



URBACT – Good practice summary

‘Let’s reinvent the Grand Paris Metropolis’

'Let's reinvent the Grand Paris Metropolis' is a unique territorial co-construction process involving its stakeholders.

The institutional Grand Paris Metropolis was founded on 1 January 2016. With a population of seven million and an entrepreneurial pull, it launched a call for innovative urban and economic projects.

In a period of major technological developments and urban transformation in European cities – and faced with a land optimisation challenge – the Grand Paris Metropolis took inspiration from the success of the 'Let's reinvent Paris' operation and launched a call for projects in the autumn of 2016. The aim was to showcase the abundance, diversity and dynamics of its territories and play a catalyst role in the 'metropolitan project'.

➤ The aims of the call for projects: to showcase urban quality

'Let's reinvent the Grand Paris Metropolis' was launched in the form of a call for projects for spaces proposed by the towns and territories where the land is under public sector control. This competition was a chance to call on the inventive abilities of groups of professionals with a range of skill sets, resulting in 'turnkey' projects. Thus, designers, developers, promoters and investors came together, alongside a professional set involved in 'innovation ecosystems' of an economic, technical, environmental or social nature, or relative to citizens, uses, lifestyles, integration and the dissemination of digital technology.

➤ An innovative method, giving free rein to company creativity

'Let's reinvent the Metropolis' tested a new form of town planning project leadership where the companies are given substantial freedom. This allows them to offer pleasant surprises in terms of programming, the economic and social model for their project and the urban or architectural style, thus guaranteeing innovative proposals.

In line with the Grand Paris Metropolis strategy, they complied with the following principles:

- working towards an innovative, sustainable, united and intelligent metropolis,
- boosting economic vitality and job opportunities in the metropolis;
- responding to residents' housing and service needs;
- setting an example in terms of energy and the environment;
- contributing to the artistic, cultural and social reach of the metropolis;
- suggesting new concepts, new locations, new uses and new services with a focus on functional diversity and reversibility;
- suggesting models to ensure efficiency in the projects and the residents' association.

➤ **A new form of governance, combining elected representatives and teams**

The mayors and territorial presidents interested in the process were invited to suggest sites with public sector control of the land to involve their town or territory in building the future metropolis.

The idea is for the land take or corresponding building rights to then be transferred to the winning groups. The call for projects is not therefore a burden for the participating communities but, instead, an opportunity to promote their land and territory.

75 metropolis towns rose to the challenge. 112 sites were suggested by the mayors in July 2016. Around sixty sites were selected by the organisers.

The steps in the process:

The consultation comprises two rounds:

- An initial round to collect applications for each site and innovation reports from groups of companies, investors and architects and other innovation professionals, depending on the topic. Three applications were chosen for each site;
- The chosen groups will submit a detailed offer following the second round.

The winners will be chosen by a panel of organisers and local stakeholders specific to each site.

2016

- May Process launch seminar with the mayors
- July Deadline for site proposals
- September Site selection by the organisational committee
- October Launch to companies – Presentation of the list of 61 sites – Launch of the consultation website

2017

- January 2017 Submission of application packs by groups of companies
- February Selection of three candidates per site by the panel
- March–July Development of detailed offers by the chosen teams
- September Panel and selection of winners

➤ **The results exceeded organisers' expectations**

On 1 March 2017, the 'Let's reinvent the Grand Paris Metropolis' panel unveiled 164 finalist company groups chosen from 420 candidates to take over the 57 sites involved in the call for projects. These groups of property and development professionals (architects, promoters and investors) place huge emphasis on urban innovation companies and a strong local presence. The teams are made up of more than 326 innovative start-ups, associations and SMEs.

The environment is a key factor, thus preparing the city for future climate change with bioclimatic buildings, rainwater harvesting or infiltration, mass greening, etc.

Forty per cent of projects are based on a circular economy site (reuse of demolition materials) while a quarter have opted for timber construction. Half were concerned with building reversibility.

In total, 6.4 billion euros of investment will be injected by the companies acquiring the sites.

The process is intended to last and expand. Innovative urban consultations such as these are taking off again with initiatives in other French cities starting in 2017. They will gradually prove a key factor – though not the only factor – in getting companies involved in urban projects on relatively large areas of public sector land. This in turn helps develop ambitious projects with many more facets than traditional town planning. It is measured by the number of urban development newcomers generated by the consultation. The Metropolis is now planning the next one and the set-up of a scientific committee to monitor the avenues of innovation.