



Call for participants - Connective Cities Dialogue Event

Urban Gardening

Berlin, Germany, 22nd- 24th April 2020

Connective Cities and the Berlin districts of Mitte, Pankow, Tempelhof-Schöneberg, Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf and Lichtenberg invite municipal practitioners to the **Dialogue Event on Urban Gardening** to be held **in Berlin, Germany from 22nd to 24th April 2020**.

The event is geared towards both German and international municipal actors working on different aspects of urban gardening and its inclusion in city development strategies and plans.

Urban gardening is becoming a more and more important issue when talking about sustainable urban development. Stakeholders' objectives to promote urban gardening are multi-layered: For a greener city, for social inclusion and integration, for winning back public space, for supporting climate-proofing urban development. Urban gardens are part of a livable, lively and sustainable urban society. Furthermore urban gardening is a cross-cutting issue that calls for the involvement of stakeholders across sectors and therefore should be addressed with a cross-departmental approach and incorporated at different levels in the urban development plans and projects of cities. While urban gardening is regarded as a citizen oriented form of activity, urban agriculture is seen as a more commercial sector. Urban gardening is seen as a positive aspect of urban development, the benefit of urban agriculture contributes inter alia to better food security.

Connective Cities is organising the event in close collaboration with five Berlin districts which are themselves involved in this topic and are eager to share their own experiences.

Background

By 2050 70% of the world population will be urban. This means that cities are growing, becoming denser, which further increases challenges for a sustainable urban development. Fast growing cities get more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and face a steady flow of migration towards them. A greener urban development contributes directly to local climate adaptation and is needed to strengthen urban resilience, to increase social cohesion and as a measure to improve food security.

Thematic focus of the dialogue event

In order to be able to discuss the broad field of urban gardening at a practical level, the Connective Cities dialogue event in Berlin will focus on three specific aspects:

- Anchoring urban gardening in the city (urban planning, city-wide concepts)
- Social and intercultural learning in urban nature
- Urban agriculture and regional value creation chains

Anchoring urban gardening in urban planning and city-wide concepts

Urban greenery and urban gardening are part of a livable and sustainable urban community. “Green” planning approaches emphasize urban-nature relationships and patterns, through green belts and land-use zoning (UN-Habitat, *World City Report*, 2016). As cities grow worldwide the urban spaces become increasingly dense and a competition for land purposes arises. Urban planning that integrates the vital need for green spaces in the cities is an important tool to sustain existing green spaces and to be able to continue to promote urban gardening.

Urban gardening more than traditional parks or green spaces offers a potential of innovative usage for urban spaces. It comes potentially into consideration in contexts of conversion or temporary usages.

Urban gardening: Social and intercultural learning in urban nature

Urban gardens are considered as modern community hubs (Urbact, *Are Urban Garden the place for modern Community hubs?* 2019) where new forms of neighbourhood, (inter-)cultural exchange and active citizen participation take place. Gardens are also places of learning about nature and food production for both adults and children. Schools, kindergartens and community groups are important stakeholders in urban gardening projects. The municipal administration can act as a multiplier for the mediation of the topic, promote acceptance and create opportunities for cooperation through its various offices and institutions. The practical contribution of the municipalities can consist in promoting appropriate gardening schools and school gardens as well as in considering the approach in an urban development perspective in the design of parks and green spaces.

Urban agriculture and regional value creation cycles

Besides the above stated relevance of urban gardening for sustainable urban planning and its potential for social and intercultural learning, urban agriculture has various economic potentials. Urban agriculture can make an important contribution to household income and household food security, especially in poorer urban areas (RUAF Foundation, *Urban agriculture: what and why*, 2019).

This said, urban food production cannot sufficiently provide food for entire urban areas. Peri-urban and rural agriculture remains the main source for food production. Here, regionally focused production chains are of special interest: regional products need less transportation, less refrigeration and can supply cities with fresher food at competitive prices. The creation of economically, environmentally and socially sustainable regional value chains is of great interest both for the cities and their surrounding peri-urban and rural areas. (FAO, *on Urban agriculture*, 2019)

Objectives of the dialogue event

An involvement of experts from municipalities, civil society and their organisations, as well as research, academia and businesses provides the right platform to pool experiences, discuss challenges and generate ideas for urban gardening.

The aim of the exchange is to get to know **best practice examples** from municipalities with different local conditions. Here, the interest is mainly in **pragmatic solutions and approaches that can be applied or adapted to the different regional contexts**. Furthermore the event will offer a platform to discuss the challenges around the theme of urban gardening and support municipalities in developing new **joint project ideas among peers that can be further implemented in the respective home communities or in the framework of existing or new thematic municipal partnerships**.

This dialogue event is the **first step** of what we call a “**Connective Cities learning process**”. Selected project ideas developed as part of this event will have the **chance to be further supported by Connective Cities** through a follow-up activity such as an expert mission or a local project workshop, webinar or study tour and through advice on options for project financing. The final goal of a Connective Cities

learning process is to support a municipality with **peer-advice** towards external or third-party financing allowing the implementation of a fully-fledged project resulting from this learning experience.

Participation and contact

If you wish to participate and **actively contribute to the dialogue event with a project** you are planning or implementing that fits in the thematic focus of event, **we warmly invite you to apply for a participant spot** at the event. To do so, please send us an email with your function and organisation as well as with a short description of the project you would like to showcase. We welcome the participation of **municipal delegations of two experts** respectively working in the **environmental, planning departments or green space department** to present their project cooperation. One of the participants may also represent other relevant urban actors from civil society, private sector or academia. Please apply as soon as possible – the event is limited to a maximum of 35 participants.

If you have any queries about the event and the participation process, we encourage you to contact us. Alexander Wagner, alexander.wagner@engagement-global.de, +49 (0)228-20717-455

Connective Cities at a glance

The international exchange platform Connective Cities has been bringing together international urban practitioners from city administrations, civil society, academia and the private sector since 2013. Connective Cities is a cooperation project of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the German Association of Cities and Engagement Global with its Service Agency Communities in One World. For more information on past and upcoming activities please check: www.connective-cities.net

Factsheet: All information at a glance

Date & Place	22 nd - 24 th April 2020, Berlin, Germany
Duration	2.5 days including site visits
Criteria for participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Practical perspective and first-hand experience in municipal strategies and projects in the area of urban gardening or urban agriculture - Presentation of a local good practice example - Willingness to engage in an exchange about current needs and challenges in this thematic area
City delegations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A city is ideally represented by two participants - At least one of the two participants should represent a relevant department of the municipality; the second participant may also represent other relevant urban actors from civil society, private sector or academia.
Thematic focus	<p>The event will focus on the following aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social and intercultural learning in urban nature - Anchoring urban gardening in the city (urban planning, city-wide concepts, conflicts of interest) - Urban agriculture and regional value creation chains
Expertise	German practitioners will present the experiences they have made on their way towards strengthening urban gardening. International participants will share their knowledge and good practices on this topic. Both, German and international urban practitioners will also share and discuss their challenges.
Objective	<p>Initiate a practice-oriented exchange between German and international practitioners active in urban gardening or urban agriculture</p> <p>Facilitate peer-to-peer learning</p> <p>Foster the development of concrete project ideas</p>
Language	English, exceptional interpreting services in Portuguese only upon request

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Commissioned by



In cooperation with the Berlin districts of Mitte, Pankow, Tempelhof-Schöneberg, Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf, Lichtenberg and Promoter for municipal development policy

