension, regulation, organization and definition of societal goods assumed to be equally accessible for all members of society and crucial for sustainable urban development. Following the concept of commoning, we believe that long-term change and societal benefit can only be addressed and realized through a shared learning process grounded on partnerships. For this reason we continually work with local knowledge whilst each project represents a mean in our learning path that continuously creates new working tools. In this process we pursue facilitating and coordinating initiatives with social impact grounded on participation, engagement and open knowledge creation, comprised in the umbrella term *openness*.

//*HOW?

We deploy our know-how in a diverse set of projects, ranging from the design of tools to stimulate socio-spatial reading, the stimulation of collective learning processes, the pro-active identification of challenges and opportunities, the deconstruction of roles and positions in the process at stake, the use of a spatial agenda to develop new types of coalitions, the exploitation of the ambiguity of the role of the expert, through to the use of research as a dialogical medium.

1 Linebaugh, Peter. *The Magna Carta Manifesto: Liberties and Commons for All*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008.

CHAPTER 2



WE KOPEN
SAMEN
DEN OUDAAN

CASE STUDY OUDAAN

The Oudaan is an Antwerp city icon dividing opinions for decades. It was designed by the modernist architect Renaat Braem, one of Belgium's most influential architects in the latter half of the 20th century and student of the famous and notorious Le Corbusier. Braem gained far-reaching prominence after receiving two commissions from the City Council of Antwerp in the 1950s: a social housing project in Het Kiel, and the construction project of the Administrative Center, of which the Oudaan tower was the only realized and constructed element, ten years after the plan was launched. The tower and its initially envisioned concept pertaining to its *raison d'être* for *the people* emphasizes the architect's to this day respected principles about collectivity as the cornerstone in socially responsive city planning, which were repeatedly revived in his works².



Antwerp skyline and the three towers: Kreditbank, Oudaan, Onze-Lieve-Vrouwekathedraal

2 Centre for Flemish Architecture. Renaat Braem 1910 2010. De Singel. Internationale Kunstcampus, 2010, retrieved from: http://www.braem2010.be/_documents/file/Braem20101028_NL_EN.pdf.

Braem had a revolutionary aim in mind when he planned the Administrative Center including the Oudaan as the civic core, and thus transformed Antwerp's skyline: Next to the Kredietbank's Boerentoren (*Farmer's Tower*), representing the city's economic significance, and the Onze-Lieve-Vrouwekathedraal (*Cathedral of Our Lady Mary*), Antwerp's symbol of religious devotion, Braem envisioned the Oudaan as a sign for civic pride and model of efficient serviceability, indicating the dawning of the modern era³.

Although Braem's ambitions for the Administrative Center were widely appreciated, the Oudaan was the only building de facto constructed, and its conversion into a police tower replaced the pioneer's vision of a publicly accessible building. Thenceforward, the building was broadly perceived as an unwelcoming bureaucratic clump, radiating an ambience of executive coldness and at odds with the surrounding historic centre.

On June 27 2015, AG Vespa (Antwerp's autonomous municipality company) officially declared the tower for sale, and thus revitalized the debate in the matter of the icon's use and impact. The city's aim was to sell the object to the highest bidder. This is why on that same evening and along with equally enthused collaborators, we launched the impulsive call 'We kopen samen den Oudaan' (*Let's buy the Oudaan together*) via social media. We cannot allow ourselves to adopt a passive position over the profit-oriented sale of an object of such metropolitan importance and scope, which clearly reflects irresponsible action in this day and age. In this sense, our enthusiasm did not only serve the purchase of the building but also the launch of a debate about real estate and urban development bearing in mind its social and sustainable significance.

In this undertaking, we became aware of the potential to generate an impact. Our ambition has always been to make cities less unequal, which was also the key impetus for the Oudaan project.

3 Braeken, Jo. *Renaat Braem 1910-2001: Architect*. Brussels: ASA Publishers, 2010.

Our intention was to initiate the tower's redevelopment as an open process by constructing a value framework in a co-creative way, responding to and on different scales. The Oudaan was our first project realized in this manner, which pushed the boundaries of city making not only for our collaborators and us but also for the public and the government.

We established a dialectic learning process by capitalizing and applying local expertise, heralding in the action research emphasized in the Euler project. We believe that this application of open source knowledge creation facilitated the exchange, assemblage and amplification of skills of local citizens, owners, investors and organizations, which collectively pursue modelling their future urban environment.

Our initiative was massively shared and picked up by national media; and we realized: we are coming to the future. That strengthened our belief in the potential and necessity of our project and the pilot notion of openness, functionalized as the concept of OPP (open promoter platform). The following chapters demonstrate the development and cross-pollination of these competencies, presented in five phases, and the tools assisting this process. We conclude with a demonstration of newly acquired approaches such as the Noordwijk in Brussels North and Antwerp's Stuivenberg neighbourhood, navigated by the OPP conception.

CHAPTER 3

3.1. INTRODUCTION: THE MEANING OF SKILLS

The main part of this book is divided into five phases: Draw Attention, Assemblage, Campaign, Inventory and Use. Before explaining in more detail the characteristics and according acquired competencies of each phase, it is worth analysing the meaning of such competencies and how these evolved throughout the process of the pilot project.

We discovered that required skills or knowledge at the beginning of the project do not necessarily comply with the ones we saw developed at the end. In regard to our mission to make the development of cities accessible to all members of society and consequently facilitate the creation of more resilient and diverse urban environments, we pursued to integrate as many interests as possible in the Oudaan case. Additionally, given that the city of Antwerp is home to approximately 190 different nationalities asks for a multicultural dialogue. It appears logical in this sense to follow a skills framework that leaves space for transition and takes into consideration the diverse forms and faces of needs in the elaboration and definition of competencies, while also making it applicable to other cases.

One example is the European Reference Framework, based on which competencies essential for lifelong learning are defined as “a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the context.”⁴ In accordance to the premise of “appropriate to the context”, we elaborated different phases, each requiring a certain set or state of skills. The document furthermore states that “key competences are those which all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment.”

4 Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning, 2006/962/EC, Brussels: Official Journal of the European Union, 2006.

In the next pages, we will address these indicators by discussing the matters of personal fulfilment and development, displaying what our collaborators and us mean by active citizenship and how it can be promoted by platform-based initiatives. Last but not least, we will focus on the subjects of social inclusion and employment, for which the competencies addressed in this booklet pose key functions.

3.2. PHASE ONE: DRAW ATTENTION/ REACH OUT

As mentioned in Chapter Two, the experimental undertaking to purchase the police tower started on the same day the building was offered for sale. We published our impulsion on Facebook, and within 24 hours a vast number of people reacted, which forged the idea into an organic loop of media attention and advertisement. We invited everyone to contribute ideas and built a core group of experts. The achievement of recognition represents the first stage of the process assignable to four essences as presented below.

3.2.1. THE OUDAAN: A TOWER FOR THE CITY...

ACTION: IDENTIFY THE GAP

The main premise, to draw attention to our intentions and invite citizens with a similar mindset to participate prove right. The positive reactions we received from the virtual and later on real world showed the interest, importance and possibility of an alternative development plan for the tower. We discovered that we were not the only ones dreaming of a more democratic way of city making and that the missing element was a tool for people to be able to join.



"We kopen samen den Oudaan" core group (f.l.t.r. Tara Op de Beeck, Ellen Verbiest, Seppe De Blust, Maarten Desmet, Hanne Van Gils, Tim Devos, Anne-Sofie Verheyen)

✕ **TOOLS: TRANS-MEDIAL ATTENTION /SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM**

Today, social media is one of the key instruments of communication. The Facebook group we created was the tool we needed, on the one hand, to gain consideration and conduct first steps of a campaign and, on the other, to give voice to people who feel concerned by the future course of the Oudaan. It was the first time we noticed the advantages of platforms in regard to exchanging ideas and information as well as passion and – in the long term – skills, in a short period of time and with low transaction costs.

Platforms

Platforms like Facebook or Google serve for the personal exchange of information whereby their greatest market share is built on advertising products and services. The author of "Platform Capitalism", Nick Srnicek, refers to the platform as the 21st century function of monopolies that imply serious difficulties for a post-capitalist future. They surpass and excel conventional industries and employment structures, whereby issues related to privacy, labour conditions and tax evasion represent only a few of the disquieting consequences following this trend.

“Platforms, in sum, are a new type of firm; they are characterised by providing the infrastructure to intermediate between different use groups, by displaying monopoly tendencies driven by network effects, by employing cross-subsidisation to draw in different user groups, and by having a designed core architecture that governs the interaction possibilities.⁵”

In his perspective, the great platforms of our times (for example Amazon, Uber, TaskRabbit, Airbnb) depict means of generating monopolistic control over data extraction and distribution, and thus contribute to the already worrisome capitalistic currents responsible for rising inequality. Platforms have acquired much more present roles in our lives than often recognized. However, the conclusion of the present work shall show that such platforms can be used for more than advertisement and data extraction, that is for example the application and amplification of equality and inclusion in city making.



SKILLS: PERSONAL FULFILMENT AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

This action required certain competencies on behalf of the group members that launched the call on social media, as well as of other interested parties. Indeed, as indicated in the introduction, these competencies might not refer entirely to “ready-made” skills or at least not determinable ones, but to certain types of mindsets or assets from which particular skills can emerge and be used later on. These mindsets have two main aspects in common: first, people in this group have expertise, training or passion for the design of their physical and social environments and the future course thereof. Second, there are tendencies that show the existence of a common interest, whereby members privilege collective societal benefits over the individualistic course of living (or who consider the latter as a consequence of the former).

5 Srnicek, Nick. Platform Capitalism. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2017.

In consideration of the framework, the competencies addressed in this phase give rise to personal fulfilment, since particularly professionals were looking for a more meaningful way of applying their expertise, prioritizing the impact of their doing over other assets such as wealth creation or simplified working procedures. Additionally, we see high levels of entrepreneurship, sense of initiative and cultural and social awareness, that set the base for active citizenship, a highly valued competence in every democracy and essential for the cooperative development of a public tower.

OUTCOME: CREATE PURPOSE

Combining the above-mentioned elements and re-linking them back to the Oudaan case, we can see that the first phase is determined by creating purpose for individuals who are concerned about the future of the Oudaan and its impact for the citizens of Antwerp. We identified the lack of tools for this performance, which is why a virtual platform seemed to be the adequate invitation to share information for interested tenants and investors. The outcome of this phase shows that the project provided interested parties with new meaning for their doing and the chance to expand their role as active citizens.

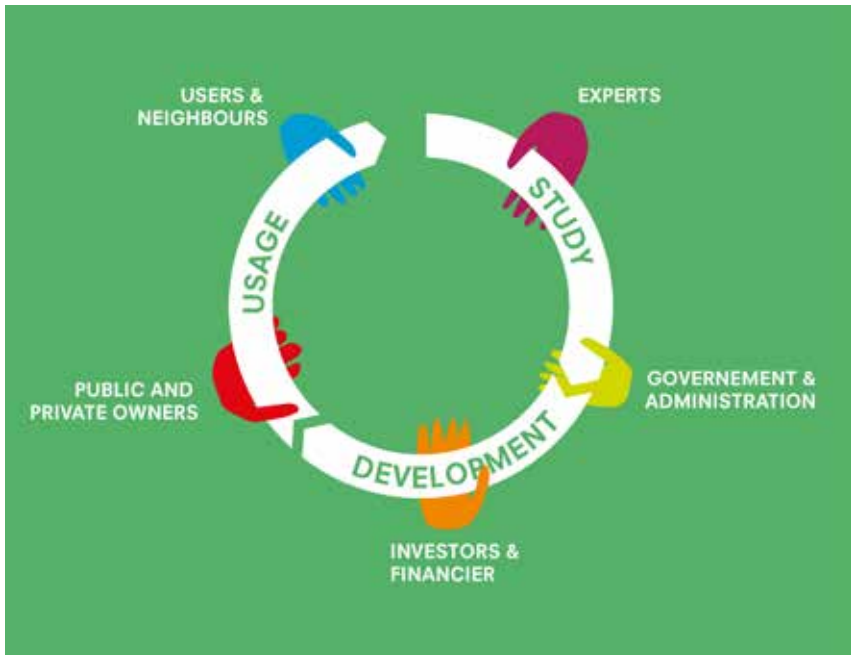
3.3. PHASE TWO: ASSEMBLAGE/ ENGAGE

The *sealed bid* approach the city was following in the sales procedure of the Oudaan is problematic in two ways: first, this approach implies an uncertain level of ambition in regard to the tower's development and hence undefined outcomes for concerned actors and the individual taxpayer. Second, the procedure leaves little to no space for the public to engage in the process. A look at classic forms of real estate developments and the constant pressure to achieve high returns indicates that owners are rarely transparent in their doing, often disregard essential space for innovation and research and thus turn to high-levelled capital generating uses of space.

This approach fully ignores the fact that the tower's future concerns many citizens of Antwerp, and we were looking for an alternative way that allows involving them.

From the project's outset onwards we realized that the knowledge we brought together in our core group would be insufficient to bring the project to a satisfactory and substantiate conclusion. Additionally, we became aware that the ample and continuously increasing scope of incoming ideas would have to be collected, sorted and further processed. We organized first workshops and working groups, applied for the Flemish BWMSTR Label, spoke to a broad range of actors and refined our mission. For this reason we identify this phase as assemblage with the following components.

3.3.1. THE OUDAAN: ...BY DEVELOPING DIFFERENTLY



Development process

► **ACTION: DESIGN DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

These months we spent on elaborating a framework for an alternative development model reinforcing the social value of the tower. We worked closely with different experts and city actors, including city planners, architects, lawyers, real estate experts, governmental representatives, specialists in cooperative companies, and engaged citizens.

As a first step we had to reflect on the question of what the future use of the Oudaan should bring, taking into consideration affordability and investment return, and started to write down the results of this research in a manifesto. In doing so, we aligned our approach with the aforementioned principle of openness, leveraging two core mechanisms in our work: transparency and participation.

The logo consists of the words "BWMSTR" and "LABEL" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. "BWMSTR" is positioned on the left and "LABEL" is on the right. They are both rotated 90 degrees counter-clockwise, making them appear vertical. The letters are thick and closely spaced.

Additionally, we applied for and received the BWMSTR Label 2015, which served as a way to render the thinking about the future use of the Oudaan towards alternative city making approaches. Next to refining the development plan of the tower, we wanted to come up with a concrete development model that can also be used for other socially relevant construction and reconversion projects. In this way, we paved the way for maximizing the surplus of the project for involved actors, independent of whether the tower will be purchased at the end or not.

Burgerinitiatief ijvert via Facebook om de zeventien verdiepingen tellende Oudaan te kopen

't Stad is van iedereen,
en de politietoren ook

Een groep jonge Antwerpenaren wil de iconische politietoren in het centrum van de stad kopen en renoveren. Concreet zijn de plannen nog niet, de interesse des te meer. De Oudaan moet weer zijn plok krijgen.

ANNOUNCEMENT

[illegible]

In 1848 en 1849 herengroeven, men ontdekte
aardworpertoren en rond de dertig, witten dat
het goudwaas vooral naar noord-oost konink
gevoelen. De konink der konink was volwikkelen,
niet op het Eilandje. Men op psychologische slak
nog veel konink, maar heeft konink goed
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niet. Men de konink witten was de konink

We willen dat de Antwerperaar de schoonheid van het gebouw weer ziet.

NAME OF STUDENT _____

[illegible]

Die Inventionen Ochsens sind für die Anwesenheit nicht nur ein Werk des architektonischen Genies. Die Ochs denkt auch anders nach. "Wir sollten das Anwesen nicht als schwebend im Raum gefangen sein sehen. Wir können es auch einfach zusammen mit anderen, mit uns

€ 10,5 miljoen

* Umweltverbote regeln die
ökonomische Nutzung der Ökonomie

mean glucose values around 100 mg/dl must be maintained, which is dangerous (Graham 2).

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Conclusions:

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Wolke voerde de participatieprocedures in een klein groep, welken De Blaas niet als 'interdisciplinaire werkgroep' aanvaardde. Daar moest uiteindelijk vijf tot zes volwaardige leden komen, of else niet afhankelijk van de monitoring. Maar wat was aan quality bestuursbeheer, om de kwaliteit van de bron. Op de Faculteit-pagina's gaven de voorstellen alle richtlijnen tot vier aspecten: kennis, vaardigheden, inzet en houding. Het was een lijst met een aantal punten. Het was een lijst met een aantal punten. Het was een lijst met een aantal punten.



* Die Installationen werden von der Fachhochschule - group. Wir bringen unseren Ideen Ausdruck, nicht Handlungen. Unsere Die Kunst ist hier nicht nur ein Bild, sondern eine Idee, die wir in die Welt setzen. (www.fh-berlin.de)

De Morgen newspaper article: "The city is everyone's and the police tower as well"

✕ TOOLS: SOCIALLY RESPONSIVE RESEARCH

Our endeavour lied in coming up with a research model that simultaneously serves as a dialogue with citizens and other concerned actors. After the considerable response in the Facebook group and our website, we decided to organize workshops next to expert working groups as methods of socially conducted research that opens up to different types of available expertise and takes the time to explore socially interesting possibilities for the tower's use. This form of research allows the elaboration of sustainable, socially efficient and flexible models, working procedures and uses.

Workshops

In cooperation with the Flemish Architecture Institute, we selected four themes for the workshops, each investigating the possibilities of the Oudaan as a tower of the city: innovative program, urban embedding, sustainable conversion, and management and shared use of space. The topics were chosen based on previous group sessions, and the results studied and processed in an equally detailed manner.



Workshop with engaged citizens and experts at De Singel, Antwerp

Innovative program

In doing so we paid particular attention to functions that are conceived to face a lack of facilitation in the conventional real estate market or rarely find place in the centre of the city. This entails for example social functions, public spaces and local entrepreneurship.

Urban embedding

Given the Oudaan's image-determining role in Antwerp it is crucial to investigate how the tower and surrounding public space are to be anchored in the urban fabric.

Sustainable conversion

The Oudaan's conversion, not least because of its status as historical monument, is difficult to perform. Engineering and construction rarely meet present standards in this regard, and certain functions like its residential use require high investments in renovation works. On this subject it is crucial to establish a balance between different investment costs and carefully examine their links to certain opportunities.

Management and shared use of space

In order to develop the tower in an alternative way we aimed for a flexible program. We approached this from a cooperative logic and aspired a management model that offers possibilities for a diversity of functions, and stimulates innovation. Nonetheless, this design requires certain, well elaborated "house rules" that underpin a sustainable model with the responsibility shared by the different users.



SKILLS: INCLUSION OF VARIOUS STAKE- AND SHAREHOLDERS

Giving the diversity of people that felt concerned by the future development of the Oudaan, we steered towards involving different users and investors. The same applies to experts and engaged citizens participating in the elaboration of a development plan, who were appealed by the project's social ambition and the tower's prospective daily management.

The inclusion of different parties with various competencies, distinctive roles but the same common goal would also facilitate adaptability and responsiveness in financing, combining different models such as crowdfunding and bond loans.

In a later stage of the project, we conducted interviews with participating parties, two of which are presented below. Fons Bastiaenssens is the former head of police who became later on spokesperson of the police. Although he is not an expert in architecture or entrepreneurship, he posed a key figure for questions related to the building's past development and meaning, and its interiors. Another example is given in the interview with Koen Drossaert, a partner at HUB Architects, who was appealed by the social drive of the initiative.

Interviews



Interview with Fons Bastiaenssens, former head of police

Fons Bastiaenssens – head (and later on spokesperson) of the Antwerp police force:

Fons Bastiaenssens used to work in the Oudaan for 60 years, gave tours through the tower and has a very good understanding of its development and use. He states that the building needs appreciation. It deserves to be looked at from a historical perspective and its character should be preserved.



Interview with Koen Drossaert, partner at HUB Architects

Koen Drossaert – Partner at HUB Architects:

"We are involved as specialists in a number of expert groups and workshops. There we have used our knowledge to further sharpen the way of thinking about the project. The biggest obstacle, which also was the most interesting for us, were the preconditions which you must meet for such a project to come to a good end. These preconditions concern spatial issues, but also finances, and affect the way a building is reconsidered and sold. The idea to [work] bottom-up, with 'almost-guerilla-actions', can trigger to think about the re-consideration of buildings to create a big social added value and to serve public interest, is very interesting. Within the current market context that question is rarely mentioned. And if that happens, it will have a predetermined answer, or an answer that is given due to current market conditions. This is also what interests us: To see how you can influence the conversion of this type of building without complying with the classic market conditions, but looking for alternatives from below. That belongs to our mission as architects. Thus, we take care of the social added value of our projects. And in this project about the Oudaan it was very clear that the future of the tower would focus on the citizens, and the building would not simply be transferred to a private investor."

OUTCOME: REFINED PROPOSAL AND OPEN DEBATE

In this practice, different partners could make use of a cross-knowledge creation by gaining insight into fields that otherwise would have been “closed-off”, and/or give meaning to their doing. Similar to professionals, engaged citizens without any particular professional background were inspired, participated in the working groups or took part as prospective users (tenants).

We were steering towards becoming a cooperative that combines different forms of management. This management type would entail three financial and juridical advantages, as presented in this phase: We would be able to include a diversity of users and investors, follow a flexible and demand-driven infill and use of the tower, and fulfil the mission-driven character of the plan with limited returns in order to keep the building publicly accessible and its use affordable.

3.4. PHASE THREE: CAMPAIGN/ ACTION

After assembling all kinds of ideas and expertise with the help of different dialogical mediums, it was time to translate our intentions into practice and build partnerships with potential tenants and investors. We organized an exhibition on the Day of Architecture and designed new participatory tools to launch this campaign. We then started to map possible uses and programs, always following the premises of efficiency, flexibility, affordability and consequently added social value as the core component of our plan. In the course of forming agreements we distinguish between four steps.



Exhibition at De Singel on the Day of Architecture

3.4.1. THE OUDAAN: SHARED CONCERNS

ACTION: NEW FORMS OF DEVELOPMENT RESULT IN NEW NETWORKS

We started by organizing site visits, an exhibition on the Day of Architecture and assessed the possibilities of proposed concepts. Simultaneously, we complemented our research on financial and social models by exploring reference projects in Europe and joining the international network re:Kreators, that had evolved around sharing ideas and inspirations for experimental procedures in urban development projects. As part of this network we took part in the 'City Makers Summit' held at the cultural centre Pakhuis de Zwijger in Amsterdam, and visited inspirational examples like the Zomerhofkwartier (ZOH0) in Rotterdam. We also attended one of the sessions of 'Funding the Cooperative City' in Budapest, an initiative of Eutroplan mobilizing the stimulation of practices from all over Europe. We discovered that a vast number of European organizations deal with the questions of our time around sustainable living, and together we wanted to examine whether small-scale, organic urban development can give according answers. We created a database for case studies and references, using the input from online information as well as our regular contact with the mentioned initiators.



City Makers Summit at Pakhuis de Zwijger, Amsterdam © Pakhuis de Zwijger

Reference



City Makers Summit at Pakhuis de Zwiger, Amsterdam © Het video Bureau

ZOHO Rotterdam

The Zomerhofkwartier (ZOHO) in Rotterdam, also partner member of re:Kreators, is located in the former industrial area close to the city centre. Near Rotterdam Central Station, over 10,000 m² of inner city business area used to stand empty. Since the owner and city maker (Havenstader; STIPO) started with a new development plan in 2013, vacant buildings have been filled up, ground floors opened up to revitalize the streets, and a new cultural extension of the centre has come into existence. Different actors, including companies, organizations, inhabitants, and visitors, can get involved, whereby common collaboration is based on sharing and adding in order to create new values for the network. The goal is to turn ZOHO into a valuable part of the city, collectively created and achieved through organic and slow bottom-up urban development.

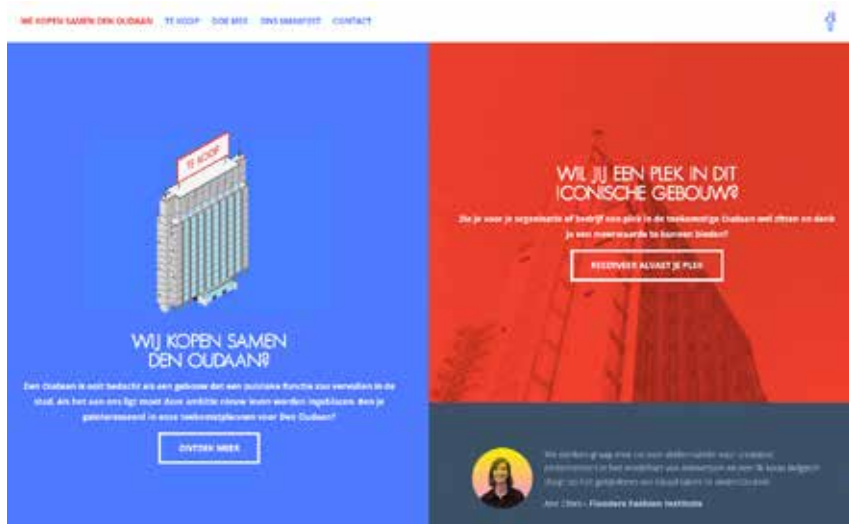
<http://zohorotterdam.nl/over-zoho>

<https://citiesintransition.eu/cityreport/rekreators>

<http://www.stipo.nl>

For many of these initiatives funding is a delicate issue. Classic funding approaches oftentimes leave little leeway in alternative programs, while alternative funding models require a lot of creativity, high levels of cooperation and trust with the investor(s), and most certainly a good portion of luck. Either way, successful examples are often context-specific and consequently difficult to repeat in rendered circumstances. Many organizations share this concern, and networks on whatever scale can provide advice on possible models and collectively develop solutions to the problem at hand. The international network also supported our weight in the bigger debate and strengthened our role in the urban agenda of policy makers. This bolstered the position of citizens confronting larger real estate companies and lobbies.

✕ **TOOLS: INTERACTIVE DIGITAL INFORMATION PLATFORM**



Screenshot of the interactive website: application tool for interested stake - and shareholders

One of the most crucial aspects in this procedure was to find a tool to make the tenancy and our plan accessible and understandable to everyone disregarding socio-economic status, educational background, or any other characteristic, and invited all people who felt concerned to our exhibition, from the great-aunt up to the project manager.



Fashion students' studio exemplifying possible uses



Interactive website: visualization of the tower's vision and program if managed collectively

We published our manifesto, and together with Bagaar, one of our closest collaborators, we transformed the “We kopen samen den Oudaan” website into a digital information platform. This platform sought to be interactive, explaining in a simple manner our mission and goals, possible uses of the tower and offered interested parties an application with which to apply for investments and/or tenancy.

Interviews



Interview with Annelies Desmet, Bagaar

Annelies Desmet - Bagaar:

Their objective was to convince people of the philosophy and of the project itself. This goal they approached with an animated website, which works on the conceptual level first and then builds up the necessary knowledge in the course of the workshops, which is required for the design phase. Their motivation further was to prove that the concept works and can bring people together.



Interview with Dieter Desmet, Bagaar

Dieter Desmet – Bagaar:

They were wondering at first, how serious and possible the project actually is. It seemed surreal but soon became a real project. Their attempt was to illustrate and translate the project and its purpose into a language comprehensible for people who are not from “this world”.



SKILLS: CITY MAKERS AND PRO-ACTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

The attendees of the aforementioned City Makers Summit did not only identify with their own projects but with a broader ambition, turning “city maker” into an attitude. The term is deliberately not further defined nor related to certain profiles or backgrounds: everyone can “make city”. The same applies for the people engaging in the Oudaan project who are city makers because of their willingness to offer their know-how and passion for the development of the tower.

Moreover, applying a varied program and involving diverse stake- and shareholders allows to work on shared functions. We aimed at creating a structure and management model that offers opportunities for a multitude of features which also stimulates all kinds of innovative cross-fertilisations. In this procedure, the Oudaan was meant to be a place for sharing spaces and facilities, which again empowers knowledge sharing, supports the development of new working schemes and enhances productive collaborations.



OUTCOME: RESPONDING TO THE CITY'S SKILLS

The cooperation with local supporters and international networks strengthened the theoretical foundations of our project, extended the network and increased our credibility. Furthermore, after attracting the attention of stake- and shareholders and yielding the proposals of different concepts with the help of the interactive digital information platform we saw the gradual crystallization of five main domains of involved skills.

Information Technology (IT) as the core instrument for communication amongst collaborators and users, the digitalization of data for the

development plan and many other elements dependent on rapid forms of storage, research and retrieval of information. Second, spatial planning, architecture and real estate expertise act as one domain for the assessment of physical parameters required for the conversion of the tower and concept assessments, while each field gains importance for certain individual queries as well. Financial expertise, as the third domain, is crucial for all questions regarding the development plan, the conversion phase and programming and daily management, and therefore has a leading and open-end role from the beginning of the process. Fourth, organizational skills turned out to be particularly essential for the structure of the cooperative, the allocation of tasks, and preparation and realization of the daily management of the Oudaan. Last but not least, we see another emphasis on social entrepreneurship, giving our mission to reintegrate the social character in the tower's development and use, and maximize according social benefits.

3.5. PHASE FOUR: INVENTORY/ PROJECT

To conclude our vision of the Oudaan's redevelopment in the upcoming months, we had to carefully contemplate at least three aspects. First, we had to work out a clear model of how we can develop the tower cooperatively. Additionally, we had to determine a legal structure, elaborate a management model that is in line with our flexible parameters, and assess possible investment paradigms. Lastly, because developing differently means for us to create a program that can continuously adapt to changing needs and dreams of users and the city, we had to develop a responsive scheme, while taking into account the added value we intended to achieve with a public tower. Within our flexible design, this concerns both the determination of terms and types of users as well as the design of a structure that enables us to renovate the tower relatively economically. The following steps have been taken in the inventory phase before finally submitting an offer.

3.5.1. THE OUDAAN: SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW, SOMETHING BORROWED, SOMETHING BLUE

▶ **ACTION: EVALUATION OF FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL PARAMETERS**

As a cooperative sought to build collaborations with different stakeholders and shareholders, we could share and hence double existing space of the Oudaan, allowing an efficient use of scarce square meters and the improvement of affordability. We saw and still observe a broad range of pressing issues that need to be considered in urban development projects. Thus, we initiated dialogues with different types of potential users and by doing so, were looking for concepts that allow affordable and non-long-term commitments, combining different long and short-term rental models.

During the consultancy by financial experts, we enabled a dialogue with one big and several small potential investors and users. We defined particular financial characteristics of the programming that were meant to be taken into account when we placed our bid although although we opposed the city's sale procedure. In order to develop economically we aimed at a maximal return of 4 per cent that allows openness and avoids the Oudaan to become an exclusive tower. In this manner, we could ensure possible financial assets for small and large investments, constituting a saving possibility for Antwerp's citizens.

We furthermore had to detail rather invariant parameters, such as finances and returns of the conversion and renovation of the tower. We wanted to develop a plan, that "is about working with the space and rediscover how to not build", as one of our collaborators, RE-ST architect Tim Vekemans states.

Interview



Interview with Dieter Bagaar, Bagaar

Tim Vekemans – Partner at the architecture office RE-ST:

"We have assisted in estimating what is needed for the use of the Oudaan. We soon determined what the first ambition should be: use the building in the state in which it currently is. Then the conversion can go very quickly, in fact from the moment you hold the key and the building is done. That was the starting point for further developing the technical-financial issue. How can you as a cooperative, in a user-network that takes up stewardship for the next decades, take over responsibility for this building? What must be done now? What can be done later?"

"RE-ST examines the concept of non-building and wants to link our spatial needs to the existing patrimony. Non-building is a mindset and attitude: how can we fill the spatial needs without adding cubic meters? How much of our needs could we meet? The research starts with studying the suitability of existing buildings for all kinds of contemporary needs. So bringing your supply and demand together. The case of the Oudaan is a good example for that. Not only does it take into account the need for affordable living and living space, it also works from the realization that the Oudaan has an urban and public role."

"We have learned that the Oudaan is a modernist giant as a building, with a very specific structure, which does not allow all forms of conversion. As a starting point we face the question: what is a self-evident way to use this building? What is the most natural conversion? Then you get quickly to the question: how can you do that as economically as possible, with the most respect for the monumental? An evaluation of the existing technical parameters was also extremely important. These are not always up-to-date, yet still modern enough to be used immediately. Our conclusion? The building has a lot of potential, even in the state it is now."

TOOL(S) & SKILLS: COSTSHEETS AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

In this procedure we developed an organizational structure, wrote cost sheets and designed a timeframe including the essential development steps of the upcoming ten years.

By March 2016 we had planned to submit an offer of 12,8 million euros. 15 per cent of this amount was meant to come from one or more main impact investor(s), 35 per cent from opportunity investors (by following the appeal of the former) and 50 per cent in the form of a loan. Part of the sale's deal was that the police of Antwerp would rent the building until the construction of their new headquarter is finished in 2020, which provides for an annual rental income of 1,5 million euros starting from 2017. This income would serve as an important guarantee for potential investors who were meant to receive the annual amount until 2024. In the following year, a minor renovation would be planned for which costs meant to be kept at a bare minimum. Concurrently, the founding of the cooperative should be finalized by which the tenants gain control over the further development of the tower. When things were running according to the plan, we would rent out the ground floors and integrate shops and parking spots to gain extra revenue. By 2021, we aimed at being able to offer a rentable area of 11,463 m² to an affordable price (for example, between 400 and 500 euros per month for 50 m²) with a 7 per cent return for opportunity investors. We further wanted to accommodate functions that rarely find a place in the real estate market and stimulate mixed forms of use, including shared space.

For instance, meeting rooms could be shared and spaces used for events by tower tenants but also external parties. We furthermore identified a lack of affordable, small-scale and flexible work-spaces. We prepared to guarantee a response to this need and therefore support small businesses or social companies. Additionally, we saw a shortage of educational facilities, and wanted to focus in particular on multi-deployable practice rooms that can be embedded in the city centre instead of remote campuses. Last but not least we wanted to include a considerable amount of space that should be accessible for the public, such as a square in front of the building and a library in the top. In the meanwhile, we would hope our cooperative to build up, and more and more tenants to join, consisting of a few “anchor tenants”, capital-able and publically known tenants, who attract other smaller ones. By 2024 we intended the cooperative to be able to purchase the tower for an estimated value of 20,7 million euros after the redevelopment, following the rent to own model and an internal rate of return (IRR) of 25 per cent. With enough tenants to join the cooperative we would be able to give the bank or investors of the purchase loan the necessary guarantees.

Three principles underlie this agenda. These would have been more likely to succeed in an alternative sales procedure (other than the *tender* or *secret bid* approach). First, we intended to follow a progressive rental purchase model, meaning that instead of buying the building with a single click after eight years, we wanted to set up a contract whereby the leading investor (or owner) is gradually bought out by the cooperative. For example, as a tenant you do not only pay rent but also contribute (with that amount) to the purchase. This approach is in line with the intention to form a cooperative. Secondly, not only big investors but also small organizations and citizens who believe in our project could contribute and become co-owners. Together, they act as a community of users and investors involved on different scales, by which for instance part of the renovation costs could be financed. Lastly, the intention was to form a cooperative that combines different cooperative forms. From larger shareholders who invest in the increasing value of the building to the numerous people and organizations that find a place in the tower, consisting of both shareholder and users, and even sympathizers who want to contribute.

OUTCOME: MAKE AN OFFER

As a timeframe was elaborated, three additional workshops were planned: one for determining needs and wishes of different user profiles, one around the position of the tower in the city and a third workshop about the cooperative's setting. Considering that our model could guarantee affordable space in the centre of Antwerp, already at an early stage we were approached by various organizations in the socio-cultural area. Such organizations include start-ups, sustainable fashion brands or similar, which are all types of organizations that could integrate added value to the neighbourhood, as well as the city as a whole. By the end of 2016 we wanted to use the results of the workshops to conduct a market research, giving insight to interested investors and tenants. This inquiry was completed by March 2016, the moment when we submitted the offer with the amount of 12,8 million euros.

3.5.2. THE OUDAAN: ONE DOOR CLOSSES,...

The submission deadline was at the beginning of September 2016. Although our plan was greatly supported by the public, an immense amount of effort was invested, and about 3,000 small investors were found, we were not able to outdo the bid of the major real estate players. The highest offer was submitted by Tanguy Westerlund, a member of the Maritime Entrepreneurs family. He purchased Braem's tower for 25,5 million euros, whereby his development plan entails the construction of luxurious apartments or a hotel, according to certain sources. The City of Antwerp reinvests the profit to build the new police headquarter with costs of approximately 275 million euros.

... another opens

Nevertheless, the efforts paid off: As mentioned above, the purchase of the Oudaan was never the only goal of our mission but was consistently accompanied by the debate on socially responsible city making and offering the project as a reference for according best practices. After the purchase option was officially closed, a new chapter began.

We were approached by city governments, developers and other organizations in their search for more open ways of urban development and consequently acknowledged the need for an alternative approach more responsive to citizens' needs.

Oudaan Politietoren verkocht voor 2,5 keer de vraagprijs

Vastgoedinvesteerder Westerlund staat voor uitdagende renovatie van Antwerps monument

De stad Antwerpen heeft een koper gevonden voor de Politietoren op de Oudaan. Investeerder Tangy Westerlund bracht een bod uit van 25,5 miljoen euro, ruim het dubbele van de minimumprijs van 13,5 miljoen euro die de stad voor het geklasseerde gebouw wilde opkopen.

Tien tot twintig jaar geleden zou de Politietoren op de Oudaan voorlopig niet meer worden ontwikkeld, maar nu zijn er andere plannen. Het gebouw werd in 1958 door de stad Antwerpen gekocht voor 13,5 miljoen euro. Het was toen een vastgoedproject van de stad. Het gebouw werd in 1958 door de stad Antwerpen gekocht voor 13,5 miljoen euro. Het was toen een vastgoedproject van de stad. Het gebouw werd in 1958 door de stad Antwerpen gekocht voor 13,5 miljoen euro. Het was toen een vastgoedproject van de stad.

Laeslief en heist!

De periode dat er bod kon worden uitgebracht op politiehof-kantoor, liep vorige week af. Het laatste bod dat werd uitgebracht, was dat van de bekende familie van maritieme ondernemers.



HOE VAN DE VELDE (IN WJ)
Schepen van Stadsontwikkeling

"Onze vastgoedoperaties hebben tot nu toe 41 miljoen euro meer opgebracht dan het bedrag waar we vooraf rekening mee hadden gehouden."

ondernemers. Westerlund bood 25,5 miljoen euro voor de toren van Braem. "Klopt", zegt schepen Van de Velde. "Ook de andere grote vastgoedoperaties, zoals de verkoop van het huidige hantelaar, hebben meer opgebracht dan verwacht", zegt schepen Van de Velde. "Ook de andere grote vastgoedoperaties, zoals de verkoop van het huidige hantelaar, hebben meer opgebracht dan verwacht."

Tangy Westerlund was gestroomd met bereikbaar voor de toekomst. In de vastgoedsector verwacht men dat de ondernemers vooral luxeappartementen zal ontwikkelen, gezien het sterke zicht op de stad vanuit de toren. Het gebouw ligt bovendien centraal in de binnenstad, in de nabijheid van de Kammermarkt, de Wilde Zee en de randboulevard van de Noordkolk. "Ook een hand heeft het mogelijkheids", volgens een bron in de vastgoedsector.

Goed voor de begroting

Schepen Joris van der Aa (N-VA) heeft geen zicht op de plannen van de toekomstige eigenaar. "Er zijn blijkbaar gebouwen onder gekocht omhoog. Er is geen voorstelling geweest tussen de stad en de kandidaat-kopers."

Voor de Antwerpse stadskas is de speculatieve verkoop van het politiehof een succes, omdat het 15 miljoen meer opbrengt dan wat voorzien in de begroting was.

groot. "Niet alleen de verkoop van de Oudaan is een succes, ook de verkoop van de toren van Braem. "Klopt", zegt schepen Van de Velde. "Ook de andere grote vastgoedoperaties, zoals de verkoop van het huidige hantelaar, hebben meer opgebracht dan verwacht."

De opbrengst van de verkoop van de Politietoren zal onder meer worden gebruikt om het stadsmeestergebouw van de politie te financieren. Dat zal ongeveer 27 miljoen kosten, zegt een bron in de vastgoedsector.

De nieuwe eigenaar van de Politietoren staat voor de uitdaging om het oude, afgekeerde gebouw te renoveren tot een eigentijdse gebouw. Dat zal bovendien minstens 15 miljoen kosten.

Renaat Braem, Joris van der Aa en Maxime Wuyts begonnen in 1950 aan de sloop van de eerste plannen. Naam de begroting - toen was in de plannetjes ook opgenomen van de gerechtsgebouwen, maar de plannen werden nooit gerealiseerd.

De bouw van de toren begon in 1958. Het ontwerp van Braem werd in 1965 bekend met de SBKAM-architectuurprijs (Société Royale des Urbanistes et Architectes Modernistes). In 2002 werd het gebouw officieel beschermd als monument.

JORIS VAN DER AA

Goedkope kredieten en "positieve vibe" doen Antwerpse vastgoedsector boomen

De voorkeursprijs die voor Antwerpse vastgoed werd betaald, lijkt voor een deel het gevolg van de lage interesten. "De situatie op de financiële markten zorgt ervoor dat beleggers hun geld in vastgoed stoppen, omdat andere beleggingsmogelijkheden minder rendement opbrengen", zegt schepen van Stadsontwikkeling Wilt van de Velde. "Door de lage interesten is geld lenen ook goedkoper geworden. Maar de situatie op de financiële markten verklaart niet alles. Ik kunt er niet om heen dat er een 'positive vibe' hangt rond onze stad. Er wordt weer meer geïnvesteerd in het vastgoedsector. Dat merken we duidelijk aan het aantal bouwvergunningen dat we afgeven", zegt Van de Velde. De schepen van Stadsontwikkeling liet een analyse maken van de bouwsector. "Tussen 2008 en 2013 leverde de stad jaarlijks 3000 bouwvergunningen af. Na 2013 is dat aantal begonnen te dalen. Dit jaar zullen we ongeveer 1600 bouwvergunningen afgeven."

(wvd)

Verkoop vastgoed levert 41 miljoen extra op

• **Politietoren:** De stad Antwerpen gooide het administratief centrum van de politie op de markt voor 25,5 miljoen euro. Uitendall bracht de verkoop 25,5 miljoen euro op. • **Stadsmeestergebouw:** Het gebouw op de Interpoort werd voor ongeveer 10 miljoen op de markt gebracht, maar mededagings en vastgoedontwikkelaar Joris Van der Aa betaalde 13,5 miljoen voor het gebouw.



Gazet van Antwerpen newspaper article: "Oudaan sold for 2.5 times the asked price"

3.6. PHASE FIVE: USE/ NURTURE

For this reason we present a last but left-open phase in our approach, namely *use* or *nurture*. If acquired according to the plan described above, the main goal of this phase should be to keep the cooperative management running as well as the continuous nurture and refinement of the building, its functions and most importantly, never losing sight of the social, economic and ecological parameters in doing so. Because it never came to this phase, we are now experimenting with other projects and regularly expand our research to eventually be able to formalize according steps. Until then, we assemble our past experiments and work further on the development of a platform that ought to facilitate the use of urban space.

The major challenge lies in enabling such isolated experiments to be reproduced and scalable. During our research we saw that many civil society organizations, start-ups and other organizations are looking for innovative models in order to engage in circular forms of real estate development. Therefore, during the year following the capitalist takeover of the Oudaan, the project partners focused on developing a platform, the open promoter platform (OPP), in the endeavour to facilitate multifaceted co-creation and working procedures in this manner. We sought to create a model that is applicable to a variety of cases, which then again are considered by various stakeholders.

The relevance of such a platform is twofold: On the one hand, it ought to facilitate innovative developments on a regional scale, for instance in the Flemish context, so that these can also be accessed by initiators outside the metropolitan domain. On the other hand, it should also allow adaptability from building scale to neighbourhood scale, given that the challenges in often mono-functional administrative centres or offices are increasingly in need of new approaches.

CHAPTER FOUR

OPP

MATCHMAKING

As the organizational plan in the previous phase shows, we would have combined and experimented with different forms of cooperative management, stimulated by different examples in Europe and elsewhere. The creation of networks brings foreign examples into play, such as the so-called “Baugenossenschaften” in Germany, Austria or Switzerland. The Zomerhofkwartier in Rotterdam, as presented above, or the Binckhorst in The Hague exemplify other responses to similar problems.

Reference

Stadsmakersplatform

Also in terms of platforms we discovered likeminded initiators, aspiring the exchange of expertise and experiences on a virtual stage. One example is the stadsmakersplatform (*city maker platform*), which also emerged from the Oudaan project, and is determined by five principles.

1. Front-level placement of otherwise closed processes
2. Stage for city debates
3. Matchmaking between different parties
4. Collective knowledge creation
5. Link to international networks

This being said, the stadsmakersplatform is a low-threshold, visible stage in the form of an online platform for matchmaking between different parties. In doing so, it functions as an organizational tool for debates, lectures, master classes, festivals and so forth.

Similar to the exemplified models, the platform presented in this book should provide citizens, companies and governments with a concrete tool for taking action, more precisely to reprogram and rebuild existing buildings in an alternative and sustainable way. In doing so, the platform aims at responding to the overproduction of space while also offering an integrated approach to deal with vacancy. For example, in the North of Brussels we observe a problematically high rate of vacancy of office buildings. Additionally, the platform encourages new multidisciplinary partnerships that provide opportunities for (a combination of) programs and infills that are often out of place in the conventional real estate market but which according to us benefit the development of more resilient and diverse cities.

LEARNED LESSON “OUDAAN”

By drawing knowledge from experiences with the Oudaan and contemplating each phase individually, we translated the OPP procedure into four concrete steps. Each of the step requires further investigation based on a number of crucial assumptions as listed below.



OPP: Four steps

Step 1: Application

Different types of initiators (owners, individual citizens, private entrepreneurs, organizations and governments) can manage a building on the OPP by sending an application explaining why a building should be (alternatively) redeveloped.

Assumption 1: Different types of target groups are participating on our platform. This can be seen as a kind of market analysis.

Assumption 2: Cross-pollination and optimal relationship must be sought between substantive human input (both from the OPP team and the applicants) and the automated operation of the self-managing software of the platform.

Step 2: Quicksan

The OPP uses an internal quickscan to estimate the potentials, the social impact and the financial feasibility of a project.

Assumption 3: The efficiency of this step is dependent on developing a system that enables this scan to be performed by the OPP team and partly through online software in a qualitative manner and in a relatively short period.

Assumption 4: The impact scan takes place on the basis of a clearly defined set of indicators that assess social and economic values and chances of success.

Step 3: Open Call

The power of open development that manifested itself in the Oudaan project largely rests on a process of collective vision building, combining both program infills and specific expertise. To this end, a building on the platform is announced by launching an open call involving all crucial elements in order to make the process a success, and based on the results from the quickscan. These elements entail from skills and knowledge, material and interested tenants, up to investors and buyers. Additionally, communication and recruitment play essential roles in this phase, for which the platform can provide the necessary support.

Assumption 5: The platform can directly or indirectly provide and assemble the right tools to stimulate the co-creative construction of a shared vision.

This can be achieved through the construction of a shared manifesto, the provision of innovative renovation models or similar.

Assumption 6: The platform provides the necessary conditions to adequately centralize the circular character of open real estate development both in the initial scan of a project, the open collaboration model and the final vision formation around a building.

Assumption 7: The OPP platform can provide the basis for creating trans-medial campaigns on different scales to realize a wide variety of target groups and engagement.

Step 4: Project assembly and realization

After an integrated vision has been developed for a building, the platform supports realization and nurture of a project.

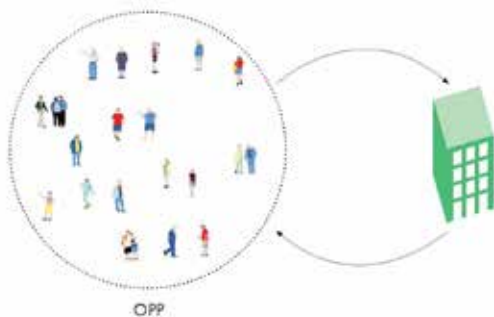
Assumption 8: The platform can also play a lasting role in serving as an online project manager, impact meter and backlog during the realization of the project.

Assumption 9: The realization of the project reaches target groups directly involved in the project (eg. as service providers or tenants) but builds up by raising interests also in the broader community that can be validated later.

Assumption 10: The impact assessed during a first quickscan is now finalized in the realization of the project and transitions into implementing and monitoring the technical, financial, cooperative, circular and social parameters.

CITIZENS AS DEVELOPER

Following the scrutiny of our experiences and concurrent research we distinguish between five main stakeholder groups: owners and buildings; users and sellers; government; investors and financiers; and experts and learners. In doing so, we also investigated their positions on the market, how their demand can be met in working with the platform, what the according vision entails and how their potential input can be stimulated. The results of this research are listed in the table below, indicating that the stakeholder groups' needs and made efforts can be triggered, and their goals met with the platform, representing a tool for the exchange and generation of know-how and values.



OPP: Matchmaking

Matchmaking (M) ... Relationship between expertise, knowledge, citizens, government, institutes, organizations, investors and developers.

Vision (V) ... Survival role; creating content in matchmaking.

Engagement (E) ... Build shared value frame and actions. Activate unutilized potential.

Stakeholders	Market Need	Value Proposition ,OPP'
OWNERS BUILDINGS	need to obtain perspective and vision on the market & potential customers	MM insight into market & risk reduction V developmental vision E participation in joint value creation
USERS SELLERS	need a place for a certain aspiration/longing/desire	MM choice in urban areas V participation in creation of living and working environment E participation in joint value creation
GOVERNMENT	need for better urban development and learning	MM process guidance & expertise for local authorities; active citizens V stimulate sustaining urban development E participation in joint value creation
FINANCIER INVESTOR	need for long-term and stable investments	MM insight into market & risk reduction V investment in meaningful projects on local scale (value chain) E participation in joint value creation
EXPERTS LEARNERS	need for mission-driven, meaningful work and innovation of knowledge	MM insight into market and employment security V participation in socially inclusive creation of new city maker processes E participation in joint value creation

The platform's and therefore the members' success depends on the participation of the other members. Two theories underlie this approach⁶: First, the structure-process-outcome theory, according to which the outcomes of a project depend on the process participants engage in to achieve the goals, and not on the goals themselves. In doing so, desired outcomes will almost automatically result when the desired process occurs. The second theory is the social interdependence theory, whereby the kind of interdependence between individuals of a group (created by common goals) determines the according interaction, and the pattern of interaction determines the outcomes of the situation. Thus, if this interdependence is positive (cooperation), meaning that individuals believe that their achievement of goals is dependent on others' achievements (or they can only achieve their goals if the others with whom they are linked also reach their goals). The opposite, negative interdependence (competition), is the case when individuals believe their success depends on the others' failure. The cooperation results in mutual support and assistance, and mutual help results again in cooperative behaviour. Cooperation furthermore implies that the members share a common fate and experience interrelated outcomes, which then again defines the nature of belonging to a group or organization.

The theories underpin the knowledge we have drawn from the experiences with the Oudaan: The process of the project, the engagement of a variety of actors with different backgrounds and skills and the co-creation of knowledge, determined our success and surpassed the original target to purchase the building. In doing so, the success was largely dependent on the cooperative attitude of all members that were involved. For this reason, the cooperative nature and the working process, by which economic and social values are taken into consideration, receive the largest amount of attention in our actions.

6 Johnson, David W. and Roger Johnson. Cooperative learning and teaching citizenship in democracies. University of Minnesota: International Journal of Educational Research 76 (2016): pp. 162-177.

TWO TEST CASES: STUIVENBERG HOSPITAL IN ANTWERP AND THE NOORDWIJK IN BRUSSELS

At this moment, we are conducting the according research to examine feasibilities and further steps in the development of the platform. The risk of such platforms oftentimes is that a model constructed in a very complex (and expensive) way ends up with functionalities that nobody uses. The agile method that is increasingly used in IT development and beyond, but also the “experiment design” method that is used more often in impact-driven start-ups, serves to test and validate certain assumptions in the process. Two cases, the Stuivenberg hospital in Antwerp and the Noordwijk in Brussels, serve as projects to test the possibilities of an open promoter platform.

Case 1: The Stuivenberg Hospital in Antwerp North



Case 1: Stuivenberg hospital

The Stuivenberg site offers a broad range of possibilities to explore open development processes.

The site has a wide variety of places and there is a clear demand for diverse (economic) programs as much as possible embedded within the neighbourhood.

The scale of the place and the iconic value of the building require a strategy of effective reuse(s). Sustainable urban economy is a possible fulfilment. In the case of Stuivenberg, we already completed a preliminary research around the current hospital and various urban services.

Stakeholders Stuivenberg Hospital: Among others, urban services (real estate, neighbourhood workers, economics), neighbourhood associations, and programmers of urban economy in the city of Antwerp.

Case 2: The Noordwijk in Brussels



Case 2: Noordwijk Brussels © Filip Dujardin

As mentioned earlier, the Noordwijk has a growing vacancy which means that current development models of large tenants

and buildings are increasingly under pressure. More and more users are convinced of the need to situate a greater diversity of programs, tenancy models and use in the Noordwijk. In order to realize this, both the way of development and the actual reuse of buildings are going to be examined. 51N4E and Endeavor have been active in Noordwijk for several months to see how this transformation could be initiated.

Stakeholders for the Noordwijk: Noordwijk owners association, active Brussels midfield (eg. Bral), future users of temporary completion in Noordwijk (route to be started by owners Noordwijk in the near future), cultural partners Noordwijk (eg. architectural biennale ov).

In parallel with this research project, we are launching a trajectory of dissemination whereby we want to share the importance of open property development for a circular approach to the city through public workshops, debates and the present publication, to name a few.

CHAPTER 5

REFLECTION AND CONCLUSION

Our society is marked by rising inequality in the acquisition of socio-economic resources as well as rising scales of automation in the service industry, and we observe a particularly severe development thereof in the digital economy. Synchronous trends in the labour market demand a more differentiated educational background with multi- and interdisciplinary skills, while individuals on all levels face growing competitive pressures accompanied by aggravated shifts in demography and life-style choices.

While a solution to these problems requires a variety of measures, this book has made a first step by looking into project-based, cooperative working environments as a source for the generation of a compound of competencies. We believe that given current developments as the ones described above, the key competency lies in knowing **how, where and with whom** to look for required answers rather than confronting the tensions on the market and rigid working environments individually. Platforms with an open source approach act as an instrument in finding such problem-solutions, support the creation and sharing of knowledge, and subsequently strengthen individual skills crucial for employment and lifelong learning.

As described by Nick Srnicek, the aforementioned author of “Platform Capitalism”, platforms as an integral part of the digital economy are contributors for according economic and political trends. Facebook, Uber, Amazon and the like thereby make use of platforms as a means of seizing monopoly control over distribution and production, and consequently are responsible for changes in employment conditions.

The difference to these already existing, data and capital-monopolizing types of platforms is that OPP does not aim at the centralization of production and profit but at inviting people to engage in our ideology and action around publicly accessible approaches to sustainable city making.

The OPP as a digital platform ensures a direct way to share knowledge with a large audience that acts as an organization but also a sustainable structure around the topic of alternative urban development, whereby this approach can be amplified and refined for a diversity of issues.

To conclude, the message of this book is as follows: the right to the city is in the hands of responsible citizens, and it is our contributive intention to build a connection between the existing potential of physical urban heritage and people's will to engage.

Outlook...

"Rather than just regulating corporate platforms, efforts could be made to create public platforms – platforms owned and controlled by the people. (And, importantly, independent of the surveillance state apparatus.) This would mean investing the state's vast resources into the technology necessary to support these platforms and offering them as public utilities. More radically, we can push for postcapitalist platforms that make use of the data collected by these platforms in order to distribute resources, enable democratic participation, and generate further technological development. Perhaps today we must collectivise the platforms. (...) As they reach out further and further into our digital infrastructure and as society becomes increasingly reliant upon them, it is crucial that we understand how they function and what can be done. Building a better future demands it."⁷

7 Srnicek, Nick. Platform Capitalism. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2017.

...on a better future

We learned from our project that more open forms of city making and community-based development approaches generate purposeful jobs, allow individuals to personally grow in their role as responsible citizens, and henceforth strengthen our democratic systems. There is a win-win situation in such processes due to the enhancement of employment, on the one hand, for architects, engineers, IT experts, urban planners, real estate consultants, sociologists, and many more; creating space for the utilisation of skills that were forced away by conventional capitalist market pressures. At the same time, we see an improvement of the quality of urban development because better (skilled) people are willing to contribute to city making projects with lower threshold and a meaningful ambition. Thus, if we want to strive for more sustainable cities, we need to look for strategies to develop new logics and models that work with democratic parameters in this matter.

In this book we gave access to how we approach this task, by presenting our projects, research, strategies and future plans. The discussion about reorganizing and developing a more sustainable way of city making increasingly becomes central theme in how we act as society. Through this experiment, we have not only achieved to open the debate on urban development, but also designed a product to work with existing dynamics and tracks that serve to connect each other, and so we move one step further towards our common goal.



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