

Desire – Designing the Irresistible Circular Society

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Desire

DELIVER A NEW VISION FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

By designing products, services, experiences and systems to be irresistible, we aim for a future where sustainability in urban transformation becomes so attractive that it barely seems like a choice



Objectives (targets)

1. **Create a learning environment** with identifiable values, principles and approaches and realize it in the spirit of the original Bauhaus school, to enable an emerging learning community for aesthetic, inclusive and sustainable urban transformation.
2. **Deliver a DESIRE lighthouse demonstrator** for local impact to manifest the NEB values through learnings from eight different territorial transformation sites covering multiple themes, geographies and scales.
3. **Build a scaling framework for new EU-wide value** through a co-created platform and digital infrastructures for long-term triple bottom line shared value creation, stakeholder involvement, and empowerment.



Desire Manifesto...

Key words

- Trust through relationship
- Action in focus
- Contextuality
- Connectivity and inclusion
- Regeneration

Creating a **new narrative** – mission-driven approach



09-07-2025

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DESIRE Manifesto



Our mutual global challenge is clear. We are exceeding the planetary boundaries and our planet is suffering. Social equality and equality between species are negatively affected. We are in need of radical change.

So, we act now by creating a movement that breaks with our traditional linear approach and traditional ways of thinking, collaborating and acting.

We stand shoulder to shoulder in an inclusive revolution that embraces, nurtures and experiments with the innovative and creative DNA of art, architecture and design to explore the irresistible circular society by:

Creating social and inclusive housing: We design communities around spaces involving everyone who uses, lives and will live there in the future to make sure everyone benefits from this transformation. We support a sense of belonging by evoking appreciation of and connection to the world around us through sensory experiences. We focus on transparency, trust and inclusiveness in order to create social sustainability. We empower people to take action in the circular transition by making it a natural part of our everyday life.

Reconciling cities with nature: We advocate a planetary perspective to ensure a sense of belonging for all beings. We act on behalf of all human and non-human species. We raise ambition with a dedicated aim of giving back more than we take from the planet. We experiment and see present boundaries as creative constraints that catalyze future potential.

Transforming through symbiotic relationships: We work to develop a shared language and establish trust between all species so all can be engaged in solving problems at their core. We use aesthetics to evoke emotions that create synergies between beings. We work together across sectors, disciplines, backgrounds, cities, borders and generations, to create momentum for the irresistible, aesthetic, inclusive, and sustainable society we all long to be part of.



So, join us in carrying this movement forward by sharing know-how and new perspectives with impact-oriented optimism. Together we can unleash quality of life for people and the planet. Let this movement assure us that a collective and collaborative imagination can and will change the world to an irresistible circular society.



Desire Principles

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Movement

We give agency to all actors

Imagine standing in a big choir listening to all the voices together, leaning into the collective movement of the group, and then noticing your own voice. When all the voices come together you feel uplifted, like the voices are carrying you off the ground and giving you the courage to sing. Imagine the breath of a collective voice surrounding you, making you feel that this is the feeling of acting towards an irresistible circular social force; you are part of a movement.



This is how we work with movement

- We emphasise transparent and democratic processes to all actors.
- We secure awareness about all factors, structures, and actors in urban development.
- We cherish a sense of collective responsibility by exploring ways in which we can support collective management of shared resources.



Biodiversity

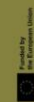
We embrace a multispecies perspective

Imagine, sitting in a courtroom, defending a tree in a rainforest about to be beheaded and thereby potentially disrupting a delicate balance that has been developed throughout the last 3.8 billion years. How would you favour the ruling? Imagine if we knew nature rights as we know human rights. Imagine if we valued and considered the perspectives of humans and non-humans equally. What if we extended principles of justice, participation, empathy, and inclusion so vital to our human race to all other species that work to keep us all in balance on a thriving planet? That is what embracing a multispecies perspective entails.



This is how we work with biodiversity

- We represent all human and non-human species when we make decisions in transformation processes.
- We use the means of art, architecture, and design to ensure that spaces have a quality and the prerequisites that enable all species present to live and flourish.
- We ensure a holistic perspective, where individual well-being can only be measured in relation to the collective well-being.



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Belonging

We nurture a sense of place

Imagine the feeling of a parent's warm embrace. Imagine laying your head against their chest, following the movements of the deep and calming breathing as their chest raises and lowers. You feel the boundless love from which they feed and you become dissolving. You become one. You do not question your place in the world.

and run through the light to be in this place, emotionally, and the courage to leave it.

and embrace patience and smelling just as for, material and in



Aesthetics

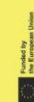
We expand the concept of beauty

Imagine running your fingers down the wall of the building you live in. It is all warm from the sun. You feel its comforting embrace. Imagine wanting to hug the building, leaning into its soft curves and inviting colours. You feel drawn to it. Connected to it. You catch your reflection in the window. Instead of seeing a body shape, you see curves of a mountain landscape you once drove through. You see fingerprints in the wood veins of the window frame. You suddenly hear the sounds of the forest your grandmother used to take you to as a child. You see yourself caressing the wood of the window frame and it makes you smile. You look up only to meet the eyes of your neighbour who reciprocates your smile. You both live in the materials of the building and they live within you. Imagine that this is what aesthetics is. It is a sensory experience that brings forth images, emotions, and reflections of ourselves that we want to lean into together.



This is how we work with aesthetics

- We apply the disciplines of art, architecture, and design through all phases of our work process.
- We integrate the notion of aesthetics in our processes and not just in the end products.
- We expand the value of beauty by making sensory and tactile experiences community-based and inclusive.



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Circularity

We unleash a circular mindset

Imagine the feeling of meeting someone that you have an immediate connection with. You get the instant feeling of being interconnected and at the same time curious to get to know more about this person. Their story is like a long road running through the landscape making turns and loops, and your road was just beginning to know their past, everything that has led you to where you are now. When your roads have crossed, you are always not leaving a positive impact? Who knows, your mindset feels like. It is not only knowing their story as they are part of yours, and

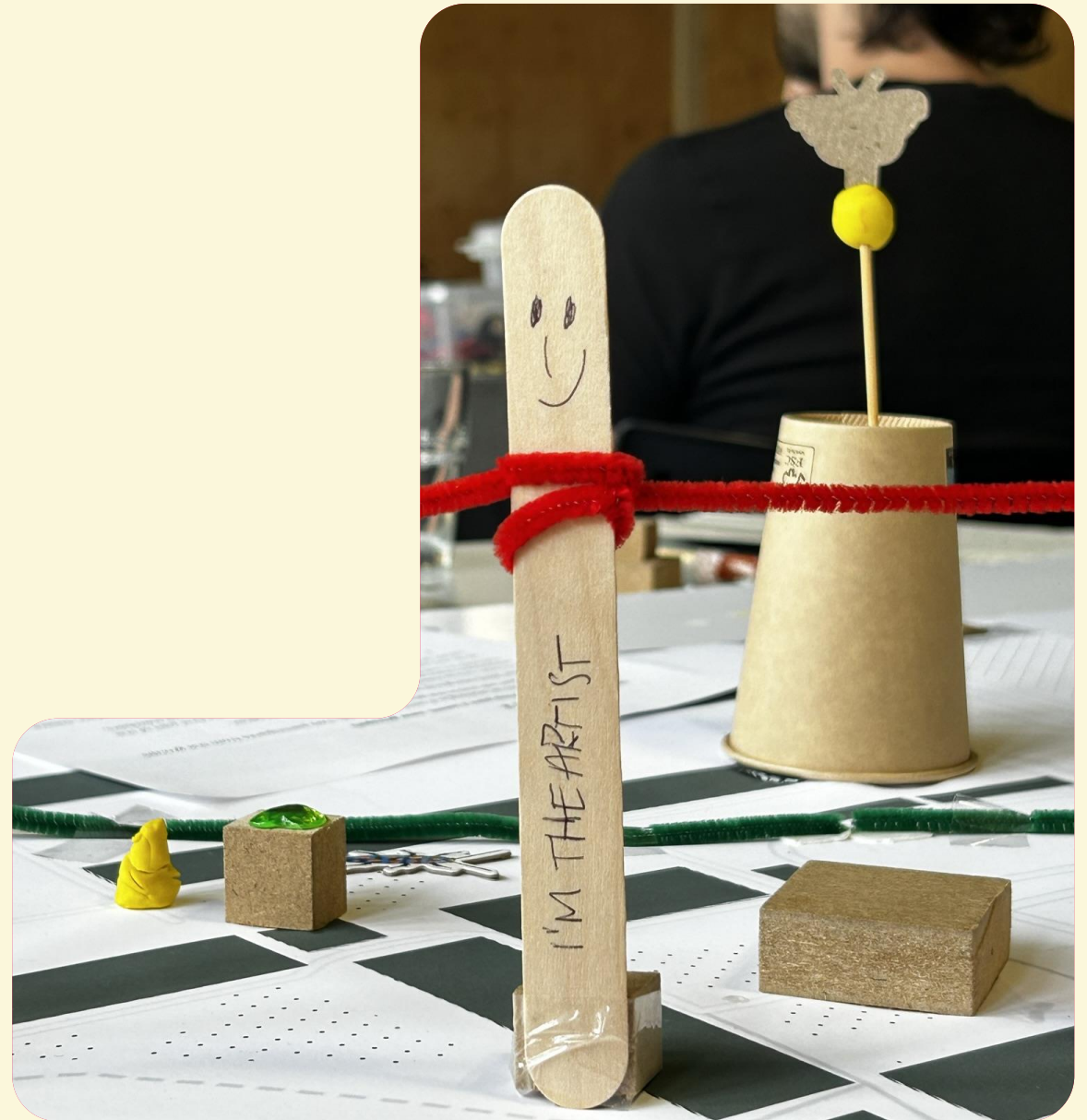
be harvested not by us, but by generations to come. It is accessible for all local actors. The implementation of circular solutions



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OUR APPROACHES AND METHODS

- Work **mission-oriented** and mobilise ecosystems and stakeholders across different sectors and levels of governance
- Learning-by-doing, learning-by-interaction and learning by reflection mechanisms to **drive learning continuously**
- **Experiment** through co-creation and co-design processes tailored to the eight territorial sites
- Think and work in nested systems to **create regenerative capacity**

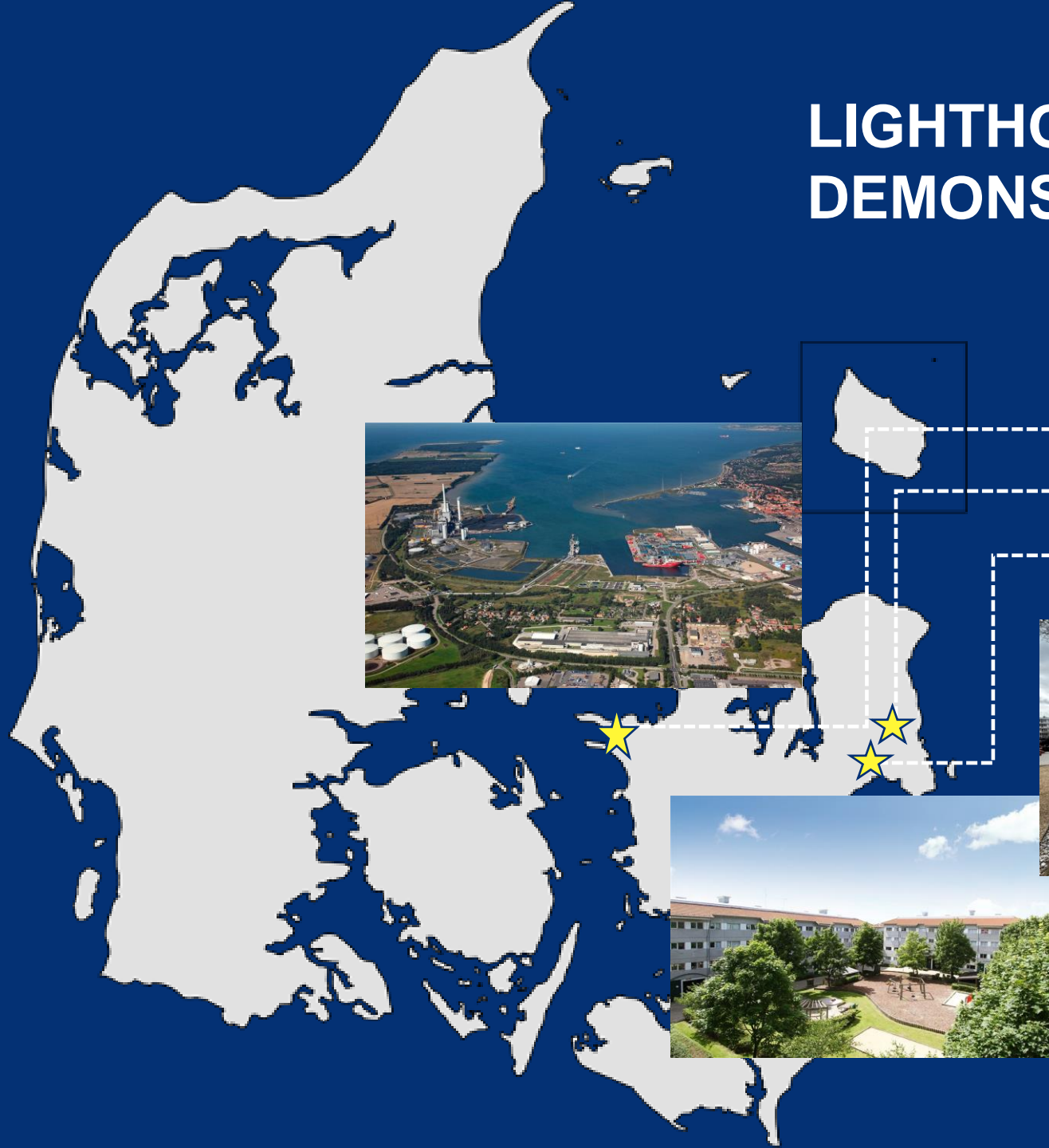


LIGHTHOUSE DEMONSTRATORS

Creating
social and
inclusive
housing

Reconciling
cities with
nature

Transforming
through
symbiotic
relationships



Kalundborg

Herlev

Gadehavegaard





Riga

Amsterdam

Ljubljana

Milan

Turin

8 LIGHTHOUSE DEMONSTRATORS



Gadehavegaard, Høje-Taastrup, Denmark

Demonstration Site Circularity Biodiversity Ownership
Inclusion Learning Ambition



Ziepju Street 11, Riga, Latvia

Demonstration Site Aesthetics Biodiversity Belonging
Inclusion Trust



Wildemanbuurt, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Demonstration Site Belonging Movement Trust Inclusion



MIND, Milan, Italy

Demonstration Site Belonging Aesthetics Movement



Cascina Falchera, Turin, Italy

Demonstration Site Belonging Aesthetics Movement
Ambition Ownership



BTC City, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Demonstration Site Belonging Movement Biodiversity
Aesthetics



Kalundborg Circular Campus, Kalundborg, Denmark

Demonstration Site Circularity Belonging Movement
Aesthetics



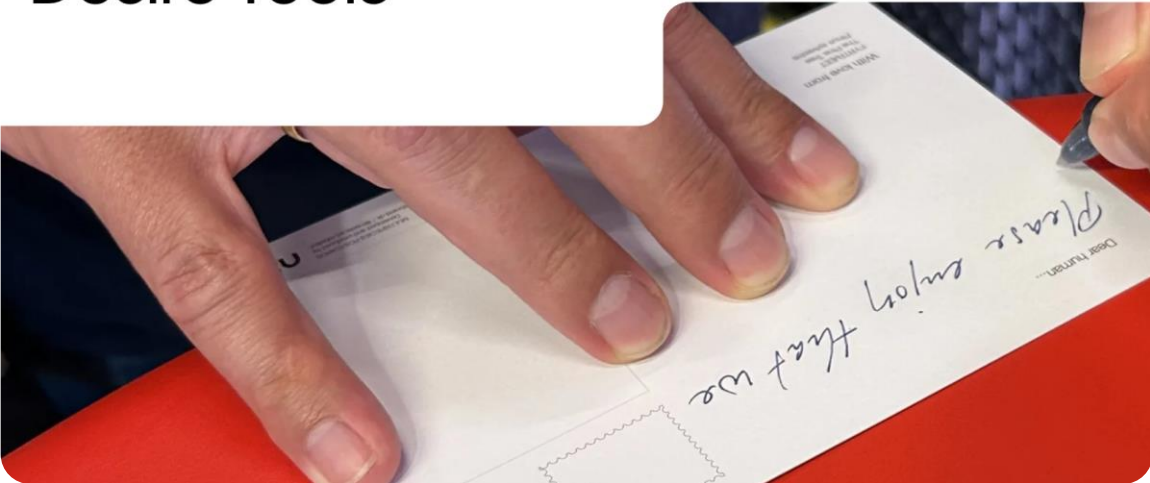
The Garden Caretaker, Herlev, Denmark

Demonstration Site Belonging Biodiversity Movement
Aesthetics Empathy

DIGITAL LEARNING HUB

Collection

Desire Tools



Discover

Citizen engagement in the green transition is essential for success, and this has been the focal point of the Desire project. Our eight demonstration sites in five EU countries have approached this in various ways.



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Learn Discover Connect

Materials in this collection ⁽⁸⁾



Gadehavegaard, Høje-Taastrup, Denmark

Demonstration Site Circularity Biodiversity Ownership Inclusion Learning Ambition



Ziepju Street 11, Riga, Latvia

Demonstration Site Aesthetics Biodiversity Belonging Inclusion Trust



Wildemanbuurt, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Demonstration Site Belonging Movement Trust Inclusion

TRANSFORMATION GUIDE



Build and Maintain Trust

Transformation Theme

Trust



Establish and Nurture Ownership

Transformation Theme

Ownership



Prioritise Empathy and Deep Care with the Place

Transformation Theme

Empathy



Raise and Sustain Ambitions

Transformation Theme

Ambition



Embrace and Enable Inclusion

Transformation Theme

Inclusion



Monitor and Learn Continuously

Transformation Theme

Learning

KEY PUBLICATIONS



One of Desire's flagship contributions - a collaborative publication authored by all the organizations involved in the demonstration activities and edited by Politecnico di Milano.

Published by Springer Publication - [link](#)



Belonging by Connecting: A field guide to designing sustainable places through community practice

[Link](#)



Practice-based perspective of the project's two-year outcomes, focusing on actions carried out by eight urban Desire sites of transformation. Published by Aalborg University

[Link](#)



IRRESISTIBLE CITIES LAB – community of city-makers

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CONSORTIUM

BLOX HUB



Danish Design Center



nxt[®]

Knowledge Hub Zealand

domes.dk



KAIROS



the beach

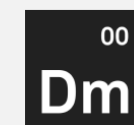


+ PLUSVALUE



**3Xn
GXn**

CHART



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