



Urban Shift for green innovations

Itinerant Exhibitions – Round 2

July 2025

Institute for Advanced Architecture of Catalonia

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on Education for Sustainable Development



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Foreword

Urban Shift (UShift) is an experimental, impact-based, and transdisciplinary education programme that focuses on creating lasting change by bringing together students from Higher Education Institutions (HEI), a Vocational Education Institution (VET), urban experts, and business partners. This is to be achieved by combining intersectional environmental education, knowledge exchange, transdisciplinary collaboration, and sustainable innovation.

By providing the learners with the necessary GREEN LABOUR MARKET SKILLS (digital, green, business and transdisciplinary/resilient skills), UShift is creating a LIVING ECOSYSTEM for 80 learners from diverse backgrounds (urban design, environmental engineering, media and business) that fosters the development of solutions to pressing urban challenges. The learners, divided into two batches, will create 10 startup teams working on urban challenges linked to urban heat islands (UHI)/cooling, and food waste/circularity, or climate/extreme weather predictability and mobility/circularity. Thus, the project allows students to successfully transform into change makers and EU GREEN DEAL AMBASSADORS by equipping them with the knowledge and experience needed to become green entrepreneurs and/or future employees of green jobs on the global market.

The culmination of this education programme are two sets of LIVING EXHIBITIONS (8 separate exhibitions) spread across Barcelona, Genoa, Copenhagen, Stuttgart, and Vienna. Their purpose is to showcase the solutions and success stories that flourished from the UShift project lifetime in order to raise public awareness for humanity's biggest challenges (i.e., pressure on planetary boundaries, resource scarcity, persistent poverty, social injustice, exponential population growth, urbanization boom, global pandemics, etc.) and interest in the UShift LIVING LABS curricula, the European Green Deal, and the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This will be done through an interactive exhibition programme made up of panel and roundtable discussions, media discourse, artistic events, workshops and knowledge exchange via the exhibition of the developed courses and start-up prototypes. The goal is to inspire individual stakeholders such as NGOs, consumers, green start-ups, policy makers, and incubators to take part in the global Urban Shift as active change makers.

Even after the project's lifetime, UShift will continue to have a positive impact via the establishment of an easily adaptable LIVING CURRICULUM template and OPEN ONLINE TRAINING sessions that will be made available on YouTube to inspire future transdisciplinary collaboration. Furthermore, the establishment of an ALUMNI NETWORK serves as a tool to foster sustainable project outputs and the continuation of the start-up teams, as well as serves as a channel for peer-to-peer learning, support, knowledge and expertise exchange, collaboration, co-creation, and mentorship between the learners, start-up teams, business partners and urban expert during and after the project.

Urban Shift is a project developed by Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien - WU (Austria), Institute for Advanced Architecture of Catalonia - IAAC (Spain), Hochschule Der Medien - HdM, (Germany), Wirtschaftskammer Österreich - WIFO (Austria), Multicriteria- MCRIT (Spain), Terra Institute - TERRA (Italy), Pretty Ugly Duckling - PUD (Denmark), Green



Innovation Group A/S - GIG, (Denmark), and co-funded by the Erasmus+ Key Action 2 Partnerships For Innovation Alliances For Innovation 2021 Programme of the European Union.

Introduction

The itinerant Living Exhibitions are a series of exhibitions that take place across Europe in 4 locations each year showcasing and promoting the results of Urban Shift and the EU Green Deal. During the second edition of the Living Exhibition, participants in Vienna, Barcelona, Stuttgart and Genova will have the opportunity to learn more about Urban Shift and the EU Green Deal. The exhibitions will include an official opening with presentations, as well as workshops and creative brainstorming sessions. Our Green Deal Ambassadors will actively participate in the exhibitions, sharing their experiences and start-ups and promoting their work.

This report outlines and shares the result of the first edition of Living Exhibitions 2024/2025, as well as key learnings after hosting two rounds of exhibitions each with their own challenges.

Objectives

- Promotion of the EU Green Deal – what it is about? What are the goals? What are the initiatives?
- Share the results of the Urban Shift Project, especially, the start-ups developed by our learners.
- To target stakeholders associated with sustainability and citizens.
- To share other success stories from initiatives / start-ups / professionals working towards the EU Green Deal.
- For the exhibition to be adaptable as it travels around the world.



Living Exhibition: Vienna

Description of the Opening Event: Vienna

Location: Chamber of Commerce of Austria (WKÖ), Wiedner Hauptstraße 63, 1045 Vienna

The Vienna Living Exhibition took place on 18 June 2024 from 10:00-21:00 at the 22nd Austrian Export Day, the second year this event was chosen for this purpose. The Export Day is Austria's largest information and networking event on the subject of export and internationalisation under the motto: 'Inspiration - Innovation – Future (Zukunft)'.

Given the success of the event in 2023, Urban Shift again had an exhibition space in the 'Innovation Jungle', with a 30m² booth in the repurposed WKÖ car park to display all prototypes. The start-ups had the opportunity to meet potential cooperation partners, customers and investors. Overall, 2,500 visitors were in attendance during the Export Day.

Open Stage

The Urban Shift project was presented at 13:00 on the Open Stage of the Export Day. A trainer from WIFI delivered an overview of the project and the start-ups. Following this, one member of each start-up presented their project idea and challenge solution in front of an audience of industry professionals and to encourage them to visit the Innovation Jungle to learn more about the prototypes.

Innovation Jungle – An artistic performance

The Innovation Jungle, located in the WKÖ garage, was transformed as before into a creative 'oasis', with colourful lighting and furnishings, exotic plants, comfortable seating arrangements for networking in the Future Lounge, as well as a DJ booth. Visitors to the Innovation Jungle were guided down a neon-lighted, pink-carpeted aisle, lined by palm trees and rainforest sounds. Therefore, on entering the 'Jungle', attendees are greatly aware of the contrast to the rest of the more 'traditional' set-up of the rest of the exhibition, demonstrating that the exhibitors located are modern, out-of-the-box thinkers.

The Urban Shift booth was located in a corner of the Innovation Jungle (see fig. 1 below) and featured posters with an overview of the project. Each prototype was displayed creatively next to a poster designed by the team itself, including an abstract on their idea, renderings of the challenge solution, and pictures of the team members.

Visitors had the opportunity to wander through the prototype exhibition and physically engage with the carefully crafted prototypes, for example trying on the cooling vest of the Zephyr Project. These professionals also had the special opportunity to engage with the creative minds behind these innovations, asking them about the process of coming up with their idea, developing the prototype, and plans for next steps of their start up.



Event Agenda

TIME	DESCRIPTION
10:00-18:00	Urban Shift Exhibition in the Innovation Jungle (WKÖ car park) Exhibition of all prototypes and posters by WU and WIFI team members from the start-ups: • Misty Greens • Cary • Climateaze • Easyride Bags • Ecovey • Far-More • GlowAura • Zephyr Project Learners were able to demonstrate their project ideas and the functioning of their prototypes to industry experts, gain valuable feedback and establishing connections. Also provided the chance to outline the importance to of addressing urban challenges to the visitors and thus of achieving the goals of the EU Green Deal.
13:00-13:30	Urban Shift Presentations on the OPEN STAGE Start-ups presented their challenge solutions to an engaged audience of industry professionals and encouraged them to visit the Urban Shift exhibition space for more in-depth exchanges. An introduction was provided by a WIFI trainer, one team member of each start-up pitched their idea. A trainer also pitched on behalf of teams where a team member was unavailable to attend. Speakers: Rudolf Kottbauer (WIFI) – Introduction to Urban Shift Presentation of Startups: • Misty Greens – Michal Stasiak • Cary – Ihor Romanchuk • Climateaze – Niklas Schulte • Easyride Bags – Darius Zweck • Ecovey – Adam Greene (WU trainer) • Far-More – Alexander Kozlov • GlowAura - Rudolf Kottbauer (WIFI trainer) • Zephyr Project – Loic Bickert
18:00-21:00	After Hours Networking with live DJ

Photos of the Living Exhibition Vienna

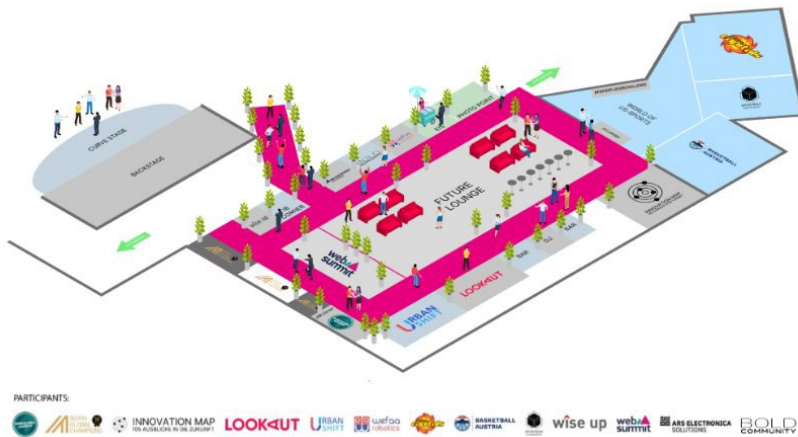


Fig.1. Plan of the Innovation Jungle



Fig. 2. The Innovation Jungle in the WKÖ car park



Fig. 3. The Urban Shift Living Exhibition space.



Fig. 4. Industry professionals engage with the WU and WIFI learners and their prototypes.



Left: Fig. 5. Darius Zwecker (WIFI) with the EasyRide Bags prototype ((c) Nadine Studeny | Karin Gruber)



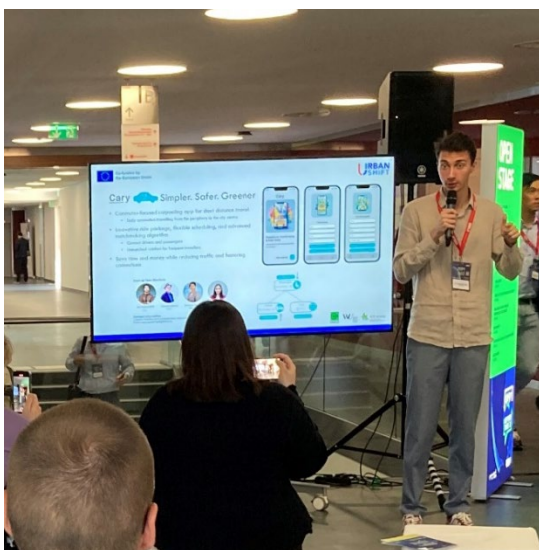
Right: Fig. 6. Michael Stasiak (WIFI) with the Misty Greens prototype ((c) Nadine Studeny | Karin Gruber).



Fig. 7. Michał Stasiak (WIFI) in discussion with industry experts ((c) Nadine Studeny | Karin Gruber).



Fig. 8. Rudolf Kottbauer (WIFI) presents an overview of the Urban Shift project on the OPEN STAGE



Clockwise: Fig. 9. Niklas Schulte (WU) pitches Climateaze to industry professionals on the OPEN STAGE.

Fig. 10. Loic Bickert (WU) pitches the Zephyr Project on the OPEN STAGE.

Fig. 11. Ihor Romanchuk (WU) pitches Cary on the OPEN STAGE.

Fig. 12. Alexander Kozlov (WU) pitches Far-More on the OPEN STAGE.

Results of the Living Exhibition Vienna

The Living Exhibition was a great opportunity for the WU and WIFI students to gain practical experience of pitching in front of a wider group of industry experts, diving deeper into their project ideas in the exhibition area and learning from exchange in a more professional environment. The Austrian Export Day was a particularly valuable learning for the students following the more structured approach of the Urban Shift Living Labs. The students proactively engaged with visitors to the exhibition space and encouraged professionals to find out more about their start-ups and prototypes through their pitches. These were key skills which had been developed during the programme and which the students had the chance to put into practice.



Creative Brainstorming Session 1: Vienna

A session was held at the SPEAK OUT Festival (11 June 2024), an energising one-day festival held in the MuseumsQuartier in the heart of Vienna. Organised by futurezone and Austrian news organisation KURIER, the event brought together over 700 guests from research, business and politics to discuss the future of our planet.

The session (hosted in German) was entitled 'Urban Shift: Sustainable start-up solutions', and sought to answer the question: 'How can sustainability in start-ups be ensured through transdisciplinary education?' The session started by providing an Urban Shift overview and an introduction to transdisciplinary start-up education. The creative brainstorming then began, using a World Café format across three stations, these being: 'What skills do future start-ups need?'; 'How can the challenges of working together across different disciplines be overcome?'; and 'How can the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) be integrated as a central component of start-ups?' Each group of participants worked at each station for 5 minutes, entering a discussion on the topic of the station, before moving on and building on the ideas of the others.

Following this was a silent brainstorm, whereby the participants could dot vote on ideas which particularly resonate with them or are worthy of further discussion, as well as adding onto ideas previously outlined. The session concluded with a couple of quick-fire impressions from the participants on their perspectives on transdisciplinary education and sustainable entrepreneurship, experience of the brainstorming session, and key takeaways.

Event Agenda

TIME	DESCRIPTION
15.00 - 15.10	Introduction to Urban Shift and transdisciplinary start-up education
15.10 - 15.15	Introduction to brainstorming session format: World Cafe
15.15 - 15.30	Brainstorming session – 3 stations
15.30 - 15.40	Silent brainstorming: Dot voting and ideation
15.40 - 15.45	Wrap up: Quick-fire impressions

Results & Photos



Clockwise: Fig.13. Overview of the 3 stations for the brainstorming
Fig.14-16. The teams work on their ideas in the World Cafe

Outcome

What skills do future startups need?

Courage; Systems thinking; Communication; Flexibility; Doing; Money market business; Division of expertise; Design thinking; Innovation within the company; Impact storytelling; Graphic design; International networking; Social skills; Green and sustainable business



models; Fair dealing/trade; Openness to change; Transparency; Understanding of hidden costs/externalities; Diverse teams from different sectors

How can the challenges of working together across different disciplines be overcome?

Courage; Inclusion; Informative communication; Easily accessible; Simple language; Stress the necessity of transdisciplinarity; Common terminology; Work without compulsion; Clear, common goals; Strong group dynamics; Can improve communication; Break out of structures; Open mindedness; Empathy; Teachable

How can the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) be integrated as a central component of start-ups?

Commitment; Regular meet ups; Onboarding of new employees; Playfully think outside of the box; Intrinsic motivation, passion; Better management; Be a role model; Reflection on humanity; Use the predefined SDG structures; Build a background knowledge of the SDGs; Take individual responsibility; Learn to communicate about the SDGs; Understand the core of problems; Use the SDGs as a manual for meaningful work

Creative Brainstorming/Workshop Session 2: Vienna

Following the success of the first creative brainstorming sessions and given that the opportunity arose to host another session for a slightly different target group, WU held two more sessions on 26 November 2024 on the margins of the event 'Perspectives of Success: Universities Shape the Future'. The event was an initiative of the Austrian Ministries for Education and for Climate Protection as part of the 2024 Sustainability Award for universities and higher education, hosted by the Forum for Environment Education at das MuTH, Vienna's most modern concert hall.

The session was entitled the 'Green Skills Sprint' and, across two rounds, three groups worked on different urban challenges similar to those during the Urban Shift project, namely Food Waste, Urban Heat Islands, and Active Mobility. The session adopted elements from both the creative brainstorming and one-day workshop, with Design thinking tools implemented for a greater understanding of the value of interdisciplinary approaches to future challenges.

Having provided an overview of the session and project, the participants were then informed of the task and urban challenges. Using a structured template, each group worked towards building a common understanding within their assigned challenge area by; sharing prior knowledge; identifying a problem; identifying (in)directly affected target groups; and defining their problem focus.

Based on the groups' chosen problem focus, they sought to shift the focus from the problem itself to potential solutions through "How might we" questions, encouraging a positive and proactive approach. The process is also an important learning in working together and further developing a common group approach. To conclude, each group

shared their question with the other groups, and each person had the opportunity to share feelings of the session.

Event Agenda

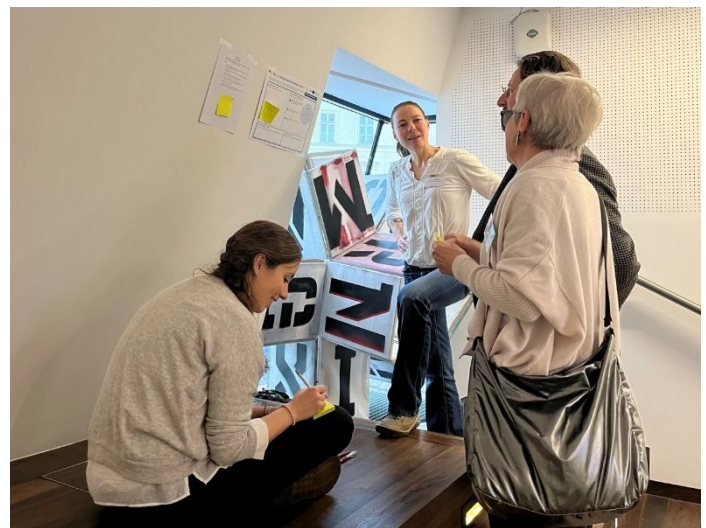
Round 1

TIME	DESCRIPTION
11.40 - 11.45	Arrival and division into groups
11.45 - 11.55	Introduction to session, team and Urban Shift
11.55 - 12.00	Introduction to the tasks and challenges
12.00 - 12.18	Building common problem understanding
12.18 - 12.25	"How might we..." question
12.25 - 12.30	Summary and quick-fire impressions

Round 2

TIME	DESCRIPTION
12.40 - 12.45	Arrival and division into groups
12.45 - 12.55	Introduction to session, team and Urban Shift
12.55 - 13.00	Introduction to the tasks and challenges
13.00 - 13.18	Building common problem understanding
13.18 - 13.25	"How might we..." question
13.25 - 13.30	Summary and quick-fire impressions

Results & Photos



Left: Fig.17. The participants of round 1 receive an introduction to the session and Urban Shift

Right: Fig.18. A group in round 2 work on building their common problem understanding



Fig.19. Participants and facilitators in round 2 consider one group's common problem understanding

One-Day Workshop: Vienna

The one-day workshop, the Green Ideation Sprint, was hosted at the Clubraum of the Learning Center, WU Vienna on 16 May 2025. The workshop aimed to support the development of specific skills trained and learned by students during the Urban Shift Living Labs for the growth of a start-up. By applying design thinking methodologies, participants gain practical experience and meaningful insights as they work through key stages: identifying a problem, empathising with users, generating ideas, creating prototypes, and pitching solutions. This hands-on journey empowers them to develop innovative and sustainable ideas that can contribute to a better future—while also equipping them with tools they can apply in their studies, careers, or entrepreneurial pursuits.

The workshop began with an introduction to ideation sprint challenges, focusing on the themes of food waste and urban heat islands. Participants then learned how to leverage design thinking for creative ideation. Finally, the workshop covered how to ensure the future relevance of ideas through market validation and effective pitching strategies.

Event Agenda

TIME	DESCRIPTION
09:30	Arrival
09:45	Welcome & Introduction
10:15	Challenge & Design Thinking Overview
10:30	Team Formation & Building
11:00	BREAK
11:15	Problem Understanding

12:15	LUNCH (self-paid)
13:00	Ideation
13:30	Idea Clustering
13:45	BREAK
14:00	Prototyping
15:00	Pitching
15:20	Closing
15:30	END

Results & Photos:

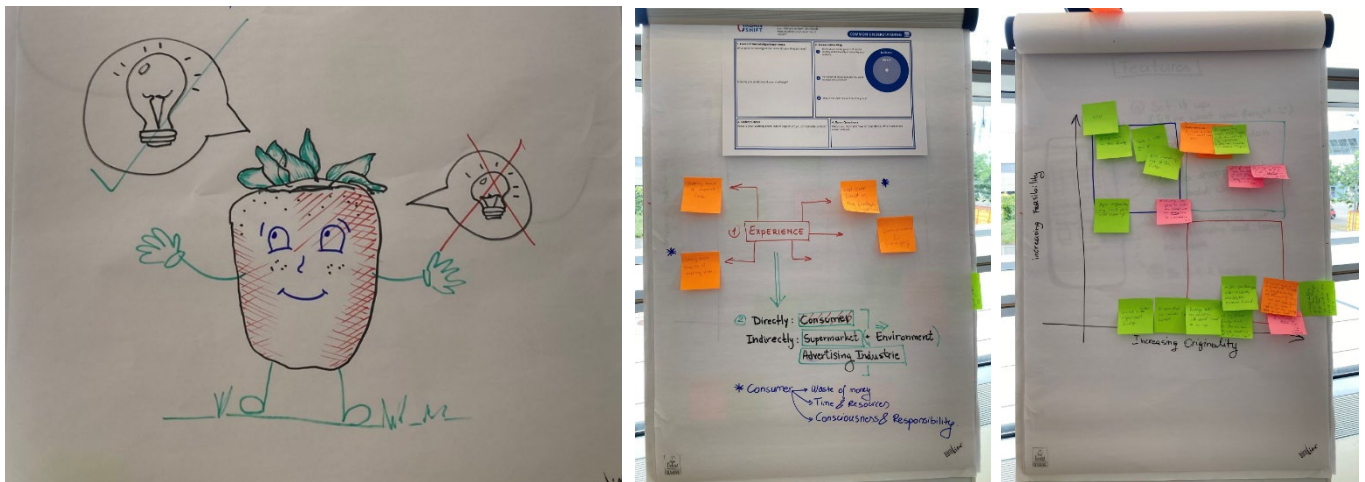
Despite 11 registrations for the Green Ideation Sprint, in addition to 8 participants expressing interest, only three participants arrived on the day to take part in the workshop, which was particularly disappointing for the WU team. In spite of this, the three participants were still very eager to learn new Design Thinking skills, as they had not been involved in such a workshop before, and therefore very enthusiastically and effectively worked through the various stages of the process.

The participants strongly engaged with the challenge of food waste and brought their own personal experience and expertise of the problem to bear, working well in their team and displaying excellent creativity and understanding of the strengths within their team. The team appreciated the structured approach of the Design Thinking templates and time boxing in the process to support faster decision making, assisting them in moving very quickly from initial problem understanding towards a concrete start up idea. Ultimately, the team succeeded in developing a novel idea based on their abilities and backgrounds, and the feedback received was overwhelmingly positive, with the participants noting that it was a shame others could not also have taken the opportunity to be involved.

DESCRIPTION	PROTOTYPE
MealMinder <u>Urban Challenge:</u> Food Waste <u>Solution:</u> An app which helps you to create meal plans and assists in putting together a shopping list based on healthy, sustainable recipes provided as part of the service. Aims to overcome the distractions of daily life which lead consumers to lose track of what groceries they buy and consume.	



Fig.20. Trainer from the WU presents the Urban Shift project and Design Thinking method



Left: Fig.21. MealMinder mascot for the food waste challenge
Center & Right: Fig.22-23. Stages of the green ideation process



Left: Fig.24. The team works on their MealMinder start up idea
Right: Fig.25. The team presents the outcome of the Design Thinking process



Attendees & Participants: Vienna

EVENT	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Opening Event (Austrian Export Day)	2000 / 14
Creative Brainstorming Session 1	700 / 17
Creative Brainstorming/Workshop Session 2	130 / 24
One-Day Workshop	6

Impact & Results: Vienna

- The Austrian Export Day once more allowed the students of WU and WIFI to come into contact with, present to and gain insights from industry professionals from various sectors, an especially valuable experience for them in moving beyond the theoretical to consider what would be necessary to take their prototypes to the next step. Furthermore, as the only student exhibitors at the Export Day, the students gained a better understanding of the professionalism and networking skills required to stand out in such environments.
- Through the Export Day, SPEAK OUT Festival, Sustainability Award and on campus workshop succeeded in bringing the project and its results to a broad audience of professionals, educators and other students, raising awareness of innovative and sustainable approaches to urban challenges.
- The skills developed in the various events, both by the students and external participants support the adoption of new approaches in professional and academic spheres, including problem-based learning, creative facilitation, and a cooperative mindset. By couching the exhibition elements as methods to tackle current and future challenges, the participants emerged with insights on how they themselves can stimulate change in their respective fields.

Living Exhibition: Stuttgart

Description of the Opening Event: Stuttgart

The Urban Shift Living Exhibition in Stuttgart was part of the "Media Night". The "Media Night" took place at the campus of the Hochschule der Medien in Stuttgart. The event was held on Thursday, the 4th of July 2024 from 17.00 till 22.00 o'clock.

The media night is a showcase of the creative results every study course at the HdM. With more than 5.000 students the teams presented about 135 projects about Film- and Audio-productions, Software and Games, VR, communications, KI-concepts, prints or totally different prototypes like the ones developed at Urban Shift.

The Urban Shift Living Exhibition was located in an explicit room without other projects presented. The visitors could concentrate on the displayed prototypes.

At 20.30 the HdM Big Band played a concert right in front of the building where the Living Exhibition was located. The big band is called MAJAM, this stands for Montags Abends Jam (Eng. Monday evening jam).

Event Agenda

TIME	DESCRIPTION
17:00 – 22:00	Living Exhibition as part of Media Night
18:00 – 20:00	Creative Brainstorming Session
20:30 – 21:30	MAJAM Big Band concert

Photos of the Living Exhibition Stuttgart



Fig.26.Living Exhibition at HdM Stuttgart

Creative Brainstorming Session: Stuttgart

The creative brainstorming session was also part of the Media Night at the Hochschule der Medien in Stuttgart. Interested participants could sign up for the session from 18.00 to 20.00 o'clock. Hence no one signed up beforehand we accepted and acquired spontaneous participants to have a group for the brainstorming. First, we started with an introduction explaining what Urban Shift is about. Next, we conducted a brainstorming on "What will be the future of Green Innovation" and wrote it down in the Living Book. People just visiting the exhibition also had the chance to answer the question as it was publicly displayed in the exhibition room. After that, we brainstormed on the question "What kind of green innovation do you know, or can you think of?". Therefore, we used the matrix of Now, Wow and How. The y-axis represents the feasibility and the x-axis represents the originality of an idea.

Event Agenda

TIME	DESCRIPTION
18.00 - 18.15	Introduction to Urban Shift
18.15 - 18.45	Brainstorming "What will be the future of Green Innovation?"
18.45 - 19.45	Brainstorming "What kind of green innovation do you know or can you think of?" Now, Wow, How
19.45 - 20.00	Wrap up of ideas

Results & Photos

People came up with the following ideas:

- Fairphone: A fairly produced smartphone
- Mit Ecken und Kanten: An online shop for returns and items with minor flaws
- Too good to go: An app to order left overs from restaurants
- Grutto.com: An initiative to buy parts of a cow, called Crowdbutchering. The animal will not be butchered until every part of it is sold.
- Ororo: A sustainable clothing company
- Reusable cotton pads
- Pinqpong: A fair, vegan and sustainable company for clothing, backpacks and other accessories
- Nikin: A sustainable clothing company
- Prosevation: A startup founded at HdM for sustainable packaging out of natural syrofoam from grain residues

An idea which was unclear how to realise were better and sustainable alternatives for plastics.

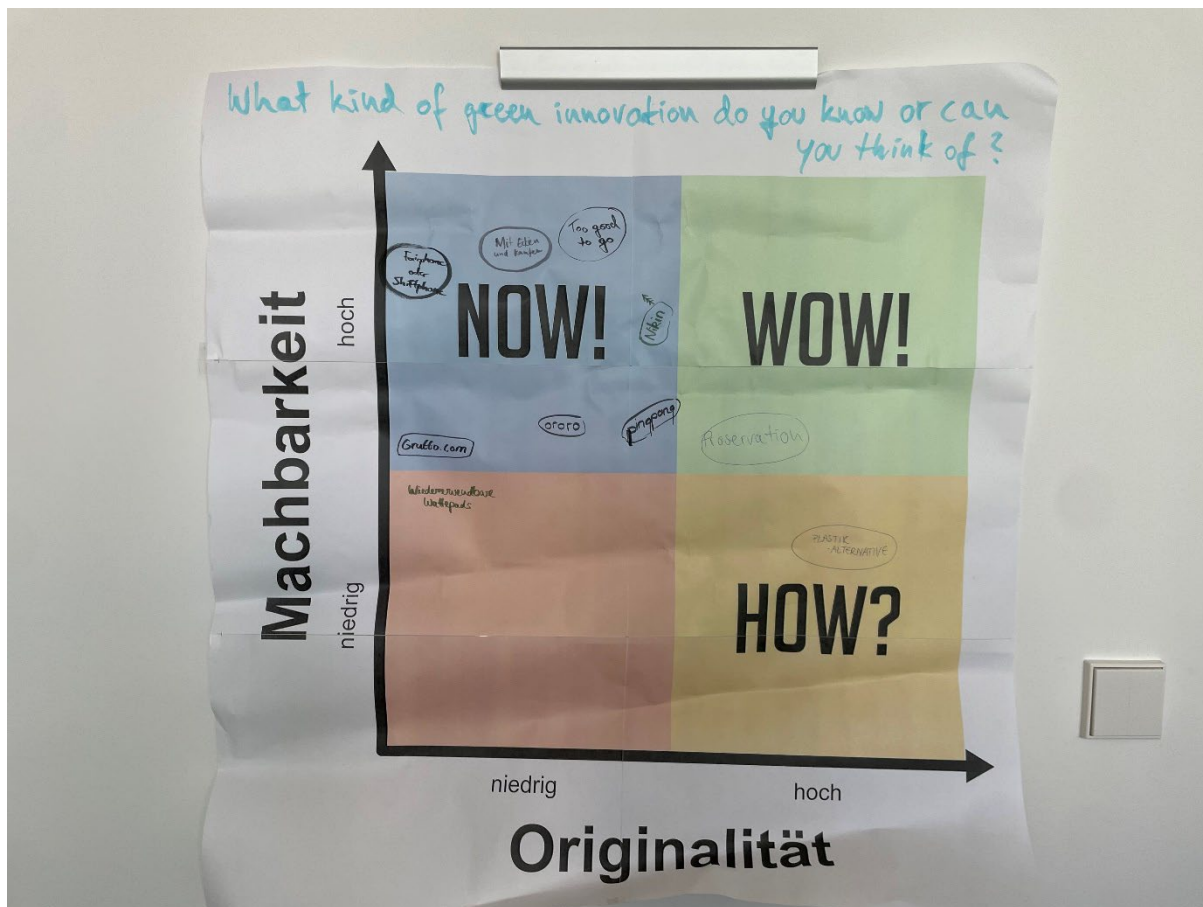


Fig.27.Output from the Creative Brainstorming

One-Day Workshop: Stuttgart

This one-day workshop was designed to spark students' interest in entrepreneurship with a specific focus on sustainable urban innovation. As part of the "Green Idea" format developed by the Startup Center of Hochschule der Medien (HdM), the workshop introduced students from all faculties to entrepreneurial thinking and action. The event combined personal reflection, team collaboration, and practical methods to guide participants from initial inspiration to idea development.

The workshop began by exploring participants' individual motivations, values, and interests—aiming to answer key questions such as: Who am I? What can I do? What does the world need from me? Based on these insights, students worked in teams to develop business ideas addressing pressing urban challenges derived from the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They were introduced to key innovation and startup methodologies including Design Thinking, Lean Startup, Customer Discovery, and Effectuation. Throughout alternating input and working sessions, students validated their ideas through problem-solution fit analysis and prepared short pitches to present their concepts and receive peer feedback.

This interactive format provided hands-on experience in entrepreneurial ideation with a sustainability lens, empowering students to take the first step toward creating meaningful impact.

Event Agenda

TIME	DESCRIPTION
09.00 - 09.10	Welcome & process of the creative workshop
09.10 - 11.40	Entrepreneurial Me
11.40 - 12.00	Forms and paths to entrepreneurship
12.00 - 13.00	Problem exploration (SDGs)
13.00 - 14.00	Lunch break
14.00 - 15.00	Effectuation-based Ideation
15.00 - 15.15	Coffee break
15.15 - 16.15	Customer discovery, validation & prototype
16.15 - 17.00	Pitch ideas

Results & Photos:

The students achieved an overview into their own Entrepreneurial Me and explored the Problems and challengers regarding the 17 SDGs. The ideas varied from first ideas about the given topics Urban Mobility & Extreme Weather Events. Examples are given in the pictures below.

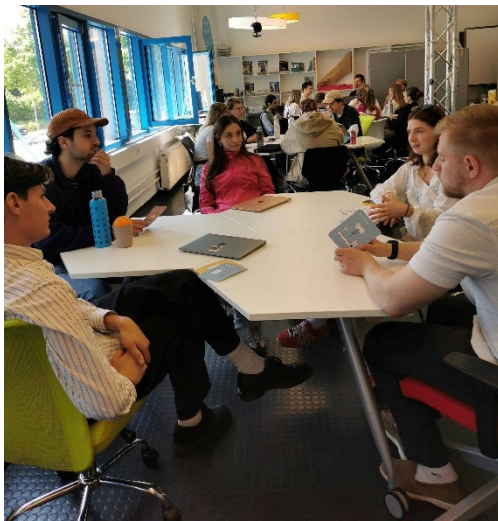


Fig.28. Participants at the One-day Workshop



Fig.29. Workshop Results

Attendees & Participants: Stuttgart

EVENT	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Opening Event	250
Creative Brainstorming Session	10
1 Day Workshop	15

Impact & Results: Stuttgart

- The Living Exhibition at the Media Night showed the visitors a different perspective of projects at HdM. Most of the projects are not interdisciplinary across Europe like Urban Shift. Moreover, they are not sustainability nor driven by the 17 SDGs. The Exhibition therefore showed the lack of sustainable projects at HdM.
- Not only students but also externals like parents, friends or even professionals from cooperation projects visited the Media Night, hence also the Urban Shift Living Exhibition. Accordingly, the Living Exhibition reached totally different target groups and showed those groups the importance of sustainable innovations.
- Based on the Living Exhibition of the first Batch earlier this year at the "FairHandeln" HdM is currently in discussions with the Ministry for the Environment, Climate and



Energy Sector to have a follow up project as a combination of Urban Shift (developing prototypes) and Greenpact (getting sustainable knowledge through external experts). The project is aimed to have a duration of 18 months and will be held in two semesters.

- Reflective students with an insight about their own entrepreneurial perception and understanding of challenges regarding the 17 SDGs.

Living Exhibition: Barcelona

Description of the Opening Event: Barcelona

Location: Institute for Advanced Architecture of Catalonia, Pujades 102, Barcelona 08005

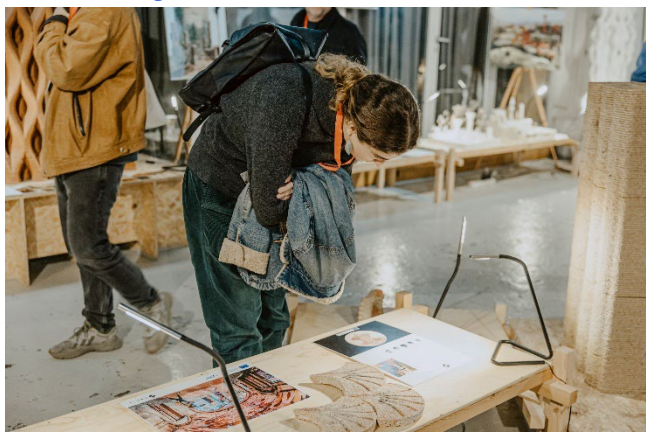
The opening of the Living Exhibition Barcelona 2024 formed part of the Biennale Responsive Cities Symposium event. The opening of the exhibition closed the first day of the symposium on the 25th February 2025 and took place in the IAAC Main Hall. The exhibition promoted the work done through the Urban Shift programme as well as interactive elements such as the Living Wall to encourage participation from the attendees. Insights from the Living Wall were incorporated into the Living Book which has been travelling across Europe.

The Urban Shift prototypes (Batch 1 & 2) were complimented by prototypes developed by IAAC students on nature-based solutions as well as circular design with a big focus on materials. Live music and drinks led to people sticking around the exhibition and many discussions emerging between IAAC staff, students and visitors. The exhibition was attended by a variety of profiles including students, researchers, professionals, symposium keynote speakers and citizens. The exhibition was set up on the 22nd of February and taken down on the 27th February.

Event Agenda

TIME	DESCRIPTION 25 th February 2025
16:15	Responsive Cities Symposium Closing and Transition to the Exhibition
16:30	Doors Open
17:00	Welcome
17:05	Keynote Presentations - Fiona Demeur – Urban Shift - Areti Markopoulou – Circular Matter(s) - Chiara Farinea – Nature-Based Solutions
17:30	Live Music, Living Wall, Networking and drinks
19:00	Closing

Photos of the Living Exhibition Barcelona



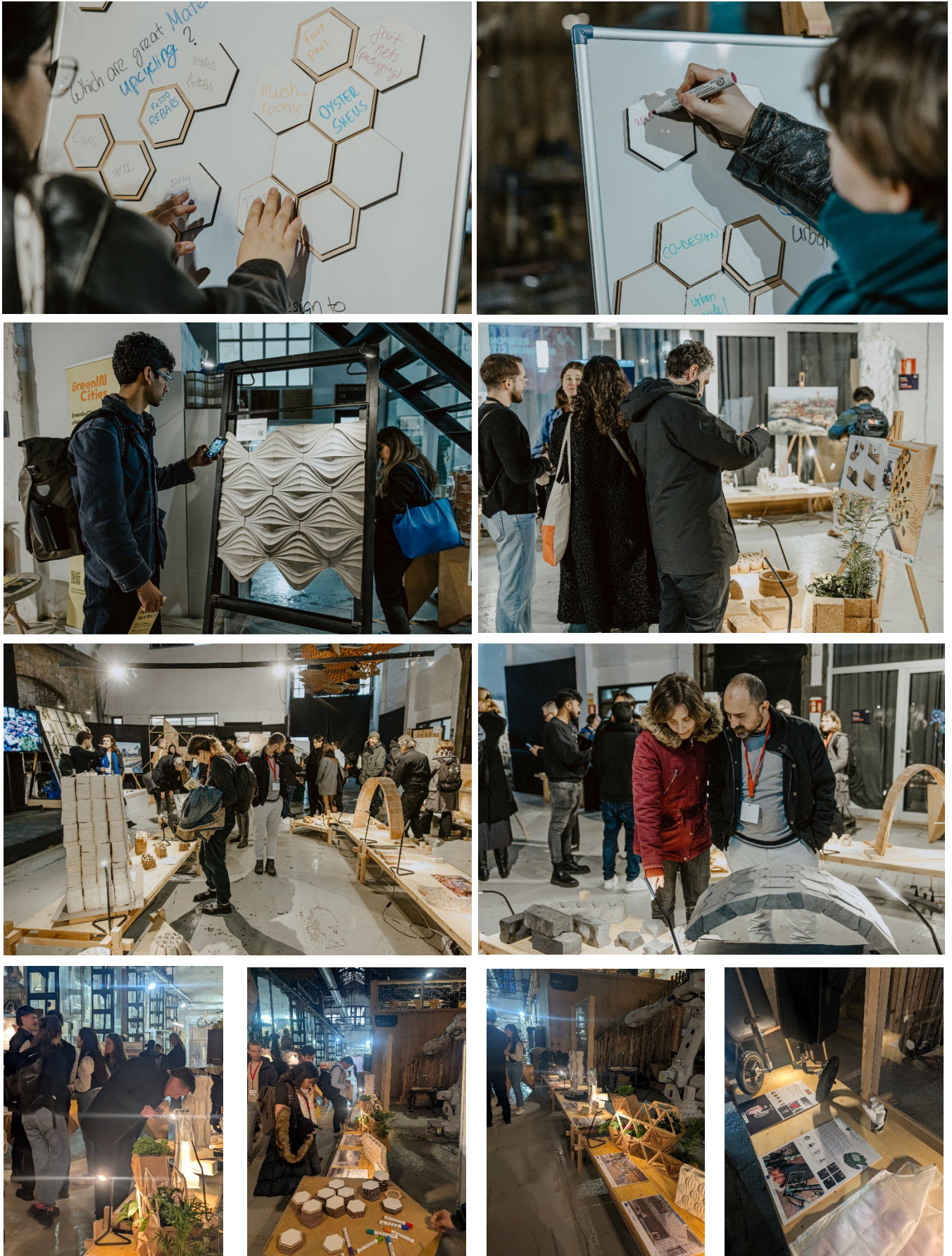


Fig.30. Highlights from the Exhibition Opening in Barcelona



Creative Brainstorming Session: Barcelona

To increase participation in the Creative Brainstorming session during the second round of the Living Exhibition, a different approach was taken to organise this event. Once again it was hosted in the framework of Semanas de Arquitectura, but to attract more participants a round table was incorporated with key speakers based in Barcelona and working on AI, Entrepreneurship and Architecture. This proved to be more successful in achieving participation and led to some insightful discussions on the future of education.

Event Agenda

TIME	DESCRIPTION 2 nd June 2025
17:00 – 17:10	Arrival and Welcome at IAAC
17:10 – 17:30	Presentation by Fiona Demeur on Urban Shift and Entrepreneurship in Education with a Mentimeter to collect inputs from the audience.
17:30 – 18:30	Round Table on the Future of AI & Architectural Education moderated by Areti Markopoulou and Angelos Chronis. The speakers were Mara Balestrini, Aldo Sollazzo, and Jonas Schorr.
18:30 – 19:00	Discussion and Questions
19:00 – 20:00	Networking and Drinks

Results & Photos

This chosen format proved to be more successful, bringing more participants to the event including students and external professionals. The combination of experts sharing their insights and participants able to ask questions and discuss relevant topics led to very interesting discussions. Education is at a turning point, especially with all the new AI tools emerging, and in the field of architecture, they are impacting and changing the workflows. In addition, IAAC has put emphasis on incorporating a business dimension within its educational offering and thus, there is a big interest to learn business skills and learn how to transform their idea into a start-up. The round table explored topics including types of funding and funding opportunities for start-ups, the ethical implications of AI, how we might transform education in relation to the tools available, and much more. The discussion gave IAAC faculty a lot to consider moving forward in transforming architectural education and strengthened collaboration with external professionals.

Insights from the Mentimeter:

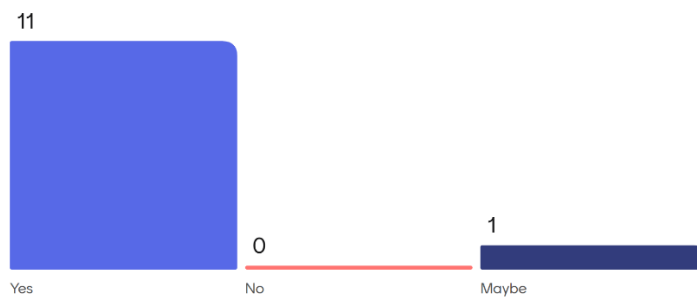
- When asked: How do you believe the future of education will be?
 - “I have witnessed [the] architecture discipline being very creative and students being in love with the profession fail to translate the profession into various connected fields and not just traditional [architecture].”
 - “Promising, especially with the democratization of AI tools that help individuals achieve goals and build meaningful things.”

- “Complemented with artificial intelligence and more interactive and transdisciplinary”
- “LLMs will disrupt the way we test knowledge completely.”
- Participants felt that entrepreneurship is definitely a vehicle for bringing together different disciplines and that cross border and transdisciplinary education should become part of education. See the images below:



Fig.31. Presentation of Urban Shift & Entrepreneurship in Education

Do you believe entrepreneurship should be a part of architectural education?



How much do you agree with the statement?

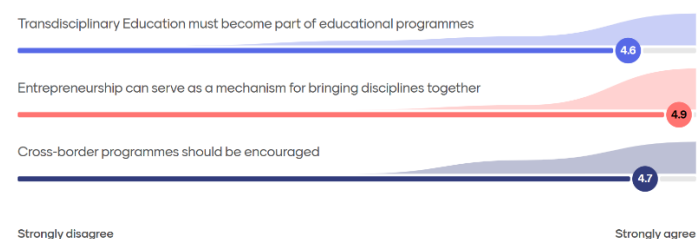


Fig.32. Insights from the Mentimeter from those that completed it

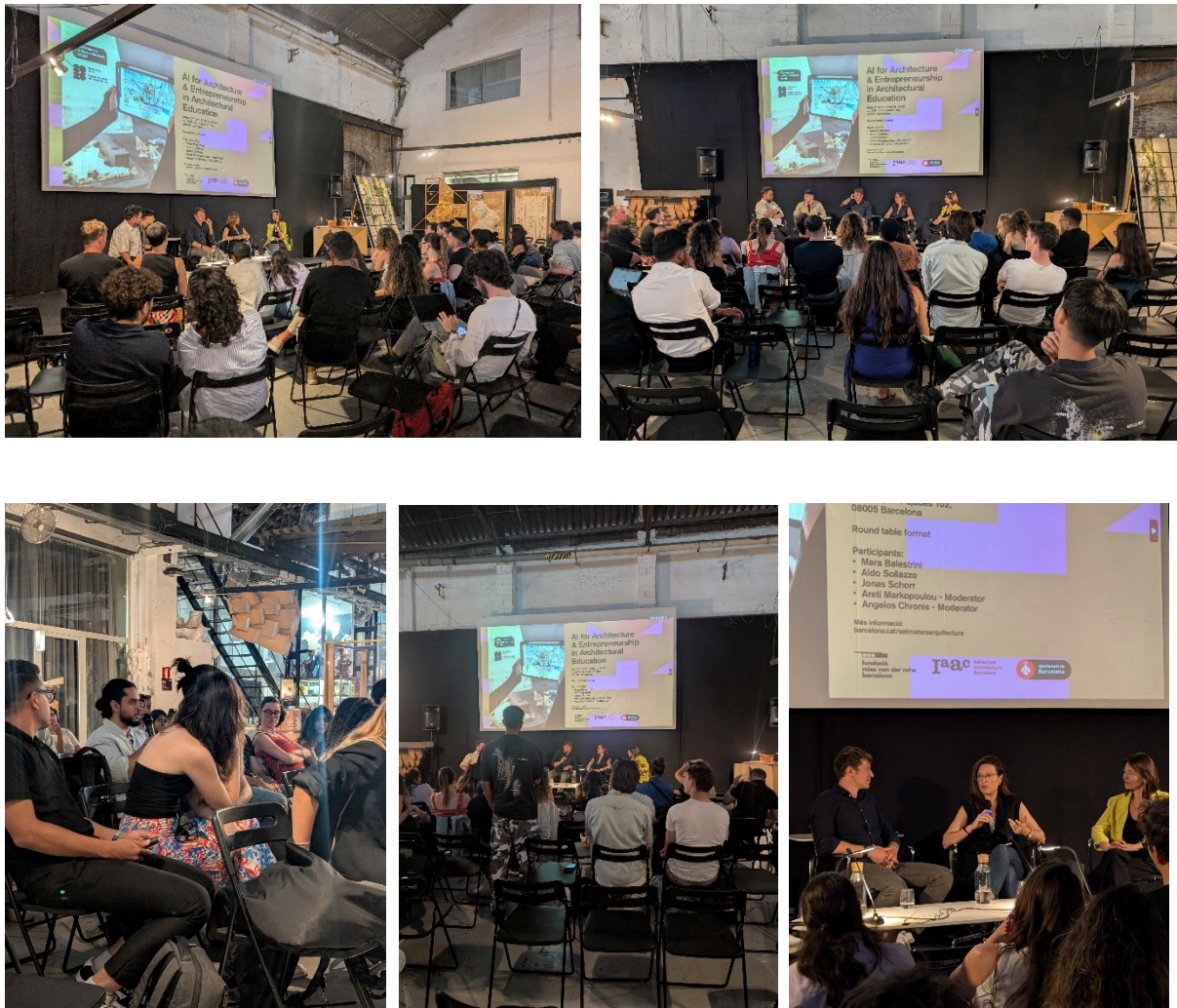


Fig.33. Round Table and Discussion

1 Day Workshop: Barcelona

Location: IAAC P51 - Carrer de Pujades, 51, 08005, Barcelona, Spain

The Green Ideation Sprint brought together a small but highly engaged group of participants for a one-day workshop in Barcelona. This edition of the workshop was also held as part of [Architecture Weeks 2025 \(Semanas de Arquitectura 2025\)](#), an annual program organized by Barcelona City Council and the Fundació Mies van der Rohe that celebrates architecture's role in shaping the urban environment. The initiative features exhibitions, open houses, lectures, and citizen-focused events across the city. Being included in this year's [official program](#) gave the workshop additional visibility, helping connect it to a broader public audience and encouraging engagement from citizens, students, and professionals interested in sustainable urban transformation.

Though only five participants joined the session, despite 22 registrations, the diverse mix of nationalities and backgrounds created a rich environment for exchange and collaborative learning.



The workshop started with a contextual introduction to the European Green Deal and the trainers highlighted how this ambitious strategy addresses interconnected urban challenges. As these issues become increasingly urgent across Europe and beyond, participants began to question how the EU's goals translate across different regional and global realities. This sparked an interesting discussion about governance, policy barriers, and the potential for global implementation of green transition frameworks. The conversation served as a great foundation for diving deeper into the workshop's main challenge areas: urban mobility and extreme weather events.

Participants were first introduced to key phases of the Design Thinking process, with a focus on the problem space. Many were new to Design Thinking but quickly embraced the methodology. Forming two teams, all participants chose to work on extreme weather events, due to their personal experiences in the summer heat in Barcelona. After defining the problem, teams moved into the solution space, engaging in fast-paced ideation to generate a wide range of possible interventions. Ideas were evaluated based on feasibility and originality.

By the afternoon, both teams had identified a core concept to develop further. One team proposed a product-based solution: modular, shade-producing structures that could cool down public spaces, especially outdoor sports areas. The second team envisioned a service model for turning unused rooftops in Barcelona into green community spaces through permaculture and urban agriculture. Both concepts combined environmental adaptation with social inclusion.

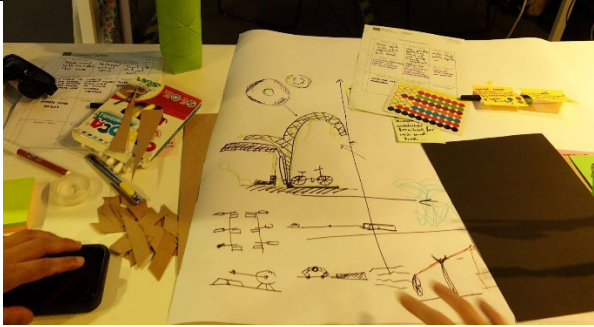
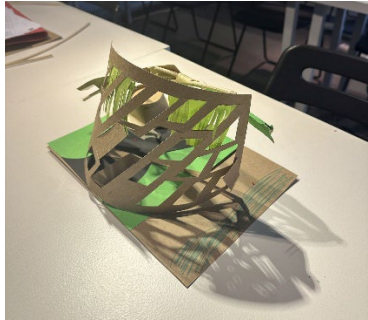
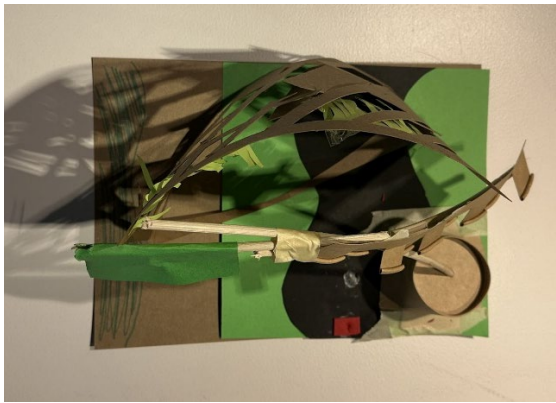
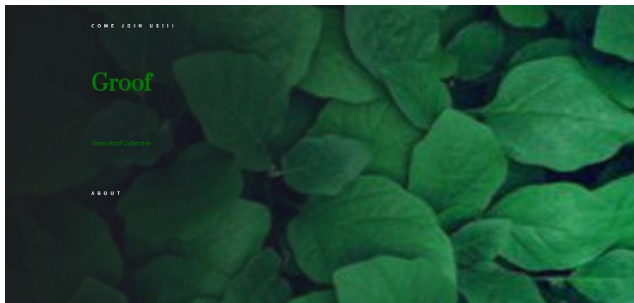
The day was finalized with a pitching session, where each team presented their solution to the group and received feedback from trainers and other participants. The session closed with reflections on how Design Thinking helped structure their innovation process and surface ideas they might not have otherwise considered.

Event Agenda

TIME	DESCRIPTION
09.00 - 10.00	Room Setup
10.00 - 10.15	Arrival at IAAC
10.15 - 11.05	Introduction to EU Green Deal and urban challenges
11.05 - 11.30	Introduction to Design Thinking and team building
11.30 - 11.45	Coffee Break
11.45 - 12.45	Problem space
12.45 - 14.00	Lunch Break (Self-paid)
14:00 - 14.50	Solution space and Ideation

14.50 - 15.05	Coffee Break
15.05 - 16.30	Prototyping and pitching training
16.30 - 17.00	Pitching ceremony, feedback and participant survey

Results & Photos:

DESCRIPTION	PROTOTYPE
Challenge: Extreme Weather Events <u>Shading Device:</u> A modular shading and cooling structure for public sports areas to mitigate urban heat. It integrates a human-powered system where users can generate energy by cycling on stationary bikes built into the structure. This energy powers a cooling mechanism that helps reduce ambient temperature in the surrounding area.	  
Challenge: Extreme Weather Events <u>Groof:</u> Green Roof Collective A service transforming unused roofs into a place for tackling extreme heat through bringing permaculture and community	Screenshots from the landing page built: 

gardens through facilitating connection, inclusion and shared ownership.

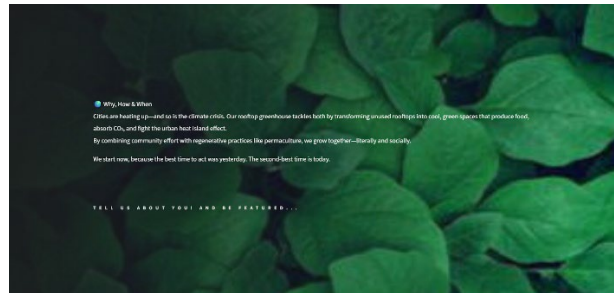
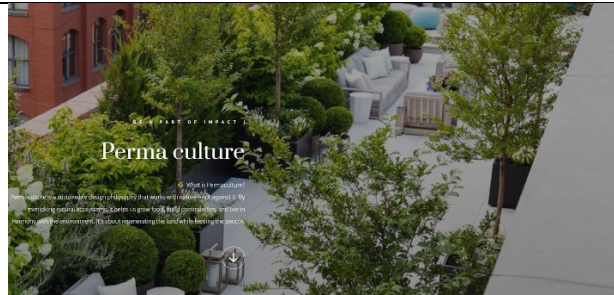


Fig.33. Participants working on problem canvas and creating personas for the problem



Fig.34. Participants working on brain writing activity for ideation and participants working and drawing their prototypes

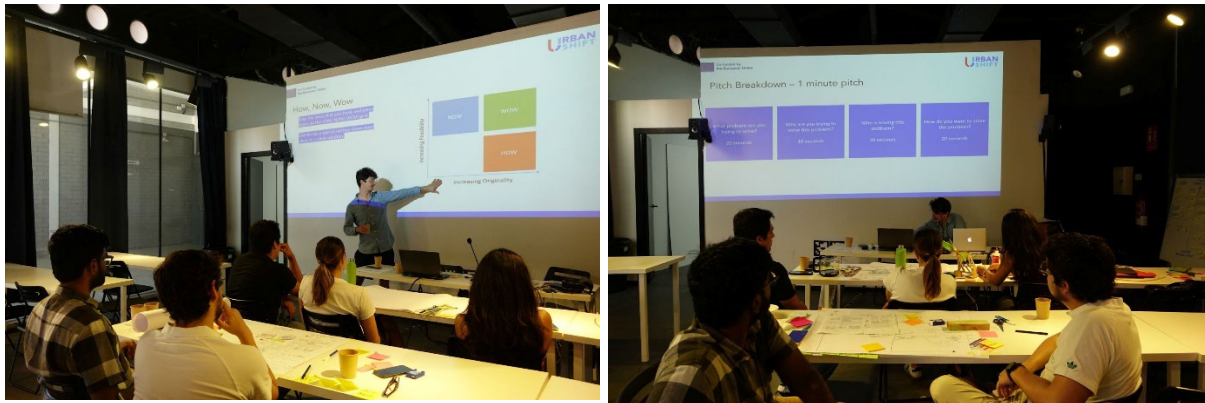


Fig.35. Trainer from IAAC explaining HOW, WOW, NOW exercise and explaining the pitch breakdown

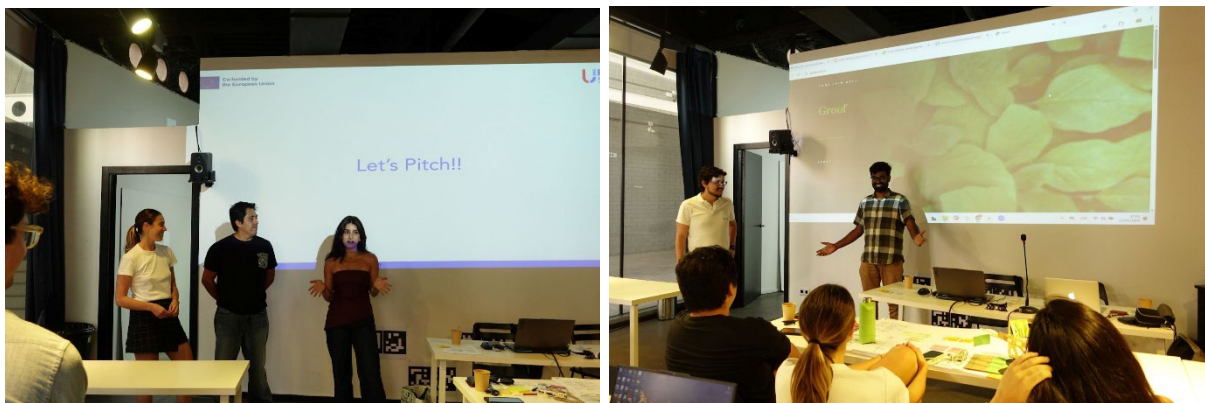


Fig.36. Participants pitching their solution

Attendees & Participants: Barcelona

EVENT	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Living Exhibition Opening	150 +
Creative Brainstorming Session	45
1 Day Workshop	7 (22 people registered)

Impact & Results: Barcelona

- The Living Exhibition was held in the same format as the previous edition as Responsive Cities in one of the biggest events hosted every two years by IAAC. This international event offers a big exposure for the Green Ambassadors. The one challenge in Batch 2 was that the students had already graduated and left Barcelona and therefore could not be present during the exhibition.



- While in the first Living Exhibition edition, there was the interest to have the Living Exhibition as part of other external events, this year these opportunities did not present resulting in lower numbers than the previous edition. This also greatly depends on the relevance of the topics being addressed and the types of start-ups created.
- The Creative Brainstorming Session proved to be much more successful in this edition due to the changes in format and inviting renowned guests based in Barcelona to attract participants. Participants were much more engaged and interested to know more, triggering interesting discussions.
- Despite the lower turnout, the Green Ideation Sprint proved to be an insightful experience for both participants and trainers. One of the key takeaways was the value of bringing together individuals from diverse cultural and professional backgrounds encouraging critical conversations around the global applicability of the EU Green Deal, discussing policy ambition and realities in different contexts. Participants explored complex sustainability challenges through a structured yet flexible Design Thinking process. For many, this was their first encounter with human-centered innovation tools, and they expressed enthusiasm about how these methods helped them shift from abstract problems to tangible pathways for solution and evaluated the methodology positively in the survey. The collaborative format encouraged critical thinking, active listening, and rapid decision-making. Overall, the workshop demonstrated that even with a small group, meaningful learning, exchange, and ideation can take place when the right environment and tools are in place.

Event Agenda

TIME	DESCRIPTION
14.30 - 14.40	Welcome
14.40 - 14.45	Introduction of the Urban Shift and its goals
14.45 - 15.00	Startup ambassadors talk on their booths
15.00 - 15.45	Creative Brainstorming Session
15.45 - 18.25	Living Exhibition
18.25 - 18.30	Closing and final remarks

Photos of the Living Exhibition Genoa



Fig.38. The Living Exhibition in Genoa during Genoa Design Week



Fig.39. Living Exhibition Genoa – Green Ambassadors explaining their start-ups

Creative Brainstorming Session: Genoa

Location: Agora Social Cooperative - Via di Santa Maria di Castello, 16123 Genoa, Italy

As part of the Living Exhibition, a dedicated Creative Brainstorming session took place from 15.00 to 15.45 at the same location. The Creative Brainstorming session was structured around three thematic questions designed to encourage open exchange and co-creation. These included: *"What skills do green startups need?"*, *"How can the challenges of working in transdisciplinary teams be overcome?"*, and *"How can the SDGs be integrated as a central component of startups?"* Participants ranging from students, educators, creatives and early-stage entrepreneurs worked as a group to explore each of these guiding questions, applying ideation and clustering tools.

One of the key takeaways from the session was the recognition of the complexity and interdisciplinary nature of green entrepreneurship. Participants emphasized the growing need for skills that go beyond traditional business competencies, highlighting areas such as artificial intelligence, leadership, empathy, resilience and storytelling for impact. Many also pointed out that while these skills are crucial, yet some of them are rarely taught in formal education settings. In the second round, participants reflected on the dynamics of transdisciplinary collaboration. Some expressed the difficulty of navigating different professional glossaries and understanding common knowledge/skills. However, they also

identified this as a unique opportunity for collaboration and setting clear expectations. Suggestions also included creating a space for psychological safety, aligning team mission/vision and working on team strengths.

Finally, in the discussion around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), many participants shared that the startups should have a problem-oriented business model, preserve transparency on operations and KPI measuring towards stakeholders and consider impact beyond regulatory requirements.

Event Agenda

TIME	DESCRIPTION
15.00 - 15.05	Introduction to Urban Shift and transdisciplinary start-up education
15.05 - 15.10	Introduction to brainstorming session format
15.10 - 15.20	Brainstorming session 1 - "What skills do green startups need?"
15.20 - 15.30	Brainstorming session 2 - "How can the challenges of working in transdisciplinary teams be overcome?"
15.30 - 15.40	Brainstorming session 3 - "How can SDGs be integrated as a central component of startups?"
15.40 - 15.45	Wrap up & final remarks

Results & Photos



Fig.40. Trainer from WU facilitating the session with participants

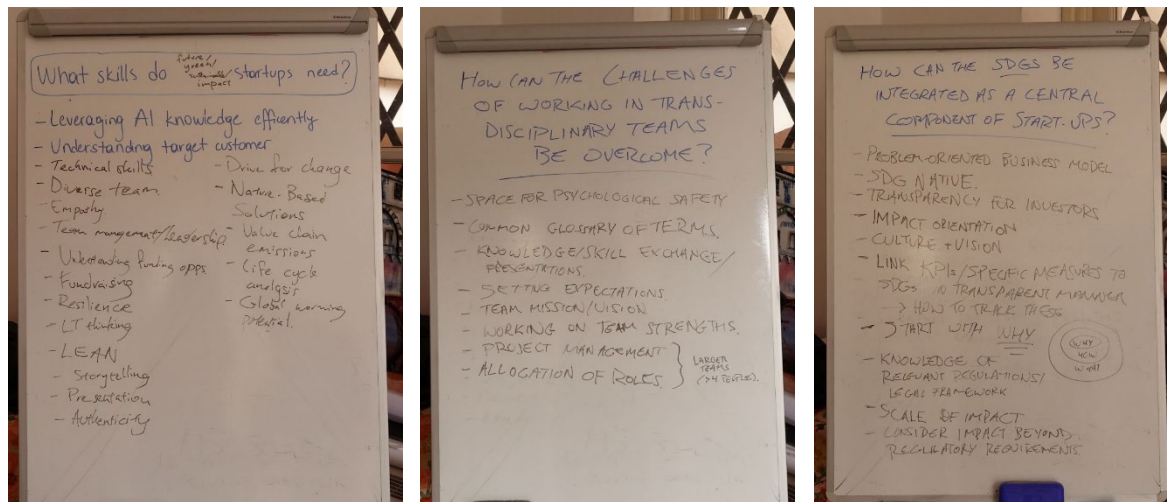


Fig.41. First guiding question outcomes

1 Day Workshop: Genoa

Location: Agora Social Cooperative - Via di Santa Maria di Castello, 16123 Genoa, Italy

The Green Ideation Sprint in Genoa took place during Genoa Design Week 2025, on 21 May 2025, from 09.30 to 15.30. Despite extensive outreach across all Urban Shift social media channels (including Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook, and X) the number of participants was 3 which was smaller than expected. This may be due in part to the session being held in English, which might have presented a barrier for some local audiences. Besides, running the event without a local partner meant fewer opportunities for extended engagement and outreach. Still, the small group created a focused setting that helped deeper discussion and collaboration.

The session brought together participants from diverse backgrounds, including architecture, business, and finance, creating an environment for cross-disciplinary exchange. This time, participants were presented with other urban challenges such as food waste and the urban heat island effect. While both topics were interesting to tackle, the team gravitated toward food waste, feeling a personal connection and urgency to the topic.

During the initial Design Thinking phases, including the problem canvas and stakeholder mapping, participants found it particularly challenging to navigate the complexity of the food system. Many expressed how difficult it was to identify clear root causes, or pinpoint which actors contribute most to food waste, whether consumers, restaurants, or other industry players. After much discussion, the teams decided to narrow their focus to household consumption as this segment was the most relatable for them and ultimately developed the concept for a high-tech refrigerator that extends the life of fresh produce using AI, humidity control, and antimicrobial lighting.

Event Agenda

TIME	DESCRIPTION
09.30 - 09.45	Arrival
09:45 - 10.15	Welcome & Introduction
10.15 - 10.30	Challenge & Design Thinking Overview
10.30 - 11.00	Team Formation & Building
11.00 - 11.15	BREAK
11.15 - 12.15	Problem Understanding
12.15 - 13.00	LUNCH (self-paid)
13.00 - 13.30	Ideation
13.30 - 13.45	Idea Clustering
13.45 - 14.00	BREAK
14.00 - 15.00	Prototyping
15.00 - 15.20	Pitching
15.20 - 15.30	Closing

Results & Photos:

DESCRIPTION	PROTOTYPE
Challenge Selected: Food waste <u>Aura Refrigerator:</u> A next-generation refrigerator that uses smart sensors, AI, and antimicrobial lighting to regulate humidity and atmosphere, keeping fruits, vegetables, and other foods fresher for longer	



Fig.42. Highlights from the One-day Workshop throughout the different phases of the day – from ideation to pitching



Attendees & Participants: Genoa

EVENT	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Living Exhibition including the Opening Event	5000
Creative Brainstorming Session	17
1 Day Workshop	5

Impact & Results: Genoa

- Organising an exhibition in a country where no partner is based proved to be a challenge from organisational logistics to getting participants for the events. Even though the partners used contacts based in Genoa which allowed us to participate as part of the Genoa Design Week, last minute decisions from the organisers of the event led to a lot of uncertainty regarding the event. While a huge effort was put into reaching out to the Urban Shift network and through IAAC's network, the commitment of participants was lacking.
- One challenge that was identified was the language barrier. This is something to be considered for the future events within such projects. It would be beneficial to have experts or trainers that speak the local language present.
- Even with all the challenges faced, the Green Ambassadors were active in sharing their start-up results and actively participated in the workshops fostering stimulating conversations.
- Having Urban Shift as part of the Genoa Design week and being advertised in their promotional materials was a nice exposure for the project that reaches a large audience.
- A lot of learnings could be taken from this event and implemented in future projects. All in all, the Green Ambassadors were grateful for the opportunity to travel and expose their work to different audiences and this demonstrated the importance of given young entrepreneurs platforms to showcase their work.



Living Exhibition: Vienna Summit Exhibition

Description of the Vienna Summit

The consortium decided to stretch the budget and offer one final exhibition in Vienna, showcasing the start-ups developed in both Batch 1 and Batch 2. This event was named the Vienna Summit and took place during the closing meeting of Urban Shift at the WU Campus. The partners believed it was important to bring all the start-ups together in one event and celebrate the work achieved while promoting the project within one final event.

Project partners actively participated in the event, organised by WU, with guests from other universities and our Green Deal Ambassadors attending to support and listen. The dynamic format allowed for participants to check out the start-up ideas, network and listen to the inputs. As the project draws to a close, it was a great way to reflect and share insights from different perspectives that have accumulated over the three years.

Event Agenda

TIME	DESCRIPTION 26 th June 2025
9:00	Arrival and Prototype Exhibition
10:00	Urban Shift Project Overview Adam Greene and Marie-Sophie Attems (WU)
10:30	Student Start-up Presentation Loic Bickert (WU student)
11:00	Urban Shift Trainer Perspective Fiona Demeur (IAAC)
11:15	Coffee Break
11:30	Panel Discussion: Sustainable Entrepreneurship as a Challenge-based Learning Tool for Transdisciplinary Groups Moderator: Adam Greene Participants: Martin Petersen (PUD), Rudolf Kottbauer (WIFI), Kristina Coric (HdM), Michael Ambros (BOKU:BASE), Niklas Schulte (WU student)
12:15	Networking and Lunch

Vienna Summit Photos:



Fig.43. Exhibition of all the Prototypes from Batch 1 and Batch 2



Fig.44. Exhibition of all the Prototypes from Batch 1 and Batch 2



Fig.45. Vienna Summit Team and some participants

Impact & Results: Vienna Summit

- Loïc's presentation on his entrepreneurial journey was a wow moment, making all the trainers incredibly proud. His presentation was engaging, dynamic and clearly highlighted all the benefits programmes like Urban Shift provide to students.
- It was great to see all the prototypes from both batches together in one place and reflect as trainers on the journeys of the students, but also as trainers.
- The panel discussion highlighted the importance of funding such opportunities in Europe. Fostering transdisciplinary education is fundamental to solve our planet's pressing urban challenges, but in some cases, this means rethinking educational formats and courses.
- Hearing from the trainers on their experiences and how for some institutes, such as IAAC, the business dimension has been incorporated into their educational offerings, demonstrated the need for such programmes to exist.
- The networking with participants was a great way to hear from others interested or working in the field.

Attendees & Participants: Vienna Summit

EVENT	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Vienna Summit	20



Conclusion

The second round of Living Exhibitions built on the learnings of the first round of Living Exhibitions. While certain changes were adopted, new challenges emerged such as organising an exhibition where no partner is based in Genoa. Changes included, experimenting with the formats of the workshops and creative brainstorming to increase participation, and having the students develop their posters as part of their final submission rather than IAAC creating the posters. Giving more flexibility to the organisation of the workshops allowed for more tailoring towards specific stakeholders.

A general challenge identified is transforming registered participants into active participants. Often the number of participants registered exceeded the KPI of participants; however, the number of participants that showed up was significantly lower. Effort was made with emails and reminders shared to remind participants, but this did not seem to impact the attendance. This is a common challenge that all partners faced within the project, but it also a common problem beyond the project. The Urban Shift partners believe that this will continue to be a challenge as these days there are so many events happening and many people just register to anything they are interested in and then decide later whether they will show up or not.

Even with the challenges faced, the Living Exhibition and workshops were always well received and positive feedback given. Attendees were always impressed by the Green Deal Ambassadors' prototypes which demonstrated what could be achieved when disciplines are brought together with a common goal. Through the various events, it was possible to promote the work of Urban Shift and the projects achievements, vital for highlighting the importance of such programmes and funding opportunities.

Disclaimer:

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