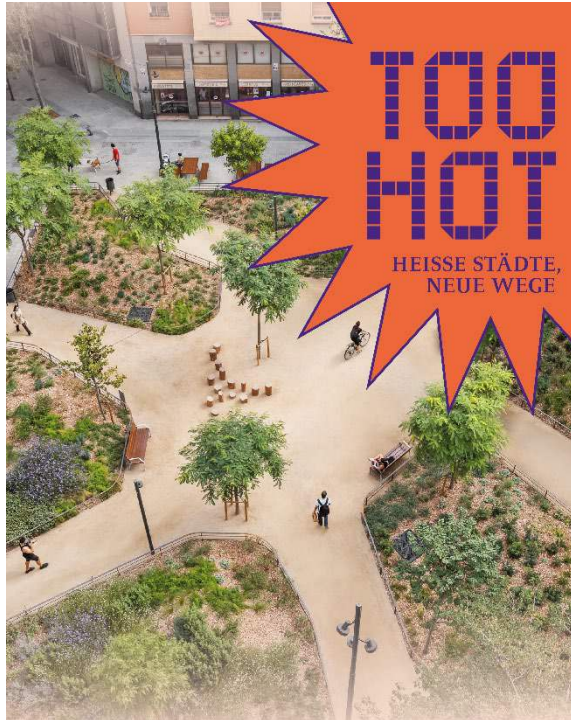


# PRESS

INFORMATION of June 18, 2026

Frankfurt / Main



Rocafort Square in Barcelona, o8014 arquitectura; Photo: Pol Viladoms / Graphics: Ammon Studio

## **TOO HOT** **Scorching Cities, New Ideas**

**June 20, 2026 – February 7, 2027**  
Deutsches Architekturmuseum (DAM)  
Schaumainkai 43, 60596 Frankfurt/Main - Germany

PRESS CONFERENCE:  
Thursday, June 18, 2026, 1 p.m.

EXHIBITION OPENING:  
Friday, June 19, 2026, 7 p.m.

PUBLIC GUIDED TOURS:  
On Saturdays and Sundays, 3 p.m.

OPENING HOURS:  
Tue/Thurs-Sun 11 a.m.–6 p.m., Wed 11 a.m.–8 p.m.,  
closed on Mondays

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Owing to climate change, cities are getting ever hotter – with tangible consequences. Heat, drought, water scarcity, and flooding, all make it clear how urgently urban spaces need to be rethought and redesigned. Since cities cause the lion's share of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, they also bear a special responsibility in this regard – for example, when converting infrastructure and public spaces. Many of them seek to become climate-neutral over the next 15 years. What does that mean for the future, for planning, architecture, and life in cities?

The exhibition *Too Hot* at Deutsches Architekturmuseum (DAM) presents examples from 13 European cities with different climates, ranging from small towns to metropolises. They are all responding to the climate crisis, and they are all taking concrete measures for climate protection and adaptation; the spectrum ranges from built projects or strategic planning to civil society initiatives. The exhibition visualizes the very many different shapes this change can take and outlines the social issues and debates on public policy that go hand in hand with it.

## BACKGROUND

Over the last hundred years, temperatures in Europe have risen by an average of 2.4 degrees Celsius – in Germany, by as much as 2.5 degrees Celsius. Since 1951, the number of hot days in Germany has increased by 208 percent. Worldwide, more than 832,000 people died as a result of extreme weather events between 1995 and 2024, particularly due to heat waves and storms.

Under the Paris Climate Agreement, 197 countries committed to limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels wherever possible. Current projections, however, suggest that this target will be missed: if current policy measures continue unchanged, warming of approximately 2.8 degrees Celsius is expected by the end of the century. Cities are simultaneously contributors, those affected, and key drivers of change – the consequences of the climate crisis are especially visible here, as are social inequalities.

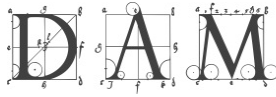
## THE EXHIBITION

*Too Hot* guides visitors through several thematic areas: the scientific foundations and policy goals, urban infrastructure, and methods for measuring urban climate. Interviews with experts on health, social justice, resource management, and greenwashing broaden the perspective. The exhibition closes with the question: *What's next?!*

At its core are thirteen European cities – from Finland to Greece, from Great Britain to Poland – each demonstrating different strategies for dealing with the climate crisis.

Several examples make the transformation of urban spaces tangible: Copenhagen uses parks and plazas as dedicated retention spaces for heavy rainfall. Vienna is piloting shared energy and cooling supply for an entire residential block. In Paris, green roofs installed beneath historic zinc rooftops significantly lower summer temperatures. Barcelona is cooling its densely built urban fabric through a network of tree-lined streets and new public squares.

Several cities are pursuing long-term structural change: Łódź is uncovering rivers and integrating them into the city as green corridors. Lappeenranta combines climate education with a transition to renewable energy. Liepāja is expanding public transit to reduce car traffic.



Civil society initiatives round out these approaches: in Totnes, local community groups are organizing the phase-out of fossil fuels. Frankfurt/Main, finally, shows how residents are advocating for the preservation of green spaces and cold-air corridors – and in doing so, bringing the competing priorities of urban development into plain view.

Artistic and scientific works offer additional ways into the theme of climate. A "swarm" of wind vanes on the museum's rooftop makes air currents visible; a rain catcher demonstrates how valuable water can be collected using simple means. Mobile climate measurement devices and a monitoring station provide insight into ongoing research projects.

## EXHIBITION TEXTS – 5 REGIONS, 13 CITIES

Region 1 – Boreal: Lappeenranta / Liepāja / Stockholm

Region 2 – Atlantic: Houten / Paris / Totnes

Region 3 – Alpine: Bern / Vienna

Region 4 – Continental: Frankfurt/Main / Copenhagen / Łódź

Region 5 – Mediterranean: Barcelona / Kalamata

### REGION 1 - BOREAL

LAPPEENRANTA, FINLAND

#### **Redesigning energy systems and educating on them**

Its location on the shores of Lake Saimaa defines Lappeenranta's development: The lake forms a natural setting for research and education projects on the topics of energy and the environment. Activities by the city, the university, and regional partners are concentrated here. At the same time, the lake is actively used for climate adaptation measures, such as for renaturing, protecting biodiversity, securing drinking water, purifying water, and as flood protection.

Lappeenranta aspires to become climate-neutral by the year 2030, and to this end is consistently transforming its energy supply system. After turning away from natural gas, the municipality is prioritizing bioenergy, climate-neutral electricity, and industrial waste heat. In particular, the focus is on the field of heating, which often causes the greatest emissions in Nordic cities, while at the same time securing affordable and stable energy prices.

At the same time, Lappeenranta is active in European networks in order to move climate goals forward and exchange knowledge. Sustainability is considered a cross-cutting task in this regard that brings together the fields of energy, a circular economy, biodiversity, and environmental education.

Decarbonizing heat: rethinking remote heating systems

The Lappeenranta remote heating system is a central network supplying many buildings with heating and had gradually been modernized. After the turn away from natural gas, the municipality is prioritizing bioenergy, renewable electricity, and industrial waste heat as sources. The heat is kept in a storage system, the electricity stored in batteries. An AI-supported control system adapts generation to demand and prices on an ongoing basis. Buildings can likewise temporarily store heat, which further reduces the use of fossil fuels and means electricity and heating markets can be more readily interfaced. Thanks to the



municipality owning the system, the City Council can set prices long term in such a way that affordable and sustainable heat supplies are available for everyone – favored in addition by low electricity prices.

### **Climate competence from a young age**

All general schools in Lappeenranta are permanently linked to LUT University (Lappeenranta–Lahti University of Technology), which is specialized in renewable energies and sustainable development. The collaboration covers projects, workshops, and experiments on energy, the circular economy, clean water, and sustainable business models. The school students explore phenomena, identify patterns in nature, and forge links to regional energy and environmental issues. As part of the official curriculum, the program covers all preschools, elementary schools, and high schools, and in this way guarantees equal access to learning with a scientific basis.

### **Renaturing the Pien-Saimaa: securing water quality longterm**

The west section of Lake Saimaa, the Pien-Saimaa as it is called, suffers from high inflow of nutrients, in particular phosphorous and nitrogen, as well as from slow water regeneration at the same time. As a result, the quality of the water is deteriorating. Together with a nature conservation organization, the City of Lappeenranta is supporting a long-term renaturing program. Among others, the measures include renaturing swamplands, erosion controls, and last but not least improving fish habitats and spawning grounds. The project is being supported by environmental education and the inclusion of landowners. Furthermore, the measures improve the resilience of the ecosystems. The quality of the lake's water has demonstrably improved.

## **LIEPĀJA, LATVIA**

### **Coastal protection, local public transportation and digitization**

Located between the Baltic Sea and Lake Liepāja, Liepāja is a windy Latvian port city with strong links to water. The port and the ten-kilometer-long sandy beach have decisively influenced Liepāja's development. At the same time, the city is closely connected to its maritime industrial history.

The city's geographical position triggers considerable climate risks, in particular coastal erosion and flooding. In 2023, this became more than apparent when soil subsidence damaged a recycling plant and sewage sludge flowed into the Baltic. Moreover, Liepāja is on the verge of transforming its existing buildings: The plan is to convert the facilities once used by the Soviet fleet stationed here as well as a steelworks that closed down in 2013.

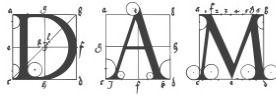
Liepāja is focusing first and foremost on the transportation sector in its effort to become climate-neutral by 2030. A total of 46 percent of emissions are caused by car traffic, which is why the city is expanding local public transport and the cycle-path network. Digital solutions such as traffic-flow sensors help optimize municipal management tasks.

### **Expanding local transportation facilities**

In order to kick-start the mobility transition, a strong effort is being made to enhance the attractiveness of local public transportation in the city and its region. The tram networks and rail links are being modernized, and affordable digital tickets (0.90 euros) are being introduced. Added to which, Liepāja is expanding its cycle-path network and with EU support investing in micro-mobility, traffic calming, and the upgrading of the central railway station to create a regional mobility center.

### **Exploiting digitization**

With the help of EU funding, Liepāja is pressing the pedal on digitization: Sensors analyze traffic flows and help optimize waste management. At the same time, the digital infrastructure is being used for the



purposes of boosting awareness of climate protection and environmental issues. The collection of personal data should be viewed with a critical eye. Via an online platform, local inhabitants can participate in all manner of events, submit projects, take part in decision-making processes, and apply to use municipal services. This saves resources, reduces car use, and lowers air pollution. The *GaiaHub* app transparently posts data on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, traffic volumes, and air quality.

### **Coastal protection**

Human interventions such as the construction of the port back in the 19th century, and the greater frequency of storms are combining to accelerate the pace of coastal erosion. In order to limit flooding and the loss of land, the city has installed a 225-meter-long breakwater (mole). The coastal reinforcements prevent sand being sucked back into the sea and protect the sewage treatment plant against damage; in this way they help prevent pollution of coastal waters.

### **STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN**

#### **Constructing large-scale projects in a cyclical manner free of fossil fuels**

Stockholm straddles 14 islands at the confluence of Lake Mälaren with the Baltic Sea. In total, 40 percent of the city consists of water surfaces and green areas. The growth in the metropolitan region is, however, increasing the pressure on resources, housing, and free spaces. In this context, the municipal authorities addressed sustainability issues from an early date: In 1972, it hosted the first United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, and in 2010 the city was named the first European Green Capital. In the city, each year construction projects give rise to around 16 million tons of construction site waste, and the recycling ratio is low. A look at the global picture also reveals that the construction industry – particularly new construction – is responsible for about 40 percent of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The increasing density also constrains the development of green spaces, which are already suffering from drought periods anyway. Forecast higher incidents of torrential rainfall at the same time increase the risk of flooding.

To overcome these challenges, the City of Stockholm has set itself the goal of becoming fossil-fuel-independent by 2040. Conditions for planting trees in the city are being improved and the flood protection system upgraded. Urban development projects with a focus on solar power, utilization of waste, and saving water have helped lower emissions despite economic growth being maintained.

#### **Low-emission construction**

Stockholm is growing and requires new housing and the adaptation of the existing infrastructure. The city is focusing on reducing emissions on construction sites in order to achieve the climate goals it has set itself. The *Slakthusområdet* (slaughterhouse district) development zone functions as a test area in this regard. The first fossil-fuel-free construction contract was issued in 2022. Construction companies have to submit CO<sub>2</sub> calculations at an early stage, and only use electrically operated machinery. In 2025, the first project launched, relying completely on electrical machines. By 2030 all municipal construction tasks will be implemented without the use of fossil fuels.

#### **Improving infrastructure**

The Slussen lock separates the sea from Lake Mälaren, protects Stockholm's drinking water, and lowers the risk of flooding. The second largest transportation hub in Sweden runs across it. Decrepit concrete structures made it necessary to rebuild the lock system and design this municipal transportation hub ready for the future: Designed to exist for 100 years, the new lock can handle the rising sea level and far more water. Changed traffic management accords buses and bicycles priority and reduces car traffic. New public spaces along the water create additional recreational space.



### **Manage resources locally**

Stockholm's construction projects generate waste material on the scale of 16 million tons each year, with a low recycling ratio. *Norra Djurgårdsstaden* (Royal Seaport) is currently one of the largest European urban development districts and demonstrates one possible solution to this problem: Since 2019, the city has been operating a turnaround and logistics center to enable recycling of 80 percent of materials. This saves 10,000 loads being trucked to dumps, reducing construction site traffic by 25 percent and lowering CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2,500 tons. In this way, Stockholm is showing what potential local measures have for reducing emissions. In particular the construction sector has much potential in this regard.

## **REGION 2 - ATLANTIC**

### **HOUTEN, THE NETHERLANDS**

#### **Bicycle-friendly, green, and cooperative**

Houten is not far from Utrecht and is a model town built in the 1960s. A village with 3,000 inhabitants was transformed into a town for 50,000, planned as a sustainable extension to the existing settlement. A circular street network keeps cars at bay from the town center while safe cycle and pedestrian paths shape the urban fabric, and green open spaces connect neighborhoods.

Although Houten was planned as a cycle-town, climate change has brought new challenges: Torrential rains and flooding have made adjustments necessary. At the same time, the town is busy trying to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and to provide summer heat protection for cyclists and pedestrians.

Each year, Houten invests in planting trees, unsealing surfaces, expanding bicycle and pedestrian circulation and supporting local wind and solar farms in order to successfully become climate neutral.

#### **Securing mobility**

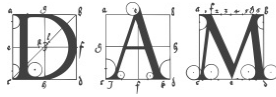
Houten has a clear advantage as regards sustainable mobility: The bicycle is its central means of transportation. Tunnels under intersections consistently separate cycle traffic from motor vehicles, cyclists have priority, and routes by bike are often faster than by car. Spacious cycle parking spaces at the railway stations also promote cycle use. A ring road (*Rondweg*) keeps cars out of the town center. In order to secure this benefit in the long term, the town is carefully investing in heat resilience: Each year, trees are planted for a total of 10,000 Euros, shade provided for cycle tracks, and thus cooling supported in a time of rising temperatures.

#### **Unsealing surfaces**

Houten is specifically reducing the risk of flooding by unsealing surfaces. The objective is to limit the proportion of sealed surfaces to 40 percent and have the remaining 60 percent consist of green areas and water surfaces. To this end, each year the municipality removes at least 3,250 square meters of asphalt; with each road built, 10 percent less surface is sealed. Moreover, at least 7,500 square meters of paved surfaces are separated from the drains and sewage system. Porous surfaces enable rainwater retention, lower flood risks, and maintenance costs. The town's inhabitants together care for the new green spaces.

#### **Rendering processes democratic**

In collaboration with other towns around Utrecht, goals, strategies and the basis for climate protection and adaptation are being developed, experiences exchanged, and mutual controls put in place. Trees covering 40 percent of areas in housing zones, on school yards, and around public facilities ensure heat protection; so-called "cool spots" (air-conditioned public meeting places) are a maximum of 300 meters from all houses. Regional cooperation also includes the energy transition, in particular the switch from gas to electricity. A civic council on energy, consisting of 100 people chosen at random, devised the



relevant strategy: By the year 2040, Houten will generate all the energy it requires locally and in a sustainable manner.

## PARIS, FRANCE

### **Greening rooftops, reducing car traffic, engaging the public**

Paris is one of Europe's most densely populated big cities. The cityscape is strongly influenced by the zinc roofs that help make up the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage site.

Paris really heats up, and not just under the roofs. Since industrialization, temperatures here have risen significant; by the year 2050, a further increase by 3.4 degrees Celsius is expected. The consequences can already be felt: increasing heat, water scarcity, and air pollution.

Since 2004, the municipal administration has therefore been targeting a fundamental transformation: It is replacing asphalt with greened surfaces, reducing car traffic, and adapting roofs and facades to the climate. Locations along the River Seine are being revitalized to cool the city and provide leisure-time space. Campaigns in the public realm are now running in order to create a stronger public awareness of this transformation.

### **Convert streets**

In 2022, a 30-km/h speed limit was introduced for almost all streets. This way, pedestrian and cycle mobility has been strengthened, and noise and pollutant levels reduced. The exceptions: the interstate ring-road and some main traffic arteries. The conversion of streets is especially visible in the traffic-calmed and greened "rues végétales" and "rues aux écoles". The latter are car-free, greened school streets that offer children a safe path to school with no exposure to fine particle pollution. The goal: to convert a total of 300 streets into pedestrian zones by 2026. This had already been achieved as early as September 2025; a further 500 streets are to follow. It bears noting critically that above all more affluent neighborhoods are benefiting, while the environmental stress remains in the outer districts of the city.

### **Designing roofs**

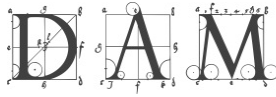
About 38 percent of the city's surface area consists of roofs; four out of five in Paris are made of zinc. Specifically zinc roofs heat up sharply and make life below them dangerous in summer. Roof greening and the Albedo effect (white coats of paint that reflect the sunlight) help diminish this and are supported by the municipality. The angled metal surfaces of the zinc roofs make greening difficult, however. Roofscapes is a start-up that has purpose-developed a greened roof superstructure in the form of a wooden platform. The superstructure cools the rooms underneath it, creates a space to spend time, stores rainwater, and promotes biodiversity. It was first realized on the roof of the Académie du Climat — where it showed that the indoor temperature during a heatwave was reduced by as much as 17 degrees Celsius.

### **Gone swimming**

At three central bathing points, swimming in the River Seine is now possible free of charge for the first time in almost a century. Cordoned-off bathing areas protect the swimmers from shipping and currents. As part of the 2024 Olympic Games, the sewage system was converted to ensure that far less bacteria enter the river. On the evening before the Games opened, the international Swimmable Cities alliance was founded in Paris and today over 100 cities and municipalities are members. It champions the right to safe bathing in public waters the world over.

### **Sensitizing the public**

Woods in front of City Hall and an artwork on the façade bearing the words "Respect Earth" highlight the thrust of Paris' climate policies. These signs are not limited to the *Hôtel de Ville* city hall: All over town,



poster campaigns provide information on the municipal activities and on places that are kept cool and the locations of public drinking water fountains. This is rounded out by three central contact points on the topics of Climate, Social Affairs, and Young People. Three former district civic halls serve as education centers and lay the foundations for the City of Paris' holistic strategy for the future.

## TOTNES, GREAT BRITAIN

### **Acting locally together**

In Totnes civil-society initiatives have long since been playing a central role in local developments. The town is considered to have acted as the launchpad of the international Transition Town Movement. The latter takes its cue from the scientific forecast that oil extraction will in the long term be economically unviable and a transition to other energy sources is needed. The objective is to strengthen the local economy, reduce environmental impacts, and thus become more resilient to the consequences of climate change. The idea of bidding farewell to oil by 2030, driven by the transformation of the food, energy, tourism, education, and healthcare sectors, is an ambitious undertaking. The initiative was not taken by the municipality, but by civil-society players. Around 200 volunteers from various groups are active in Totnes. Central structures bring these activities together in the fields of affordable housing, energy efficiency, and local business.

The model emphasizes personal transformation as the precondition for social change. A 12-phase plan documents the process and makes it readily comprehensible and transferrable to other cities.

### **Use hydropower**

The River Dart cuts through Totnes. The Totnes Weir hydropower plant is sited there, produces more power than originally forecast, and is also resistant to extreme weather events. Energy Local Totnes operates the plant as a communal initiative and combines hydropower with wind power and solar energy. The Totnes Renewable Energy Society (TRESOC) functions as the citizens' company handling marketing of the power. Households and small companies can buy renewable energy from it, lower their electricity bills, and also contribute to setting up a sustainable energy network in their community.

### **Promoting information exchange**

The *Totnes Climate Hub* is located in the center of town and serves as a meeting point and information exchange for the transition town; it offers spaces for knowledge transfer and joint projects. It was founded in 2018 after the town council had declared a climate emergency. The goal is to facilitate the efforts of people and companies alike, to give local initiatives a visible presence, and advance Totnes as a resilient, sustainable community. A library offers information on sustainability, nutrition, and climate change. The hub's team organizes events and makes spaces available for local groups and organizations. The hub is run by over 40 volunteers and a management team.

### **Caring together**

*Caring Town Totnes* is a partnership of over 80 local organizations from the voluntary, public, and private sectors. The network brings together resources, skills, and ideas in order to promote health and well-being in Totnes and the surrounding villages. It provides services and activities covering all phases of life, from the cradle to the grave. It is supported by local health centers and social services, voluntary initiatives, private providers of home care, churches, and the local job center. Thanks to this close network, Caring Town Totnes contributes to the comprehensive provision of care for the local inhabitants.

### **Promoting global information exchange**

The Transition Town Movement is a global network of over 1,100 local initiatives in more than 40



countries. It is based on the principles of permaculture, a concept for sustainable ways of living and habitats, and works with positive images of the future to lay the foundations for concrete activities to shape the future. The initiatives combine environmental and sustainability projects in order together to design the transition to a post-fossil economy with local roots. By means of alternative, local power generation, a circular economy, and educational services, the movement reduces reliance on fossil-based raw materials, lowers CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and improves wellbeing. This holistic approach is based on communal networked action.

### REGION 3 - ALPINE

BERN, SWITZERLAND

#### **Cooling things, unsealing surfaces, taking the initiative**

The climate in Switzerland's capital is influenced by the Alps and the River Aare. Unlike in the Canton of Bern, in the city, leftist and green parties have for some time now held a parliamentary majority. Bern is far smaller than Zurich, for example, and has fewer financial means at its disposal. That said, its circumscribed size and the political parameters facilitate the implementation of climate adaptation and mitigation measures: Decision-making processes are often faster and more experimental. In Bern as elsewhere, the ambient temperature is rising and with it the number of urban heat islands and of tropical nights. The quantifiable main sources of emissions in the city are the heating sector, transportation, and electricity generation.

The Aare channels glacier water, meaning the city faces the special threat of floods; however, the river offers Bern citizens a way to cool down in the summer.

In this context, initiatives and urban planning projects focus on flood protection and cooling, a switch to remote heating, and an increase in newly unsealed surfaces and cycle paths. Car traffic is essentially decreasing on municipal streets, while over the last ten years cycling has risen by about 60 percent.

#### **Marzili: Making swimming downtown safe**

With its *Aare you safe?* campaign, the City of Bern is supporting safe swimming in the river which is known for its fast currents. The longstanding outdoor and river swimming pool Marzili is located downtown in the immediate vicinity of the Swiss Parliament. Since 2019 there has been a swimming channel to make it easier for swimmers to exit the Aare; moreover, modernization work on the pool started in 2025 and a curtain wall now protects it against floodwaters. Entry to the majority of the municipal outdoor swimming pools is free of charge.

#### **Huebergass: Social and ecological construction**

The municipal allotment garden grounds were developed by a private construction company; a cooperative society was subsequently founded in which the 103 housing units can participate. Rainwater retention roofs, photovoltaic systems, remote heating connections and good insulation all attest to an ecological approach to building. Yet the presence of asphalt-covered areas and plastic windows highlight the twin poles of cost-effective vs. ecological construction. Rents are roughly one third lower than the average in the city, and occupants come from a mixture of social milieus. A central alleyway and the adjacent Hollingenpark encourage people to meet and chat. The City of Bern developed the park with the participation of its future users, and it is open to everyone. At the same time, gentrification processes in the former working-class district and the loss of green spaces were a subject of critical debate.

#### **Urban Climate Initiative: Redesigning transportation and unsealing surfaces**

The Urban Climate Initiative was established in several Swiss cities but was put in place in Bern on a



cooperative basis and very speedily. The main initiator: umverkehR, an independent non-profit that champions less car traffic and more eco-friendly urban spaces. On this basis, the Municipal Council resolved the Klimaanpassungsreglement (KAR, Climate Adaptation Ruling) that the city executive and umverkehR had spent a long time working on until a consensus was reached. Within a decade, the hard-topped road surfaces will be unsealed and transformed into zones for meeting and areas for pedestrians or cycle traffic.

## VIENNA, AUSTRIA

### **Securing housing, designing the public realm**

Vienna is facing the growing challenge of a higher incidence of hot days and tropical nights. The city has very built-up housing areas; these have little greenery and are affected by over-heating. Climate adaptation, urban development, and housing policy are closely interlinked here, as there is a great need for affordable housing.

One central approach relies on the role municipal and non-profit housing construction can have as well as a carefully focused land and housing policy. Modernization and upgrading existing housing, new housing construction programs, and the design of the public realm form the key areas for action. Here, housing is seen as part of the urban infrastructure that also influences the climate and use of public spaces.

The different levels the measures address are interlinked: from the individual housing block via neighborhoods to the overarching structures in urban planning. Construction, urban planning, and infrastructure are all aspects considered holistically in order to respond appropriately to the climatic changes.

### **Smart Block Geblergasse: Converting existing housing, dialing down the heat**

For the very first time, Vienna is now seeing a solar and geothermal-based energy system being installed for a privately-owned block from the turn of the 20th century. The goal: a decarbonized energy network for 18 properties. Solar energy is stored underground in the summer at a depth of up to 120 meters and used in winter by a heat pump to provide heating and hot water. In the summer, the same system cools the apartments and helps lower the city's ambient temperature. Customary climate appliances emit up to double the useful energy into the urban space as waste heat. Moreover, spacious courtyards, gardens, and open covered walkways provide ventilation and places where people can meet up.

### **Gemeindebau(t): A great tradition, new standards**

Vienna's municipal housing (*Gemeindebau*) runs to some 220,000 apartments in over 1,800 housing complexes. About one quarter of Vienna's population lives in municipal housing that has provided affordable housing ever since the 1920s. With the *Gemeindebau(t)* program some 1.2 billion Euro are being invested in modernization and new builds. Existing complexes are being thermally upgraded, fitted out with renewable energy sources, and their facades greened, shading installed, and other measures taken, all destined to counter overheating in summer. At the same time, new buildings are being constructed to the latest energy-consumption standards. Despite investments, new and modernized municipal buildings do not meet the total housing demand; many households are still waiting to be able to move into a subsidized apartment.

### **Westbahnhof: green, cool, fair**

At Westbahnhof there is a seven-hectare railway site, one of the last unbuilt areas in the densely populated late-19th century neighborhood of Vienna. Since 2018, a large park has been called for here. What began as a civil society vision grew through petitions, performances, and expert reports on biodiversity, cold air corridors, and social and urban planning aspects into a broad movement. Backed by



12,000 signatures, the initiative opposes the municipality's plans for partial development of the grounds. Visionary Walks, model building, sliding-into-the-park actions, and further interventions make the potential of the site visible. They accompany the dialogue with urban planning authorities, which will now be putting out a competition.

#### **Cool street: local cool-down in the summer**

As part of the Vienna *Heat Action Plan* (the municipal program to reduce heat islands), the City of Vienna administration is prioritizing mobile spray-mist systems, drinking fountains with a cooling function, and automatic cooling stele at selected sites. These measures are supported by ground-based fountains, parks, and greened sitting areas to help cool the city locally. Their impact is limited to a small space and depends on the weather; large-scale temperature reductions are as good as impossible. In the long term, trees and greened facades are more effective. They create shade, cool by evaporation, and enduringly lessen heat islands, while the spray-mist systems only offer short-term refreshment.

## **REGION 4 - CONTINENTAL**

FRANKFURT/MAIN, GERMANY

#### **Preserving green spaces and cold-air corridors**

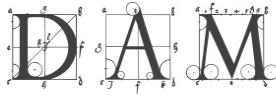
Frankfurt/Main is one of Germany's hottest cities. In fact, in 2018, it was the country's hottest city. The rising temperatures led increasingly to droughts and water shortages. Heat islands form in particular in the densely built-up downtown area as well as in industrial and commercial parks. The GrünGürtel Green Belt designed as an outdoor ring round the city and the River Main play an important part in cooling the ambient temperature in the city. The design and conversion of green and outdoor spaces as well as the alignment of streets therefore increasingly focus on channeling fresh and cold air into the inner city. With roughly 52 percent of its surface area being green spaces, compared to many other cities, Frankfurt/Main has extensive green areas, including parks, forests, orchard meadows, open water, and the Green Belt. These areas are, however, unequally distributed. In particular in the former working-class Gallus and Gutleut districts as well as the area around the central railway station there is a clear shortage of green spaces. Preserving green spaces and creating new ones as well as access to clean drinking water are therefore central urban development tasks but, given the city's ongoing growth, also entail conflict.

#### **(Re-)activating drinking fountains**

With summer months becoming ever hotter, the plan is to expand local provision of drinking water in the public realm. New drinking fountains are being installed at hot and especially highly frequented places in town. In Frankfurt/Main, there are currently 26 drinking fountains and 23 refreshment fountains; by comparison, Vienna has roughly 1,600. The WHO states that all people should have access to clean drinking water. However, access in the public realm is crucial, in particular for at-risk and disadvantaged groups of people. The map of Frankfurt shows how drinking fountains are unequally distributed round town.

#### **Preserving and developing the GrünGürtel Green Belt**

The GrünGürtel covers over 8,000 hectares and thus about one third of the city's entire surface area. It is made up of parks, cemeteries, forests, orchard meadows, and agricultural areas. It has many different functions: Open farmed fields generate cold air at night, the municipal forest contributes to providing fresh air, and the green spaces serve recreation and offer flora and fauna a habitat. The GrünGürtel constitution resolved in 1991 states that free areas must be preserved round the core city in the longer term and developed further as part of the Frankfurt Green Belt.



### **Creating a green lung, rethinking the Günthersburghöfe**

The *Günthersburghöfe* construction project in the "Green Lung" highlights the possible conflict between preserving green spaces and creating new housing. The gardens are located in a cold-air corridor with a dense fabric of old trees. For years now, local initiatives have campaigned to preserve the great biodiversity and rejected the construction of mostly high-end housing. Some of them have instead tabled a concept for climate-adapted and social housing. In 2021, a resolution was passed to revisit the existing land use plan in the form of participatory planning workshops and focus on already sealed surfaces and preserving the biodiversity. No concrete implementation has yet taken place.

### **Climbing plant nets: Cooling spaces, providing shade**

The Frankfurt Office for Micro Climate Cultivation (OMC°C) is investigating the deployment of fast-growing annual climbing plants as shade-bringers. The background: a study that shows that cities need ten times as much green if they are to be climate-resilient. The creepers need less space for their roots and can be planted next to privately-owned buildings or in the public realm. The networks of climbing plants can reduce solar irradiation by as much as 20 percent. The project is the brainchild of a research network of construction engineers, textile designers, plant nurseries, the German Meteorological Service, and Senckenberg Nature Research.

## COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

### **Store water to give neighborhoods a real future**

Copenhagen is a water-side city: The city spans several islands, is crisscrossed by canals, and opens onto the Baltic Sea. Climate change is severely testing Copenhagen and its relationship to water, with both torrential rain and flash flooding on the rise. In 2011, severe rainfall flooded entire districts of town; the damage came to about one billion Euros and forced the City of Copenhagen administration to rethink policies.

The response was to develop the *Skybrudsplan*, the Cloudburst Plan, with over 300 individual projects based on the sponge city concept. The idea is for rainwater to no longer flow into the drainage system, but to be retained in parks and squares and stored underground.

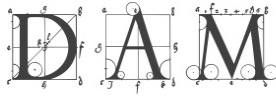
The program combines technical infrastructure with urban development: Where water is collected, not only do new green spaces arise where people can meet up, but so do cooler microclimates. The total costs through 2035 are estimated to reach about 1.3 billion Euros, predominantly financed through the water rates that private households pay. Thus, the *Skybrudsplan* also becomes a matter of principle: Not every city has the financial and institutional preconditions that would allow it to pursue such an agenda.

### **Østerbro Climate Quarter: making water visible**

In the densely populated Sankt Kjelds district, the Østerbro Climate Quarter shows how rainwater is visibly collected and used in streets, plazas, and inner courtyards. Instead of invisibly flowing into canals, it gathers in depressions, plant beds, and open rainwater ponds, slowly seeps into the ground, and serves to irrigate greened areas. Water features, climate edges (slightly raised or lowered elements that deliberately direct and retain water), and biologically purified expanses of water shape the public realm here and enable its shared use. Inhabitants help design areas and experience the measures as part of their everyday lives. In this way, places are created where climate adaptation, games, recreation, and participation are all closely interfaced.

### **Climate-resistant block**

In Sankt Kjelds quarter in Østerbro the planners together with the inhabitants have redesigned the inner courtyards of 13 blocks of flats to create one large shared inner courtyard. The concept centers on



managing rainwater: A lowered gutter collects the water and channels it back into the buildings where it is used as grey water for washing machines and toilets. In this way, the rainwater is retained in the local cycle. The system was supported by modernizing the buildings' energy consumption systems and reducing parking spaces in favor of greened areas. The project serves as a model for similar neighborhoods in north European cities.

### **Climate parks**

Parks play a key role in Copenhagen's *Skybrudsplan*: As deep-lying areas they form natural collection points for rainwater. The administration consciously uses them and is busy linking flood protection with the development of new green spaces and recreational areas. Lowered surfaces, depressions, and gutter channels retain large volumes of water in the event of torrential rain; in everyday life, the same structures serve as places to meet up, do sport, and spend leisure time. The three projects shown here stand for different contexts: a historical city park, a line of greenery in the harbor district, and an open space concept for a social housing estate. They only function, however, as part of a larger system consisting of underground infrastructure, political coordination, and long-term planning.

### **Easing the strain on the piping and sewage system**

Greening and surface measures will not suffice to protect Copenhagen against extreme rain events. The municipal utilities are therefore building a network of underground tunnels and retention basins to ease the strain on the sewage and drainage system during torrential rainfall and divert the water in the direction of the harbor. The Copenhagen canal system was originally designed to accommodate far lesser volumes of rainwater. Climate forecasts suggest that extreme rainfall will clearly increase going forwards. The new network is designed to be an integrated system: In the places where it has already been implemented, the risk of flooding has been dialed down by 30–50 percent.

## **ŁÓDŹ, POLAND**

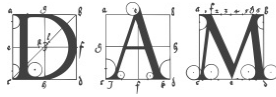
### **From industry to rivers and parkland**

In Łódź, water, industry, and increased urban densities combine. The position of the rivers defined where the early core settlements arose and laid the foundations for industrial expansion, in particular that of the textile industry in the 19th century. As the city grew, more than 20 watercourses were redirected into canals. This increases the risk of flooding, lowers rainwater storage, and by sealing surfaces intensifies urban heat islands. The city is especially affected by dryness, as Łódź is located on a watershed and the water flows off in various directions instead of gathering there.

Today, the city is committed to a comprehensive transformation effort: It is renaturing subterranean rivers, creating parkland, and replacing sealed surfaces with water-permeable ones. Since 2021, 21 forest parks with rainwater retention systems and biodiversity have been put in place. Moreover, the city is transforming the former industrial estates into cultural, educational, and residential zones.

### **Uncovering rivers and repurposing industrial estates**

Rivers such as the Sokołówka or the Lamus run invisibly under the city. Industries once used them for textile manufacturing and covered a large area of them over. Just short of 600 former industrial outfits are now no longer in use. The buildings require modernization and are gradually being converted into cultural, commercial, and residential units and their energy consumption is being reduced. The outdoor areas are being partly unsealed, planted with greenery, and made available to civic society as a whole as public leisure spaces. Both the city and citizens initiatives have been championing uncovering the river courses. This is expected to help cool the air, promote biodiversity, and give the water more space, thus



preempting flooding. The river courses are linked by parkland, forests, and green corridors, and offer the local inhabitants recreational space.

### **Testing prototypes**

Since 2007, the *Łódź Design Festival* on the former Księży Młyn factory grounds has been experimenting with prototypes for climate protection measures. The *Łódź Meander* and *Rain Flowers* projects combine nature-based solutions such as water storage and planting, with design and artisanship. The *Deer Garden* practice is together with the University of Łódź devising variants for rainwater management, from its reuse through to letting it naturally seep away. Citizens are encouraged to take part in the experiments, to help shape them, and acquire new knowledge. The processes and results enjoy a public stage thanks to the festival.

## **REGION 5 - MEDITERRANEAN**

BARCELONA, SPAIN

### **Streets, shade, superblocks**

Barcelona is one of the most densely built-up cities in Europe. The *Eixample*, a grid-shaped quarter dating from the 19th century, arose when there were far fewer cars. Today, it suffers from noise, exhaust fumes, sealed surfaces, and streets that get too hot. The city is hit by heat more frequently and more intensely nowadays. This impacts above all the vulnerable and economically weak groups: The poor tend to live in more densely populated neighborhoods with less greenery and are thus affected more strongly. Barcelona has responded with a series of strategies: Superblocks transform the streets into car-free leisure zones, a network of green axes serves to unseal and cool the *Eixample*, climate protection areas offer a safer haven in heat, new solutions provide temporary shade in everyday life.

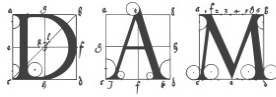
Some measures are already well-established, others are still being tested. What they all have in common is the wish to fundamentally rethink public space.

### **Superblocks: Turning streets into plazas**

Barcelona has been erecting superblocks (*Superilles*) since 2016: Every nine blocks form a traffic-calmed unit, with through-traffic interrupted, and pedestrians and cyclists prioritized. Cars must drive at a max. speed of 10 km/h. The *Sant Antoni* superblock was one of the first permanently created locations and serves as the model for the concept's further expansion. The city has greened areas within it and outfitted it with seating and play areas. Measurements show a clear result: a far lower level of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and of traffic. At one point, the talk was of up to 500 superblocks. By 2026, around 20 have been completed or are under construction. After a change at the political helm, expansion has slowed. This serves to highlight the conflicting aims of mobility, economic interests, and urban planning models – and how much urban development depends on the city administration's priorities.

### **Eixos Verds: Green axes for the city**

Since 2020, the concept of *Eixos Verds* (green axes) has envisaged a network of greened streets and new plazas in *Eixample* – Barcelona's densely built-up, grid-like quarter. The city has unsealed roads and also added plants and shade. Seepage systems ensure that rainwater enters the ground where it falls. The plan is for a total of 33 kilometers of green axes and 21 new plazas. Unlike the superblocks whose impact is often visible in the short term, the *Eixos Verds* involve permanent changes to the built environment, along with a fundamental realignment of street space and a clear reduction in motorized through-traffic.



### **Climate protection spaces: Cool spaces for everyone**

In the wake of the record 2019 heatwave, Barcelona constructed a network of climate protection spaces (*Refugis Climàtics*). These now include over 400 locations in summer and about 300 in winter. Air-conditioned libraries and civic centers, parks, and swimming pools offer inhabitants the opportunity to spend time free of charge in cooled spaces. The barrier-free spaces feature drinking water points and seating. A total of 98 percent of the population can reach such a space in less than ten minutes by foot. However, many of the spaces are closed in August and at the weekends, i.e., precisely when they are most needed.

### **Mar d'ombres: Shading as infrastructure**

Under contract to the City of Barcelona, together with a collective architecture practice an energy cooperative developed a temporary roof shade for use in the public realm that enhances leisure-time quality when the temperature is high. The pergola consists of standardized greenhouse modules, a cover made of natural reeds, and recycled crushed rock as its foundations. The modular system has been tested for its load-bearing ability and is simple to erect and take down. It can be made using local materials and flexibly adapted for other locations.

## KALAMATA, GREECE

### **Shaping a solar-powered, digital future through civic participation**

Kalamata is a prime example of a Mediterranean town where tourism and urban functions combine in a constrained space facing climate risks. As the most important urban center in southwest Greece, Kalamata is at the same time the region's largest port city. Economically speaking, Kalamata is strongly dependent on tourism and the quality of the urban space it offers.

Kalamata is confronted by an array of climate-driven challenges: coastal erosion, the threat of flooding, and the loss of beaches. Added to which, there is the burden of heavy traffic, air pollution, urban heat islands, water shortages, and a lack of green and public spaces.

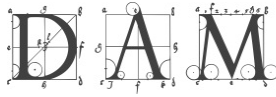
Integrated climate adaptation and mitigation measures with civic involvement and international funding are helping to drive the energy-efficient and climate-appropriate conversion of downtown Kalamata. In addition, a network of pedestrian and cycle paths connects the historical old town to the coast and adjacent green spaces.

### **Participatory planning processes: Planning communally**

Moderated by planning offices urbana, local inhabitants, the municipal administration, businesspeople, and students together developed ideas for the municipal coastline. In workshops, discussions, and joint walks, the needs of the local communities were factored into planning a climate-resistant coastal promenade. The projects expanded cycle and pedestrian paths and supplemented green spaces. Pier and harbor facilities were renewed to support sustainable mobility and shoreline protection.

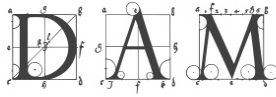
### **Energy-efficient LED street lighting: Modernizing lighting**

Kalamata is modernizing its lighting infrastructure and, in this way, considerably reducing its energy consumption. Over 15,000 LED lamps have been installed throughout the city and along the coastline, making it the first intelligent street lighting system in Greece. The system automatically dims with the onset of daylight and depending on usage, saving about 6.5 million kWh annually or about 80 percent of the energy consumption to date. The energy costs thus saved refinance the project and make it a model for other cities to follow.



### **Solar power: Using solar energy**

For Kalamata, the intensive solar irradiation is both a challenge and a resource. For years now the hospital has relied on a solar thermal plant and the city is steadily expanding its use of solar power. The energy-intensive equipment run by water utility DAYAK, including wastewater treatment and pumping stations, are now being part-powered by photovoltaic power plants. This has slashed municipal CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by about 700 tons per year – which corresponds to 3.5 million kilometers driven by a mid-range car powered by gasoline.



## ACCOMPANYING PROGRAM & PODCAST

A three-part podcast series on Frankfurt/Main, Liepāja, and Paris is being released alongside the exhibition at Kontextur: [kntxtr.podigee.io](http://kntxtr.podigee.io).

An extensive accompanying program of guided tours, lectures, and discussions will also take place. You can find full and up-to-date information at [www.dam-online.de](http://www.dam-online.de)

### Exhibition tours

Public guided tours on Saturdays and Sundays, 3 p.m.

After Work tours:

June 24, 2026 / July 8 & 22, 2026 / August 5 & 19, 2026 / September 2 & 16, 2026, 5 p.m.

Guided tours for families with Ruth Schlögl:

September 6 / October 25, 2026, 1 p.m.

### Lecture Series: International Landscape Architecture

Too Hot – Hot Cities, Cool Solutions. Landscape Architecture, Climate and Health in Dialogue

Organised by Bund Deutscher Landschaftsarchitekt:innen bdla, Landesverband Hessen e.V., in cooperation with Deutsches Architekturmuseum (DAM) and Bund Deutscher Architektinnen und Architekten BDA Hessen e. V.

29 July 2026 \ 26 August 2026 \ 30 September 2026 \ 14 October 2026 \ 20 January 2027 \ 3 February 2027, starting at 6 pm each day – exhibition tour, 7–9 pm lectures

## IMPRINT

### TOO HOT

#### Scorching Cities, New Ideas

June 20, 2026 – February 7, 2027

Deutsches Architekturmuseum (DAM)

Director DAM: Peter Cachola Schmal

Deputy Director DAM: Andrea Jürges

Curators: Jonas Malzahn, Katharina Böttger, Mathias Schnell (studio central)

In collaboration with: Philipp Deilmann – Section *The City's Infrastructures*

Confiyet Aydin, Nienke Wüst (DAM) – Section *Measuring the Urban Climate*

Tim Driedger, Simay Peters, Anna Scheuermann, Lene Oldopp, Diana Patilea, Miriam Rabmund, Klaus Korbjahn (Architects for Future) – Section *What's next?!*

Scientific advisory: Helmholtz KLIMA, Zentrum Stadtnatur und Klimaanpassung (TU München)

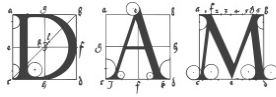
City selection with: Elisabeth Broermann (TU Berlin, Architects for Future), Stephan Lenzen (Bund

Deutscher Landschaftsarchitekt:innen, bdla), Bernd Neumann (BUND Hessen), Tatjana Schneider (TU Braunschweig)



**Exhibition design:** Luis Haslinger, Carla Riechardt, Jurek Werth (social.form – Projektentwicklung, Raum & Aktion)  
**Graphic design:** Anna Kraus, Charalampos Lazos, Hannah Reinhard, Jinyu Wang (Design Practice)  
**Image editing:** Felix Scheu (FXS Photo Retouch)  
**Editorial review:** Ilka Backmeister  
**English translation:** Jeremy Gaines  
**Video interview post-production:** Maria Gans  
**Exhibition production:** Carla Riechardt, Jurek Werth (social.form – Projektentwicklung, Raum & Aktion)  
**Media technology:** sound for friends  
**Press and public relations:** Brita Köhler, Anna Wegmann  
**Guided tours:** Team Education and Outreach  
**Design flyer, poster and banner:** Ammon Studio  
**Education:** Confiyet Aydın, Nienke Wüst  
**Facility management:** Giancarlo Rossano, Daniel Sarvari, Roman Jurkevic  
**Exhibition setup:** Caroline Krause, Ömer Simsek and Gerhard Winkler under the guidance of Daniel Sarvari  
**Registrar:** Wolfgang Welker  
**Model restoration workshop:** Bernadette Krist  
**Library:** Christiane Eulig  
**Administrative management:** Inka Plechaty, Victoria Morhard  
**Front desk:** Ieva Paegle

**Thanks to:** o8o14 arquitectura (Sandra Torres), ACO (Stefan Trippel), Agence TER (Béatrice Julienla Bruyere), ak architektur\*kultur (Karine LeroyMasson), Clémence Althabegoity, Architekturzentrum Wien (Lene Benz), Asphaltknackerinnen, Henri Bava, bdla Hessen (Ulrike Luz), (B)energy, BIEGL – Bürgerinitiative für den Erhalt der Grünen Lunge am Günthersburgpark e.V., Moritz Bernouilly, BOGL (Dorte Hermann), Christoph Brech, City of Kalamata (Konstantinos Antonopoulos, Vasileios Dionysopoulos, Panagiota Kourakli), City of Lappeenranta (Ilkka Räsänen, Simo Shivo), City of Stockholm (Björn Hugosson, Martin Ottosson), City of Łódź (Aleksandra Sztuka), Alexandra Clausen, Climate Connect e.V., Climate Service Center Germany (GERICS), Helmholtz Zentrum Hereon (Sabine Fritz, Peter Hoffmann), Climateflux (Daniele Santucci), COBE (Karoline LiedtkeSørensen), Difu Deutsches Institut für Urbanistik (Maic Verbücheln), Nora Dünser, Chiarina Fazio, Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg (Jonas Trittmann), Gemeente Houten (Arjen de Boer, André Botermans, Erik Groenland, Richard Zwartenkot), GoetheUniversität Frankfurt (Johanna Betz, Jürgen Runge), Greenreality Network (Noora Hakkarainen), Helmholtz Munich (Edith Bachmayer, Annette Peters), Helmholtz Zentrum für Umweltforschung (Dieter Rink), Henning Larsen (Greta Tiedje, Victoria Woollorton), Ciani Sophia Hoeder, HOFOR (Lise Groth Bendsen), Kristian Hüsen, Initiative WESTBAHN PARK (Suzana StojanovićJoham), ISOE Institut für sozialökologische Forschung (Flurina Schneider), IÖW Institut für ökologische Wirtschaftsforschung (Johannes Rupp), Kantara (Yoann Mahri), Karlsruher Institut für Technologie (Somidh Saha, Jan Niklas Totzki), Moritz König, Ben Kuhlmann, Lacol (Carles Baiges), Landeshauptstadt Potsdam (Niklas Nitzschke), Leku Studio (Jokin Santiago), Liepāja 2027 (Inta Šoriņa), Liepāja City Council (Mārtiņš Ābols, Linda Alksne, Kārlis Beihmanis, Ugis Kaugurs), Liepājas enerģija (Kaspars Frišfelds), LYTT (Anne Albrechtsen, Katrine Dybdal), Łódź Design Festival (Bogusława Bronowicka, Michał Piernikowski), medusa group (Miłosz Jaksik), Neckarinsel e.V., OMC°C (Sophie Oberle, Nicola Stattmann), Fabian Panzer, Marina Povedano, Rinn (Ralf Dieling), Roofscapes Studio (Olivier Faber, Eytan Levi), Robinwood, Runge (Julius Lachs), Jo Salter, Sand im Getriebe, Schönherr (Anna Aslaug Lund), SLA (Kristoffer Holm Pedersen), Stadt Bern (Corina Gwerder, Thomas Kaspar, Sabine Mannes), Stadt Frankfurt



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Loans: ACO GmbH, Clémence Althabegoïty, Bürgerinitiative für den Erhalt der Grünen Lunge am Günthersburgpark e.V. (BIEGL), City of Lappeenranta, Christoph Brech, Climateflux, ENERPIPE GmbH, Escofet, FES Frankfurter Entsorgung und Service GmbH, Gemeente Houten, Initiative WESTBAHN PARK, Jo Salter, JUWI GmbH, Klimareferat Stadt Frankfurt am Main, KSORIGINAL GMBH, Rinn Beton und Naturstein GmbH & Co.KG, Roofscapes Studio, Runge GmbH & Co. KG, Stadtwerke Verkehrsgesellschaft Frankfurt am Main mbH (VGF), Steinbrener/Dempf & Huber, THIRD NATURE, umverkehR, westbahnhof.jetzt, Umweltamt Stadt Frankfurt am Main, Wienerberger Infra GmbH, Zeininger Architekten, Deutscher Wetterdienst, Karlsruher Institut für Technologie

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