

Small Cities International Forum at Ars Electronica 2017

The opportunities of art, design and creativity as driving forces for Regional development.



INTRODUCTION

1 - When we talk about innovations, new technologies and cool gadgets we usually think of the big cities as the epicenter of the future.

Of course there are many good reasons for this, after all it's there where the elite universities are, the big companies and the investors. But what about the small cities and regions, do they necessarily have to run behind, can't they become vital places for future innovations as well? Places where new ways of doing business in a much more sustainable way are being developed? In particular when we look at Europe, a large part of our economy is based outside the capitals and no matter what, we need to dig into this potential, we have to bring it up to speed and we have to recognize the power of the local communities and the small and medium business.

2 - The evident mutation of the modern economy due to a post fordist socio-economic trend, as well as globalization has settled, mixed to the effect of the current planetary connectivity, have brought the cities greater or smaller, in the midst of the complexity, generating huge changes in the social fabric worldwide. For this reason one of the most considerable issues is the question of the identity of the cities, and the evolution of their image. But the cultural anthropology's statements, underline that our identities, person or communities we were, are not considered as a data but they are absolutely as a result, an hard work, forcing us to be hardly concerned and make a great work on the scene of our personalities.

3 - The small towns have changed some important features. The correct approach is to start from a correct reading of those events that have transformed the society and the city from a complicated reality into a complex, with the assumption that the problems could be solved starting from the systemization and socialization of internal resources.

And the emerging role of the bottom up energies. As from the early eighties, the same idea of urbanism, has used different approaches e.g. evolving from the traditional Master Plan typical of the modern urbanism into a Strategic Plan, a pattern much closer to the true needs of the contemporary (liquid) cities.

4 - Small Cities have done a considerable effort to correctly evaluate the role of its own History, and its material culture as a page of memory in the era of exponential time. In fact the condition to growth for the ones represents the symmetric for the smaller.

5 - First of all the awareness of the Symbolic Capital embodied in every city, then its Cultural and Historical elements, the social economic resource as universities are, arts and design schools, of course the presence of research center.

The awareness of the Collaborative and Social factor.

The positive connection of the reciprocal and symmetrical actors could be evaluated as a better practice from bottom up way. Which role can art, design, research and creativity play and which support is necessary to bring this potential into effect?

The Small Cities Forum is an Initiative of Pordenone Design Week and Ars Electronica Linz to promote the power of the small cities and to provide a place for the exchange of experiences and best practice model.

6 - Which role can art, design and creativity play and which support is necessary to bring this potential into effect? First of all the most important action is not a true action but is a mentality change

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Program

Friday, September 8th – POSTCITY Linz, Austria

10.00 - 11.00 Welcome Session, first introduction of participants (PUBLIC)
G Stocker- short History of AEC and the vision of its role in the future

G. Marinelli-an example of a collaborative city, the case history of Pordenone Design Week

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11.00 - 13.00 Best practice examples and inspiring projects, (cities present their activities) (PUBLIC)

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13.00 - 15.00 networking lunch (CLOSED – working group)

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15.00 - 17.30 first drafting of a small cities manifesto (CLOSED – Working Group)

Proposed outcome:

1. identify characteristics
2. clear best practices
3. connectivity/partnerships/ issue of being substituted by social media
4. community importance
5. parameters of small cities (also compared to megacities)
6. to create a scientific committee devoted to study and research on the subject
7. to create an operative organism able to sustain and to play as a counselor for news small cities having difficulties to do its own redesign

Possible participants: (please add)

Representatives from universities, arts, research or industry fields, entrepreneurs, personalities of the media and experts about cultural events, not only politics

- Aarhus
- Belgrade
- Cambridge
- Enghien les Bains
- Galway
- Graz
- Kosice
- Holon
- Linz
- Mainz
- Pordenone
- St. Entienne
- Yamaguchi
- York
- Vilnius
- Vöcklabruck

