



WP3 Simulation based training package

Module Title: Module 3: Creating youth-friendly public spaces

Introduction to the Module

This module is part of the ACT4DYS Simulation-Based Training Package (WP3), developed to empower youth workers and trainers to become active facilitators of disability-inclusive, sustainable urban environments.

Module 3 (Creating Youth-Friendly Public Spaces) builds on the foundations established in previous modules and turns the focus toward one of the most visible and everyday dimensions of urban life: public space. Parks, streets, squares, and recreational areas are not simply physical settings—they shape how young people move, interact, feel safe, and experience belonging in their communities. When these spaces are not designed inclusively, they can reinforce exclusion, particularly for young persons with disabilities and those in vulnerable situations.

This module explores how public spaces can become inclusive, accessible, and co-created environments, where young people are not passive users but active contributors to decision-making, design, and transformation processes.

Who is this module for?

This module is designed for youth workers, trainers, educators, and practitioners who support young people in accessing and shaping urban environments. It is also relevant for those working in community development, participation, advocacy, or local planning processes. No background in urban planning or design is required. The module is specifically built for practitioners who want to understand participatory approaches and apply them in real-life to youth work contexts.

What will you learn?

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Explain key concepts in participatory urban planning, including co-design, co-creation, and citizen science;
- Understand how Urban Living Labs (ULLs) function as real-life environments for collaborative experimentation;
- Identify and apply participatory tools such as mapping, generative toolkits, probes, prototypes, and serious games;
- Analyse public spaces from an inclusion and accessibility perspective, identifying barriers affecting young persons, especially those with disabilities;



- Describe how young people can act as co-creators of public spaces, rather than passive users;
- Connect local initiatives to broader frameworks such as the New European Bauhaus (NEB) and Sustainable Development Goals (especially SDG 11);
- Apply co-design and participatory methods in a collaborative scenario;
- Facilitate teamwork, communication, and inclusive decision-making processes in group settings.

How is this module structured?

The module is organised into four interconnected sections:

- Theoretical Knowledge - core concepts such as participatory urban planning, co-design and co-creation, Urban Living Labs, the New European Bauhaus, and SDG 11;
- Practical Knowledge & Case Studies - real examples from European contexts demonstrating youth participation in public space transformation, with a focus on inclusion and accessibility;
- Simulation Scenario - a collaborative, role-based exercise where participants work as Urban Planner, Disability Advocate, Youth Representative, and Environmental Advocate to co-design improvements for a public space;
- Resources - glossary, bibliography, facilitation guidance, and links to further tools and learning materials.

This module in the wider training package

This module is the third of four modules in the ACT4DYS Training Package. It builds on: Module 1: Understanding the Urban Environment: Implementing Universal Design AND Module 2: Improving Alternative Transportation: Encouraging Sustainable Practices and prepares participants for Module 4: The Urban Assessment Tool. Together, the four modules provide a comprehensive and practical framework for youth workers to support disability-inclusive urban development. As with all modules in the package, the content has been reviewed by the European Disability Forum (EDF) to ensure alignment with accessibility and inclusion standards, including Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2.

Module developed by PM.

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Module 3 - THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE

1. New European Bauhaus and SDGs

1.1 What is the New European Bauhaus?

The New European Bauhaus (NEB) is an initiative of the European Commission launched in 2020 by Ursula von der Leyen as part of the European Green Deal. Its name evokes the Bauhaus cultural and artistic movement of the early 20th century, which, in 1920s Germany, advocated that design should be functional, beautiful and accessible to all. The contemporary version draws on the same spirit, but with a broader mission: to transform the way we conceive, build and inhabit our spaces — so that this transformation is simultaneously sustainable, inclusive and aesthetically meaningful. The NEB is organised around three founding values:

Sustainability: reducing environmental impacts, using circular materials, integrating nature-based solutions

Inclusion: ensuring that spaces and design processes are accessible to all, regardless of origin, ability or socio-economic status

Beauty: valuing the aesthetic and cultural quality of the built environment as an essential part of quality of life

At work, NEB is not just for architects or urban planners. It is a language and a framework which enables youth-led initiatives – even the smallest and most local ones. When you support young persons in proposing improvements to a public space, you are putting the principles of NEB into practice.

Practical Example NEB Project · Youth4Bauhaus

Portugal, Belgium, Romania, Slovenia

Launched in 2022, the European Youth4Bauhaus project, supported by the Erasmus+ programme, brought together the cities of Braga, Bucharest, Ghent and Košice to discuss the urban, environmental and cultural dynamics of cities. Over the course of three years, 80 students and 9 teachers - including young persons with disabilities and autism spectrum disorders - developed participatory and co-creation practices in public spaces, testing them according to the principles of NEB: inclusion, sustainability and beauty. The results have been made publicly available: a handbook of participatory practices for creating sustainable public spaces, an inclusive guide and a Minecraft tutorial - allowing anyone to freely access the tools and methodologies used.

Source: <https://www.collectiveup.be/project/youth4bauhaus>

Programme: Erasmus+ Cooperation Partnerships

For youth workers: NEB is not just for architects or urban planners. It is a language and a framework that enables youth-led initiatives – even the smallest and most local ones – to connect with a broader European vision. When a group of young persons co-designs a neighbourhood garden or transforms an abandoned space into a meeting place, they are, in fact, applying the principles of NEB.

1.2 What are the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are 17 global targets adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They were signed by 193 countries, including all Member States of the European Union. The SDGs cover areas such as poverty reduction, health, education, gender equality, climate change, biodiversity and - relevant to this module - sustainable cities and communities.

1.3 SDG 11 — Sustainable Cities and Communities

SDG 11 aims to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Among its targets, the following are particularly relevant to work with young persons in public spaces:

Target	What this means in practice
11.1	Access to adequate housing and basic services for all
11.3	Inclusive and participatory urbanisation, with quality planning
11.7	Universal access to green, safe and inclusive public spaces
11.b	Urban resilience and climate adaptation policies

SDG 11 recognises that public spaces are not neutral: their design, location and management have a direct impact on health, safety, well-being and a sense of belonging — particularly for groups that are frequently excluded, such as young persons with disabilities, young persons in situations of socio-economic vulnerability and migrant populations.

1.4 The link between NEB, SDG 11 and youth participation

NEB and SDG 11 are complementary: whilst SDG 11 defines what we aim to achieve (inclusive and sustainable cities), NEB proposes how to get there - through collaborative, beautiful and equitable design processes.

Youth participation is a key factor connecting these two elements. . When young persons are involved as co-creators (and not merely as passive users or beneficiaries) the resulting public spaces tend to be:



- better suited to users' actual needs
- more sustainable, because there is a greater sense of belonging and collective responsibility
- more inclusive, because they reflect diverse perspectives from the outset of the process

Initiatives such as [Youth4Bauhaus](#) demonstrate precisely this connection: young persons from various European countries were invited to reimagine neglected spaces in their neighbourhoods, applying NEB principles and contributing directly to the goals of SDG 11.

2. Urban Living Labs – Theory put into practice

While the NEB and SDG 11 help define the vision for more inclusive, sustainable and meaningful urban spaces, an important question remains: How can these principles be translated into concrete action at the local level?

The Urban Living Lab (ULL) model has emerged as one promising approach across Europe.

Urban Living Labs (ULLs) are collaborative environments where different actors come together to design and test solutions in real urban settings. These spaces may include streets, parks, neighbourhoods or university campuses. Rather than developing ideas in isolation, ULLs create opportunities to experiment with solutions in the places where they will ultimately be implemented.

ULLs typically bring together a wide range of stakeholders, such as municipalities, researchers, companies, community organisations and residents. Instead of designing solutions remotely, this approach emphasises experimentation and collaboration in real-world contexts.

This reflects a broader shift in design practice: moving from designing for users to designing with users. Within this approach, citizens and other stakeholders are not simply consulted; they are engaged as partners throughout the process. They help identify problems, envision future possibilities and shape the interventions that will influence their everyday environments.

Shared Design Language: “Make Tools”

For co-creation to be effective participants require ways to communicate their ideas clearly, despite differences in backgrounds and levels of expertise. One important strategy is the use of “make tools” – tangible artefacts that help participants express ideas visually or physically.

These tools may include simple materials such as cards, maps, modular pieces or small models. By using these objects, participants can externalise their thoughts, concerns and aspirations in a way that others can observe, discuss and respond to.



For example, in a workshop, young persons might build a simple model to represent how they would like a public square to feel at night or rearrange modular elements on a map to suggest safer routes through a park.

Urban Living Labs as Ongoing Platforms

Urban Living Labs provide the environment in which this kind of co-creative work can take place. Importantly, they are not simply one-off workshops or isolated events. Instead, they function as ongoing platforms embedded within the city, where stakeholders meet repeatedly to explore shared challenges.

Many European initiatives – particularly those focused on NBS or climate adaptation – organise co-creation through a Living Lab cycle. In this process, participants first explore challenges together, then generate ideas, prototype potential solutions, test them in real-world settings and finally reflect on the outcomes.

When applied to youth-friendly public spaces, this approach encourages a continuous collaboration with young people. They can participate in identifying challenges in a park or public square, co-design small interventions, test changes on-site and contribute to improving or expanding solutions over time. In this way, Urban Living Labs help transform public spaces into environments that are not only designed for communities but shaped together with them.

At the same time, the rationale for co-creation is not only procedural but also strategic. The “why” of co-creation can be summarised along three main axes.

- Social impact perspective: it supports equity and wellbeing by giving voice to groups who are often marginalised in planning processes, such as young people or minorities.
- Strategic impact perspective: co-creation can lead to more robust innovations, because solutions are stress-tested early and adapted to real contexts, reducing the risk of failure.
- Collaborative synergy perspective: it mobilises collective intelligence - diverse actors share knowledge, experience and creativity, leading to insights that no single stakeholder could have produced alone.

For practitioners and students, keeping this “golden circle” in mind is valuable: we do not only ask “how” to co-create, but also “why” it matters for sustainable and just cities.



2.1. Urban Living Labs as real-life experimentation arenas

ULLs can be described as both an arena and an approach. As an arena, a ULL is a geographically or institutionally bounded space – for example, a specific neighbourhood, a riverside area, a campus or a city-wide programme – where stakeholders can experiment together. As an approach, it is a structured framework for organising collaborative innovation in real-world settings. ULLs aim to address complex urban challenges – such as climate adaptation, mobility, public space quality or social inclusion – by testing innovations where they will actually be used, rather than in isolated laboratory settings.

For an Urban Living Lab to function effectively in practice (and not just on paper) the literature identifies 7 components that need to be closely interlinked. Think of them as the ‘pillars’ that underpin the process: if any one of them fails, the lab loses its stability. You don’t need to memorise each one, but understanding them helps you anticipate what might go well or go wrong when organising a real participatory process.

1. Governance and management – How the lab is steered at strategic and operational levels: vision and scope, roles, decision-making, risk management, and how knowledge is shared during and after the project.
2. Financing and business model – How the lab is funded, how value is created and distributed, who pays for what, and how long-term maintenance and commitment will be sustained once initial funding ends.
3. Urban context – The physical and social setting in which innovations are implemented: place characteristics, ownership, existing infrastructure, ongoing plans, and other activities that may interact with the lab.
4. Solution focus (often NBSs) – The type of innovation being developed, and the sustainability challenges it addresses; the aims of the solution, the value being co-created, and who is expected to benefit.
5. Partners and users – The different stakeholders involved through a “quadruple helix” perspective: public sector, private sector, academia/research and citizens or civil society, with clear motivations and roles.
6. Approach and methods – The engagement methods, data collection and analysis tools used throughout the process, and the principles guiding them (such as openness, inclusiveness, responsibility and value creation).
7. ICT infrastructure – The hardware, software, networks and data infrastructures that support communication, engagement, monitoring and evaluation in the lab.

Tip You don’t need to have all the components in place before you start. Most ULLs begin with limited resources and develop over time. What matters is having a clear understanding of the context, the partners and what you want to learn



What makes the ULL approach distinctive is its strong focus on real-world conditions. Solutions are tested in the environments where they are intended to operate, which means feedback is grounded in actual behaviour, constraints and opportunities. This real-life experimentation helps avoid the common pitfall of designing perfectly functional solutions on paper that fail once they meet everyday use. For students and practitioners, this requires thinking from the outset about feasibility, maintenance, and how interventions will be experienced over time by different groups – including young persons, elderly residents, local businesses and visitors.

2.2. Phases, frameworks and life-cycle of a ULL

Several complementary models are used to structure the ULL process. Here, we focus on one that is particularly useful for teaching and for designing learning scenarios: the "5 I's" framework. However other models exist (such as the Double Diamond, the Living Lab cycle, or the participatory action research model) and may be explored in further reading.

The “5 I’s” framework (Inform, Inspire, Initiate, Implement, Impact) which focuses on the overall journey of setting up and maturing an ULL:

- Inform - Build capacity and awareness among stakeholders. This includes training on participatory methods, sharing basic concepts of co-creation and urban sustainability, and clarifying what a Living Lab is and is not.
- Inspire - Motivate stakeholders to take part by showing relevant examples, success stories and the potential benefits of participating. This might involve inspirational talks, visits to existing labs, or sharing stories from other cities.
- Initiate - Start co-development processes, for example by creating working groups, convening first workshops, and co-defining problems and objectives with stakeholders.
- Implement - Co-create and implement concrete actions, such as pilot projects or prototypes in real-life settings, accompanied by monitoring and iterative adjustment.
- Impact - Reflect on outcomes, evaluate impacts on sustainability and inclusion, and plan for replication, upscaling or institutionalisation of successful initiatives.

2.3. Citizen engagement, citizen science and intensity of participation

Citizen engagement in ULLs is not a simple yes/no question; it is better understood as a spectrum of intensity. This spectrum ranges from minimal involvement to strong shared control:

- Symbolic engagement - Citizens are asked for input (for example through surveys or consultations) but their contributions are not meaningfully integrated in decision-making.



- Engagement by advice – Citizens provide feedback via interviews, questionnaires or focus groups, which can inform the project but do not necessarily influence its overall direction.
- Engagement by doing (action) - Citizens participate actively in co-design activities, workshops and prototyping, influencing the content and form of solutions.
- Strong control - Citizens hold significant decision-making power over priorities, budgets or final choices; their perspectives can determine which solutions are adopted.

For youth-focused co-creation, working towards engagement by doing and, where possible, towards strong control helps ensure that interventions truly reflect young people's needs and aspirations.

Citizen Science

Citizen engagement increasingly connects with citizen science, especially in relation to monitoring environmental and social conditions. “Citizen sensing” refers to the use of tools such as mobile apps, low-cost sensors, online platforms or simple observation protocols that allow residents to collect data about their environment – for example, air quality, noise levels, perceived safety, or use of public spaces. In an ULL, citizen-generated data can feed into the exploration and evaluation phases: young persons might map where they feel safe or unsafe in a park, log how often they use certain spaces, or record temperature differences between shaded and non-shaded areas. This shifts citizens from passive informants to active data producers, whose contributions can influence how interventions are designed and assessed.

Ethics and data protection are essential here. Any citizen science or engagement activity should be based on informed consent, transparent communication about how data will be used, and respect for privacy and data protection regulations. Participation must remain voluntary, and particular care should be taken not to impose additional burdens on already disadvantaged groups.

2.4. Barriers, risks and good practices for inclusive co-creation

Common social barriers:

- distrust towards authorities or institutions
- lack of time or energy among citizens
- exclusion of specific groups such as young persons, migrants or minorities.

When engagement activities are scheduled at inconvenient times, held in unfamiliar venues, or framed in technical language, many potential participants are unable or unwilling to attend. Power imbalances can also surface inside workshops, where more confident voices dominate discussions while others remain silent.



Technical and process-related barriers often arise when tools or platforms are too complex, when digital literacy is low, or when tasks are overly long or demanding. This can lead to high “drop-out” rates: participants join at the beginning but gradually disengage because they do not see results, do not understand what is expected, or feel that their contribution is not making a difference. For youth-centred projects, it is particularly important to design activities that are engaging, time-bounded, and clearly connected to visible changes.

Risk minimisation

To mitigate these risks, several ethical and methodological principles are highlighted. Participation should always be voluntary, based on informed consent, and supported by clear, timely communication about roles, expectations and possible outcomes. Data protection must be respected, especially when working with minors or sensitive topics. Tasks can be broken into smaller “micro-tasks” so that participation does not require large commitments and can accommodate different schedules and abilities. Modest incentives or recognition may be considered, but always in ways that respect participants and avoid undue pressure.

Finally, communication and inclusion practices are crucial. “Radical inclusivity” means actively seeking diversity – in age, gender, background and experience – rather than simply accepting the first group that engages. Using multiple communication channels (social media, local newsletters, posters, school networks, youth organisations, cafés, libraries) helps reach different segments of the community. Meeting people in their own environments – for instance, holding workshops in schools, youth centres or familiar public spaces – makes participation feel safer and more relevant. Continuous feedback is key: participants need to see how their input influences the process, whether through visual summaries, updates, or concrete changes in the environment.

3. Participatory Methods in Urban Planning

Participatory design methods have evolved significantly over time. Originally, many design processes followed a user-centred approach, where people were mainly observed as research subjects and designers interpreted their needs. Today, many projects adopt co-design approaches, where people are considered partners in the design process and experts of their own experiences.

This shift is important because it changes the role of communities: from passive users to active contributors, and sometimes even co-decision-makers.

3.1. Co-Creation & Co-Design

Co-creation is the broad term for any form of collective creativity in which different people contribute ideas, perspectives and energy towards a shared goal. It can happen in a single workshop, an online platform, or an informal community gathering. What matters is that multiple voices are genuinely present and genuinely heard.



Co-design is more specific. It refers to applying collective creativity throughout the entire design process - not just at the beginning for diagnosis, or at the end for validation, but continuously: understanding problems together, exploring needs, generating ideas, and refining solutions in an iterative cycle. Co-design treats participants not as informants to be consulted, but as partners with genuine design agency. This distinction matters in practice. Many projects claim to involve communities but do so only superficially - presenting ready-made solutions for approval or running one-off consultations with no visible impact.

This distinction matters in practice. Many projects claim to involve communities but do so only superficially - presenting ready-made solutions for approval or conducting one-off consultations with no visible impact. Co-design, by contrast, means that community input genuinely shapes what is ultimately built, changed or decided.

In short, the shift is from designing for people to designing with people.

Key insight: thinking through making

One of the most consistent findings from co-design research is that people think more creatively when they make things, not only when they talk about them.

When participants create physical or visual artefacts, something important happens: they externalise ideas that are difficult to explain verbally, they explore possibilities by trying things out rather than simply imagining them, and they often surprise themselves.

This is why so many co-design methods are grounded in making activities - not as a creative exercise for its own sake, but as a more equitable and generative form of thinking together. For youth workers, this has a direct implication: the best participation sessions are rarely the ones where young people sit in a circle and answer questions. They are the ones where young people build, draw, map, arrange and then explain what they made.

3.2. 3 Common “Making” Approaches

In co-design, you don't learn to listen - you learn to do.

That is why many of the most effective tools in this field are based on manual, visual or physical activities that allow people to express ideas they would struggle to put into words. Three approaches are particularly common and useful in youth-focused contexts:

a. Probes

Probes are small research kits given to participants to use in their daily lives, outside the workshop setting. They may include diaries, postcards, cameras, or questions for reflection. The aim is to capture real moments of daily life: routines, emotions, difficulties. These fragments then reach the facilitator already imbued with authenticity, revealing needs that a classroom conversation rarely manages to touch



upon. In a public space, a probe might ask a young person to photograph moments when they feel excluded or uncomfortable in a park - and that record is worth more than any questionnaire.

b. Generative Toolkits

These sets of materials (e.g., images, words, shapes, maps, simple blocks) enable participants to create visual or physical representations of their ideas, past experiences and aspirations for the future. The key advantage is accessibility: you don't need to know how to draw or have a technical vocabulary of urban planning to participate meaningfully. A young person can use pieces of a map to indicate where they feel safe, where they avoid going at night, or where they would like to see a social space - and this information is directly useful to those involved in planning.



c. Prototypes

Contrary to what the name might suggest, prototypes in participatory processes do not have to be perfect or definitive. They can be simple models of spaces, sketches of new layouts, or mock-ups made from recycled materials. Their value lies not in the final result, but in the conversation they generate: by building something tangible, participants are able to discuss ideas, challenge assumptions and suggest improvements far more effectively than in abstract discussion.

3.3. Making, Storytelling and Acting

In practice, the best co-design sessions combine three types of interaction that reinforce one another:

- First, participants create something - a map, a model, a collage of a future public space.
- Then, they explain the story or reasoning behind what they have created: what they were thinking, what that space means, and what is missing.
- Finally, they act it out - imagining how that idea would work in reality, often through role-play or simulated scenarios.

This combination is powerful because it connects abstract ideas to concrete real-life situations.

3.4. Participatory Tools Used in Urban Planning

Serious Games

Serious games are games — involving rules, roles, cards or boards — that help groups explore complex decisions in a structured yet engaging way. They are particularly useful for simulating real-world dilemmas: how should space in a park be allocated among users with different needs? How should limited investment be prioritised? Who should have the greatest say in decisions? The game format reduces pressure, makes it easier for people who may feel intimidated by formal settings to participate, and highlights the trade-offs inherent in any urban decision.

Visual Mapping Tools

Participatory maps - physical or digital - enable groups to create shared representations of places, relationships and issues. A neighbourhood map drawn up collectively by young persons can reveal routes avoided for safety reasons, informal meeting places that do not appear on any official map, or areas perceived as 'belonging to others'. These tools also help to identify key actors, visualise connections between elements of the space, and explore how areas could be reorganised. In digital form, collaborative mapping platforms allow contributions to be gathered from a much larger number of participants.

Citizen Sensing and Citizen Science



Citizen sensing involves residents collecting data about their own environment using apps, low-cost sensors, online platforms, or simple observation protocols. In the context of a ULL or a participatory process involving young people, this approach can take very practical forms: recording temperatures in different areas of a park, mapping where lighting is present or lacking, documenting the frequency of use of different facilities. This data, generated by the community itself, can inform the diagnostic phase and strengthen the legitimacy of proposed interventions among policymakers.

3.5. Challenges in Participatory Urban Planning

Participatory methods when applied to urban planning, encounter structural tensions that practitioners need to anticipate and navigate honestly:

- a) **Scale** is perhaps the most persistent challenge. Most participatory techniques work best in small, trust-based groups where every voice can be heard and relationships can develop over time. But urban planning decisions rarely affect just one group in one room: they shape entire neighbourhoods, mobility corridors, or city-wide infrastructure for decades. The critical question is how to scale insights from intimate workshops into broader urban strategies without flattening the nuance, erasing minority perspectives, or reducing lived experience to a data point. There is no perfect answer, but good practice involves layering methods such as: 1) combining small group depth with wider surveys or digital engagement and 2) being explicit about how each layer of input will be weighted in decision-making.
- b) **Translating Participation into Decisions** is the second major challenge, and arguably the one that most often causes disillusionment. Participatory processes generate rich material: stories, drawings, mental maps, prototypes, emotional responses to spaces. This is precisely what makes them valuable. But planning institutions typically operate through a different language - indicators, design guidelines, spatial strategies, policy recommendations, cost-benefit analyses. Bridging these two registers requires deliberate effort. When it is skipped or rushed, community contributions risk to be reduced to ideas that disappear into reports no one reads. **Governance and Decision Power** are the third challenge - and the one that requires the most honesty. Participatory processes almost always take place during consultation or planning phases, well before the moment when physical infrastructures are defined and budgets are committed. This means that the level of influence communities have is real but bounded. Being transparent about these boundaries is not a limitation: it is an ethical obligation. Participants who understand from the outset what they can and cannot influence are far more likely to engage meaningfully, and far less likely to feel misled when they discover that some decisions were never actually open to input.



Barriers to Participation

Even when a participatory process is well designed, barriers can prevent the intended participants from contributing. Understanding these barriers is the first step towards dismantling them.

Some are structural: lack of trust in institutions built up over years of unfulfilled promises; language differences that make written materials or formal meeting formats inaccessible and logistical obstacles such as inconvenient times, unfamiliar venues, or lack of childcare. Others are more subtle: consultation fatigue (accumulated exhaustion of communities that have been asked for their opinions many times without seeing results); or the quiet conviction (justified by past experiences that participation will not lead to real change).

Effective facilitation for diverse groups - and particularly for youth and persons with disabilities - means actively creating conditions where different ways of knowing and expressing are equally valued. This involves providing accessible tools and multiple formats for contribution, clearly clarifying expectations at the outset, holding space for discomfort and disagreement, and, above all, ensuring that participants can see how their input is used as the process unfolds.

Practical Knowledge

Case Studies – Good Practices

PROJECT	COUNTRY	TYPE OF INITIATIVE	YOUTH INVOLVEMENT	MAIN RESULTS	SOURCE
PLAYGROUND4ALL	Portugal	Regeneration of sports facilities in marginalised neighbourhoods	Young people as community leaders; co-designing inclusive activities and spaces	Accessible spaces owned by the community, promoting social cohesion	Project Link
URBAN MOBILITY CLUB (UMC)	Romania	A participatory Living Lab focused on accessibility and inclusive design	Persons with visual impairments and professionals collaborate on digital tools	Bucharest's first tactile maps; the Tandem app for navigating the metro	ACT4DYS ePortfolio ; Zero Project
FURNISH / FURNISH-KIDS	Spain / Italy	Urban Living Lab with mobile urban elements	Young persons co-create and test temporary street furniture (Barcelona/Milan)	Flexible spaces for play and socialising; a model that can be replicated	Project Link
PLAY PLAN — BARCELONA	Spain	Urban planning focused on children and young persons	Co-creating inclusive and accessible play areas with children and young persons	Improving well-being, social cohesion and user-centred urban design	ACT4DYS ePortfolio ; Project Link
YOUTH PARTICIPATORY BUDGET — CASCAIS	Portugal	Youth participatory budgeting	Young people propose, vote on and monitor urban regeneration projects	Civic empowerment; funding for youth-led projects	Project Link
PARK LINEAR DE CUERNAVACA	Mexico	Participatory urban regeneration of an abandoned railway corridor	Young persons involved in the regeneration of green spaces in schools and local neighbourhoods	Integrating nature into the urban environment; improving mental and environmental health	Project Link
GREENOVATE — KOZANI	Greece	Regeneration of the town centre through nature and community involvement	Local community, including young persons, involved in the regeneration of the town centre	Green spaces, sustainable mobility, strengthened social cohesion	Project Link
YOUTH LIVING LABS	Europe (multiple)	Living Labs focused on young people	Young people as co-researchers and co-designers in real-world urban settings	Documented and replicable participatory methodologies	Project Link
OPEN NATURE	Europe (multiple)	Co-design in densely populated urban areas involving children and young people	Young people involved in the regeneration of green spaces in schools and local neighbourhoods	Integrating nature into the urban environment; improving mental and environmental health	Project Link



4. Understanding the Needs of Young People with Disabilities

Young people with disabilities often experience multiple, **intersecting barriers** in public spaces. These include uneven surfaces that make movement difficult, busy or noisy environments that may be overwhelming, a lack of accessible sports and recreational infrastructure, and social stigma. In addition, many public spaces lack clear information, safe lighting, or seating arrangements that accommodate different sensory and physical needs, which can prevent or discourage young people with disabilities from spending time there or participating in activities with their peers.

Listening to young people with disabilities is crucial for understanding these challenges in context. Youth-led mapping walks, photo diaries, and focus groups can reveal, for example, that a popular park is inaccessible at certain entrances, that there are no quiet areas for decompressing, or that existing sports courts are perceived as hostile or exclusive. These insights help youth workers and local authorities identify small but impactful changes, such as adding inclusive seating clusters, creating sensory-friendly micro-zones, or improving wayfinding, that make spaces more welcoming without requiring a complete redesign.

5. Strategies for Sustainable and Inclusive Youth Spaces

Several strategies can help ensure that youth-friendly public spaces are both inclusive and sustainable over time. Encouraging sustainable practices can involve co-designing spaces that support active mobility (e.g., bike parking, safe walking routes), integrating green infrastructure (shade trees, nature-based elements), and promoting shared use of sports facilities to reduce resource waste. Youth-led campaigns – online and offline – can reinforce these changes by celebrating low-carbon lifestyles, inclusive events, and care for public spaces.

Creating inclusive spaces requires combining physical and social interventions. On the physical side, this may include providing varied seating types, flexible areas that can accommodate both calm and active uses, clear sightlines for safety, and sensory adaptations for neurodivergent users. On the social side, it involves co-created rules, youth-led programming (events, tournaments, cultural activities), and co-management arrangements where youth groups share responsibility for the space with municipalities or community organisations. These approaches help shift public spaces from being merely “for youth” to being “by and with youth”, fostering a sense of lasting ownership and stewardship.

Connection to the Simulation Scenario

Scenario 3 translates the module’s concepts into a concrete design and facilitation challenge, in which participants act as youth workers guiding a youth-led redesign of a real park. The core idea is that youth workers practise facilitating a Living Lab-style process where young persons (18–29) co-design improvements to a real park or square, using tactical urbanism and participation tools to generate quick, testable interventions.



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Applying Theoretical Knowledge During the Design Phase

During the Design Phase, participants can use the frameworks introduced in this module (Urban Living Labs, New European Bauhaus (NEB), tactical urbanism, and youth participation tools) as a guiding lens for their teamwork. Teams composed of roles such as Urban Planners, Disability Advocates, Youth Representatives, and Environmental/Climate Advocates analyse a base map of the selected park and identify key issues: underused areas, accessibility gaps, safety concerns, and missed opportunities for youth activities.

Drawing on the concept of Urban Living Labs, teams treat the park as a real-life laboratory in which ideas can be tested through phased interventions rather than a one-off redesign. Tactical urbanism informs their thinking about small, low-cost prototypes (e.g., temporary seating, painted games, micro-sport modules) that could serve as first steps, while NEB principles help them ensure that proposals combine sustainability, inclusion, and aesthetic quality. Youth-led mapping and co-design tools introduced earlier in the module shape how they imagine involving young people in each step of the process.

Preparation for the Pitch and Presentation

The Pitch and Presentation phase requires teams to synthesise their ideas and communicate them convincingly, as if presenting to city officials and community stakeholders. Participants must explicitly connect their design and activation strategy to the module's frameworks, explaining, for example, how their plan:

- Embeds youth-led diagnostics and co-design;
- Uses tactical urbanism as a low-risk way to test changes;
- Reflects NEB values of sustainability, inclusion, and aesthetics;
- Addresses specific needs of diverse young persons, including those with disabilities.

In the exercise, youth workers practise framing youth proposals in language that resonates with decision-makers – highlighting benefits such as increased safety, better use of space, strengthened community ties, and alignment with SDGs and local strategies. This mirrors real-world advocacy where clear, evidence-based storytelling is essential.

Discussion Points for Debrief and Reflection

In the Debrief and Reflection phase, participants are invited to critically examine both their group process and the content of their proposals. Discussion prompts may include:

- What did your team learn about the needs and perspectives of different youth groups in the park?
- How did you integrate the voices and experiences of young persons with disabilities into your ideas?



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- Which participation tools (mapping, co-design, prototyping, budgeting, co-management) did you prioritise, and why?
- What trade-offs did you encounter between ambition and feasibility, or between quick wins and long-term change?
- How would you adapt this process in your own city or organisation, considering local constraints and opportunities?

These reflections help participants connect the simulation to their real work contexts and identify concrete steps they can take to implement youth-led co-development processes beyond the training.

Glossary of Key Terms and Acronyms

Term / Acronym	Full Form
WP	Work Package
NEB	New European Bauhaus
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
ULL	Urban Living Lab
NBS	Nature-Based Solutions

Resources & Bibliography

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- NEB Prizes 2025
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Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

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Urban Living Labs

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- The Living Lab Process – Youtube Video
- EIT Urban Mobility – Urban Living Labs overview: short explanations and project examples using ULLs in European cities.
- FURNISH / FURNISH-KIDS project pages: show how ULLs and Mobile Urban Elements were co-created and tested in Barcelona and Milan.
- “Empowering Communities Through Youth Innovation – Youth Living Labs” project: practical toolkit-style description of youth-focused living labs.
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- Minecraft as a participatory design tool in urban design
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Nature-Based Solutions

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- Nature-based solutions and their potential to attract the young generations. Chiara Giachino., Giulio Pattanaro., Bernardo Bertoldi., Luigi Bollani.,



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Alessandro Bonadonna (2021).

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Other Resources

- OPEN NATURE Project – co-design to rehabilitate dense urban areas with children
- Greenovate Project - revitalized the centre of the town of Kozani
- Discover the latest 116 URBACT Good Practices!
- Cascais, Youth Participatory Budget: Bringing the voice of young persons to policy-makers
- CASCAIS YOUTH PB - The process (Youtube video)
- Urban Design Forum – collection of best practices; civic lead organization
- NACTO – National Association of City Transportation Officials
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Module 3 – SCENARIO

A. Facilitator's Guide

Session objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- Identify physical, sensory and social barriers to the use of public space by young people, including persons with disabilities.
- Apply a co-creation perspective: starting from real testimonies to formulate intervention proposals.
- Recognise that accessibility solutions are also solutions of sustainability and urban quality.
- Negotiate compromises between diverse needs and concrete proposals.
- Leave with practical transferable tools for working with young people and municipalities.

Conceptual Framework (for the facilitator): Three concepts that structure the session

1. Tactical Urbanism - Low-cost, rapid, and reversible interventions that test changes before making them permanent. Terrace tables, temporary tactile flooring, pocket gardens.

2. Co-creation / Living Lab - Process in which end users participate in the definition, testing and evaluation of solutions. It is not consultation; it is co-authorship.

3. Public Space - A communal space designed to be accessible, inclusive and enjoyed by everyone. More than just a physical location, it is a social hub that encourages interaction, participation and a sense of belonging. The quality of public spaces directly influences how people use and relate to the city.

Session Structure (1h 30 min)

Time	Duration	Phase	Method
0-10 min	10 min	Opening: framing and presentation of the garden	
10-30min	20 min	Phase 1 - Diagnosis: "What is this garden?"	Guided reading + sticky notes
30–50min	20 min	Phase 2 – Role-Play: Testimonies of young people	Role-play + guided discussion
50–1:10 h	20 min	Phase 3 - Co-design: Three possible changes	Teamwork



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Time	Duration	Phase	Method
1:10– 1:25h	15 min	Phase 4 - Presentations and conflict negotiation	Quick pitches + discussion
1:25– 1:30h	5 min	Closing: what do I take from here?	Individual reflection

Materials Needed

- Per team (4 - 5 elements):
- Character Testimonials Card (one per participant) - Part C of this document
- Diagnostic Form - Phase 1 (Part D)
- Role-Play Sheet - Phase 2 (Part E)
- Co-Design Sheet A3 - Phase 3 (Part F)
- Post-its (3 colors: yellow = detail, orange = problem, green = solution)
- Markers
- Optional: Inspiration kit (photos of examples of inclusive spaces)

 **Accessibility Note:** Before the session, check the accessibility needs of the participants (wheelchairs, sign language interpreters, documents in accessible format, etc.). Adapt materials accordingly.

Facilitation Guide by Phase

Opening (0–10 min)

Icebreaker to open the session:

"Think of a public space that you use regularly. Can you imagine why someone with a motor, visual or sensory disability might not feel comfortable going there?"

Quickly present:

Session objectives

- The three key concepts: tactical urbanism, co-creation, importance of public space
- The dynamics of the session: four phases, teamwork with assigned characters
- Assign the character cards - each team receives a set of 4–5 characters

Phase 1 - Diagnosis (10–30 min)

- Guide the reading of the narrative with 3 focused questions:
- What physical barriers are there in this garden?
- Which youth groups are absent and why?
- What would your character say when entering this garden for the first time?

Facilitation tip: Do not let this phase become an abstract policy discussion. Keep the focus on the concrete: what exists, what is missing, who is excluded. Use the post-its as a tool for this.

Phase 2 - Empathy (30–50 min)

Each participant takes on their character's perspective. The team has read the testimonies and now answers the questions on the role-play sheet in their character's voice.

How to facilitate role-play:

Encourage specificity: no "Beatriz thinks that..." but "when I (Beatriz) enter the ramp feel..." The change of grammatical person activates embodied empathy.

Phase 3 — Co-Design (45 min — 1h10)

The teams develop three intervention proposals. Remember:

- Small and testable: a change that can be experienced in 30 days
- A proposal must touch on sustainability/climate (shade, vegetation, active mobility)
- A proposal must involve young people themselves in its implementation or testing
- A proposal should focus on inclusion

Examples of tactical interventions (shared orally, not imposed):

- *Temporary tactical strip + scents in the flowerbeds → orientation to Sofia*
- *Picnic table with side space for wheelchair + climbing plant → Beatriz and Inês with sustainable shade*
- *Stabilised (compacted) resource path to the → Tomás skate zone*
- *Quiet nook with high hedges + dense grass floor → Mariana*

Phase 4 — Presentations and Negotiation (1h10 – 1h25)

Each team presents 1–2 proposals in 2 min. Discussion questions for the large group:

- Who benefits the most? And who could be harmed or forgotten?
- Are these three changes compatible with each other, or do they create a conflict of use?



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- If they had €5,000 and 3 months, where would you start?
- How can young people be involved in these testimonies?

Closing — "What do I take from here?" (1h25 – 1h30)

Each participant writes one sentence (green post-it):

One thing I'm going to ask young people when I work with public spaces in my community."

Fix the post-its on a visible board. Take a photo as a collective memory of the session.

B. The Garden of Acacias - Narrative

This garden does not exist under this name. But it exists in many cities. Maybe in yours.

The garden has existed for more than 80 years. It has a fountain in the center that has not worked since 2019 - "under repair". It has well-tended rose bushes along the north wall. It has old trees, which command respect, with roots that, over the decades, have pushed the pavement up - one centimetre here, two centimetres there - until they transform it, full of undulations and fissures. The garden occupies about 1.8 hectares. Big enough to feel spacious, but small enough that all paths eventually cross the center.



The main entrance is accessible via three steps - small, almost discreet - that separate the promenade from the garden. There is also a side ramp. The ramp is there, but the material used does not offer the necessary grip. In addition, one of the centenary trees is located immediately next to the ramp and, since its implementation in 2017, the roots have been causing increasing irregularities in the surface. These deformations have already reached a point where wheelchair users can no longer access the ramp independently.



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Inside the garden

The main paths are made of Portuguese cobblestone. For those who use a wheelchair, it is a sequence of constant vibrations. For those with low vision and use a cane, it is an unpredictable floor.

The secondary paths are on dirt. In the summer, they kick up dust. In winter, they get muddy. They are not delimited, they do not have their own lighting. Street lighting only covers about half of the garden.

The benches are made of cold stone, without backrests. There are no outlets. There is no Wi-Fi. There is no cover or structure that protects from the strong sun of July or the rain of November.

❖ What does the data tell us?

In a survey carried out by the parish council in 2023:

- 68% of residents between the ages of 18 and 29 do not use the garden regularly.
- Reasons cited: "there's nothing to do" (41%), "I don't feel comfortable" (29%), "it's not safe at night" (22%).
- Less than 12% of daily users are young people between the ages of 18 and 35.

The percentage of young adults with disabilities who use Jardim regularly is unknown – it has never been measured.

C. Character Testimonies

Print this sheet, cut out the cards and distribute one card per participant. Each team member takes their character's perspective throughout the session.

Beatriz 22 years old

College student - Manual wheelchair user

"I like to go to the garden with my friends. But we never managed to make the route we wanted . The main path is the most beautiful, but the sidewalk vibrates so much that after ten minutes I start to feel pain in my back. The benches don't help



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either: they are leaning against the paths and there is no space next to it for me to park the chair and be at the same level as my friends. Once, I needed to use the accessible toilet - it was locked. The key has to be requested at the parish council, which is only open between 9 am and noon. I ended up having to leave the garden."

What I wanted: A continuous, level path that crosses the garden from one end to the other; benches with side space for wheelchairs; a truly accessible bathroom.

Mariana 19 years old

Autism Spectrum Disturbance · Sensory hypersensitivity

"Sometimes I really need to leave the house and go to a green place and get some air. But parks can be difficult for me. There is a lot of noise, many people, many things happening at the same time. In the garden there is a corner with big trees that I like very much. The light is softer and you can hear the birds. The problem is getting there: the paths all pass through the central area, where there is always music, children running, people talking loudly. Sometimes I can. Other times I go back."

What I wanted: A quiet area with shade and grass. It doesn't have to be big, but accessible without having to go through the chaos.

Sofia 26 years old

Low vision (partial functional vision, no guide)

"I've been to the garden many times, so I know more or less the space. But if I enter through a different entrance, I get disoriented. There's nothing telling me where I am – no different texture on the floor, no reference sound. Once, I entered through a side entrance and it took me almost twenty minutes to realise where I was. I ended up standing there waiting for someone to come by to ask for help. It was strange, because it seemed that the problem was mine."



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What I wanted: Tactile pavement at entrances and at key intersections. And aromatic plants in the beds - in addition to being beautiful, they help me to orient myself by the smell.

Tomás 18 years old

Skater · Recent ankle injury

"I've been coming to this garden since I was a kid to skate. There is a paved area that is perfect for this. Two months ago I injured my ankle. I thought I could come anyway, just to be with my friends. But the route there is all irregular. Between the pavement and the roots of the trees lifting the ground, getting to that area is very difficult for me at the moment. My friends still go on free afternoons, but I've been coming home."

What I wanted: A path where you can get to the skate zone without looking like an obstacle course.

Inês 22 years old

College student · Student worker

"Between classes and remote work, I spend many hours on the laptop. Sometimes, I would like to study in the garden instead of always being locked in the library or a café. But in the garden there are no tables. Nor comfortable places where you can study on the computer. The benches are made of stone and have no backrest. After a while I get full of back pain. There's also no consistent shadow for much of the afternoon - and the phone always ends up running out of battery."

What I wanted: Simple shaded desks, some more comfortable benches, and maybe solar charging points.



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D. Worksheet — Phase 1: Diagnosis

Team: _____

Characters: _____ / _____ /
_____ / _____ /

Instructions (15–20 min)

Read the narrative of the Acacia Garden and, each from the perspective of their character, answer the questions below. Then share as a team.

What physical feature of the garden did your character notice first?

What 2 main problems do you identify, from the perspectives of your characters?

What group or groups of young people are not reflected in this garden? Why?

Where do your characters' perspectives coincide? Where do they differ?



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E. Worksheet — Phase 2: Role-Play and Testimonies

Instructions (15–20 min)

Each member of the team responds in the voice of their character. Use the first person. Then discuss the differences and common points as a team.

Character	What barriers do I encounter in this garden?	What do I need or want from this space?
Beatriz		
Mariana		
Sofia		
Thomas		
Inês		

What common patterns emerge from the various testimonies? What shared needs do you identify?



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F. Co-Design Sheet — Phase 3: Three Possible Changes

Instructions (20–25 min.)

Propose three concrete interventions. Each must:

- *Respond to what one or more characters need;*
- *Be realistic and testable (low cost, reversible, achievable in 30–90 days);*
- *At least one must have a sustainability dimension (green, shade, climate) and another an accessibility dimension (physical or sensory)*

CHANGE 1

What change do we propose?

Who benefits?	Who can be negatively affected?	How to involve young people in implementation?

CHANGE 2 – (include a sustainability/climate dimension)

What change do we propose?

Who benefits?	Who can be negatively affected?	How to involve young people in implementation?

CHANGE 3

What change do we propose?

Who benefits?	Who can be negatively affected?	How to involve young people in implementation?



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G. Sharing and Discussion

After the presentations, set aside 5 minutes for individual and collective reflection.

Group Discussion Questions (time permitting)

- What was the most surprising proposal you heard from another team?
- What conflicts of use have you identified? How were they negotiated?
- If you were to present these ideas to the City Council tomorrow, what argument(s) would you use?
- How could you replicate this exercise with young people from your community, using a real local park?

Key principles to retain

	Accessibility is not a special category: it is the basic condition of a dignified public space.
	What is sustainable is also inclusive: shade, greenery and stable floors respond to climate and mobility.
	Starting small is not starting badly: a tested tactical intervention is the best argument for permanent intervention.
	The voice of users is information: the testimonies of Beatriz, Mariana, Sofia, Tomás and Inês say more than any technical report.

Module 3 – ACTIVITY & EXERCISE

The following activity and exercise can be used during the simulation or as preparatory/supporting tasks. It is aligned with the scenario roles and is divided into 4 phases.

1. Design Phase Role Tasks

a) Urban Planner Role – “Structure and Flows”

Task: Using the base map of the park, identify circulation routes, “dead zones” , and conflict points (e.g., between pedestrians and cyclists, or quiet and noisy areas).

Note where quick, low-cost changes (markings, temporary barriers, lighting) could support youth use.

Output: A simplified diagram showing movement flows and 2–3 proposals for reconfiguring paths, entrances or lighting to better support youth gathering, visibility and mixed activities.

Prompt: “How can the park’s layout be adjusted so young people can move, meet and spend time safely?”

Theory into Practice	See Section 2 - Urban Living Labs, in particular the concept of ULLs as a space for real-world experimentation. The urban planner’s approach must incorporate the ‘living laboratory’ perspective: which changes can be tested in a reversible manner before becoming permanent?
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b) Disability Advocate Role – “Inclusive Experience Audit”

Task: Conduct a ‘walkthrough on paper’ of the park using a map: imagine step by step how different young persons (e.g., wheelchair user, blind or low-vision youth, autistic youth) arrive, move through, spend time and use the space, and list barriers and opportunities in each part of the route.

Output: A checklist with at least 3 key barriers and 3 proposed improvements (e.g., clearer wayfinding, sensory-friendly micro-zones, inclusive play/sport equipment, better lighting at entrances).

Prompt: “What small, realistic changes would immediately improve the experience for young persons with disabilities?”

Theory into Practice	See Section 3.1 - Co-design and Section 2.3 (Citizen Engagement) on the level of participation. An accessibility audit is more effective when carried out with young persons with disabilities, rather than merely about them - the ideal level of participation here is ‘engagement by doing’
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c) Youth Representative Role – “Belonging and Identity”

Task: Map where youth currently spends time in and around the park (or where they would like to), and describe feelings associated with those spots (safe, boring, inspiring, risky, calm).

Output: 1–2 personas and a simple “mood map” of the park from a youth perspective, identifying priority areas for activation.

Prompt: “What would make this park feel like ‘ours’ rather than just a place we pass through?”

Theory into Practice	See Section 3.2 - Making approaches, specifically probes and generative toolkits. The ‘mood map’ requested in this task is precisely an example of a generative toolkit: a way of making subjective experiences visible that would be difficult to express in conversation.
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d) Environmental/Climate Advocate Role – “Green and Active Futures”

Task: Identify opportunities to integrate nature-based solutions and active mobility (e.g., shade trees, pocket green areas, water points, bike/scooter parking) that align with youth lifestyles and climate goals.

Output: A shortlist of 3 - 4 interventions that link environmental benefits (shade, biodiversity, reduced heat) with youth wellbeing (comfort, play, sport, socialising).

Prompt: “How can the park support both climate resilience and youth wellbeing?”

Theory into Practice	See Section 1 - NEB, particularly the principles of sustainability and beauty. Nature-based solutions (NBS) are not merely environmental techniques — they are also responses to the need for more pleasant, fresh and welcoming spaces for young people.
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2. Group Co-design Exercise – “From Ideas to Prototypes”

Once individual role tasks are completed, teams combine insights into a shared concept:

1. Step 1: Each role presents its key findings (2–3 minutes each).
2. Step 2: As a group, select 3 - 4 priority interventions (e.g., youth co-managed sport hub, quiet garden, flexible event space, improved lighting and paths).
3. Step 3: Sketch a simple “tactical prototype plan” showing what could be tested in the next 6–12 months (e.g., pop-up furniture, painted games, micro-sport modules, pilot events) and what could be a longer-term investment or policy change (e.g., permanent skate area, new pavilion).

3. Living Lab Micro-Plan – “Test–Learn–Adapt”

Theory into Practice	See Section 2.2 - The 5 I’s Framework (Inform, Inspire, Initiate, Implement, Impact). The steps in your micro-plan should, in simple terms, correspond to these phases. Which phase are you starting? What do you need to do before moving on to the next one?
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(Youtube Video - [The Living Lab Process](#))

Building on their tactical prototype plan, each team prepares a brief Living Lab plan for the park, showing how youth-led co-creation would unfold over time, inspired by Urban Living Labs and projects like FURNISH and FASTER.

They specify:

- Step 1 Shared challenge: one guiding question for the park (e.g., “How can this park become a safe evening meeting place for young persons (18–29)”).
- Step 2 Co-exploration: 2–3 activities to understand youth needs (mapping walks, photo diaries, quick surveys).



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- Step 3 Co-design: number and type of workshops, who to invite (youth, disability organisations, municipal staff, neighbours), and tools to use.
- Step 4 Prototyping: 2 concrete tactical interventions the group would test on-site (e.g., a one-day youth sports festival, a pop-up youth corner, temporary markings for shared courts).
- Step 5 Reflection and scaling: how they would document and evaluate results (photos, feedback, mini-questionnaires) and how positive outcomes could be turned into permanent changes or policy proposals.

4. Debrief Discussion Prompts

After the pitches, facilitators (youth workers) lead a debrief where participants reflect on both process and content:

- Facilitators can use questions such as:
- Which role did you find the most challenging and why?
- How did the presence (or lack of) of disability perspectives change your final design?
- Where did you feel tension between youth wishes and institutional constraints (budget, regulations, neighbours)?
- What is one concrete activity you could implement in your own context within the next six months to start a youth-led co-development process?

These activities and prompts ensure that participants not only understand the concepts but also experience what it means to facilitate youth-led co-creation of public spaces, preparing them to transfer these skills to real-world projects.



Module 2 – RUBRIC

Rubric for Evaluating Scenario 3: Creating Youth-Friendly Public Spaces

Criteria	5 - Exemplary	4 - Proficient	3 - Satisfactory	2 - Needs Improvement	1 - Unsatisfactory
Use of character testimonies in co-design	Proposals clearly and directly draw on specific details from multiple character testimonies (Beatriz, Mariana, Sofia, Tomás, Inês); the team makes explicit links between each character's stated barriers or wishes and the proposed changes, demonstrating deep empathic engagement across diverse profiles.	Proposals respond well to several testimonies; the team considers concrete barriers and wishes described by the characters, even if not all voices are equally represented in the final interventions.	The team references character testimonies and uses them as inspiration, but links between proposals and specific barriers or wishes are only partially developed or inconsistently applied across the three changes.	Proposals remain mostly generic; testimonies are mentioned superficially or not clearly connected to the suggested changes — the interventions could have been designed without engaging with the characters' perspectives.	Character testimonies are largely ignored; proposals show no evidence of empathic reading of the character cards and could have been written without consulting them.
Inclusiveness and disability awareness	Proposals clearly identify significant physical, sensory and social barriers (e.g. cobblestone paths, inaccessible ramp, lack of quiet zones, absence of tactile guidance) affecting young people with different disabilities and life situations, and propose realistic, specific adjustments that reduce these barriers; inclusion is visible across all three proposed changes.	Several relevant accessibility and inclusion issues are identified (physical, sensory, social) and the team offers solid ideas to address them, even if some character profiles or types of barriers are less thoroughly explored.	The team recognises a few accessibility and inclusion issues and suggests basic adjustments, but these are limited in scope or not central to the proposed concept; at least one character's needs are overlooked.	Disability or inclusion is mentioned briefly, with vague measures; the team shows limited understanding of how different disabilities translate into specific spatial needs within the Jardim das Acacias context.	Disability and inclusion are not considered; proposals may maintain or increase existing barriers described in the scenario narrative.
Environmental sustainability integration	At least one proposal includes a substantive sustainability dimension (e.g. shade structures, aromatic planting for sensory orientation, stabilised permeable	The team includes relevant sustainability ideas and broadly connects	Sustainability features are mentioned in general terms (e.g. "more trees", "better lighting") with	Environmental or sustainability aspects are marginal or decorative; the team's	No attention is given to environmental quality or climate comfort; proposals



Criteria	5 - Exemplary	4 - Proficient	3 - Satisfactory	2 - Needs Improvement	1 - Unsatisfactory
	surfaces, solar charging points, pocket garden) clearly linked to how young people would benefit in terms of comfort, climate resilience or everyday use; the connection between sustainability and inclusivity is made explicit.	them to improved youth experience (e.g. shade linked to Inês's need to work outdoors, vegetation linked to Mariana's need for a quiet green corner), even if the connection is not fully elaborated for all proposals.	limited detail on how they affect the specific characters' experience of the space; the required sustainability dimension is present but surface-level.	proposals may inadvertently increase hard surfaces, car dependence or sensory overload without mitigation.	could make the garden less pleasant, less sustainable or less accessible than it currently is.
Realism and practicality of proposed changes	All proposed changes are small-scale, concrete and could realistically be piloted within 30–90 days with limited resources (e.g. temporary tactile strips, movable picnic tables with wheelchair space, rope-guided aromatic planting borders); the team demonstrates awareness of constraints such as cost, permissions and maintenance.	Most proposals are realistic and could be tried with some organisation; feasibility is generally good even if details (costs, permissions, sequence) are not fully worked out; the team shows awareness that small, testable changes are preferable to large permanent ones.	The team includes some feasible ideas, but attention to practicality is uneven; some changes seem realistic, others are more optimistic or vague; the distinction between a tactical pilot and a permanent renovation is not always clear.	Proposals are vague, overly ambitious or poorly adapted to the scenario's constraints; it is difficult to imagine them being piloted in practice, even at a small scale.	The plan is clearly impractical or internally inconsistent; there is no indication of how any proposal could be implemented, even temporarily; the team has not engaged with the concept of short-term testable change.



Criteria	5 - Exemplary	4 - Proficient	3 - Satisfactory	2 - Needs Improvement	1 - Unsatisfactory
Negotiation of conflicting needs and use	The team explicitly identifies at least one potential conflict between proposed changes or between different characters' needs (e.g. a lively skate area vs. Mariana's need for quiet) and proposes a credible way to negotiate or mitigate this conflict; the reasoning reflects an understanding of shared public space.	The team acknowledges potential conflicts or trade-offs between their proposals and considers how different user groups might be affected, even if their negotiation strategy is not fully developed.	The team mentions that conflicts could arise but does not meaningfully explore them; the presentation focuses mainly on benefits without seriously considering who might be disadvantaged or excluded by the proposals.	Conflicts between uses or needs are not considered; the team presents proposals as universally beneficial without reflecting on possible tensions or exclusions.	The team shows no awareness that public space involves competing needs; proposals are presented without any consideration of trade-offs, conflicts or the diversity of the user group.