

Irresistible Cities Lab

Strategy and Launching Plan
November 2024



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IRRESISTIBLE CITIES LAB - Strategy & Launching Plan

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INTRODUCTION

This *Strategy & Launching Plan* for the Irresistible Cities Lab (ICL) is prepared as part of *WP6 Exploitation* of the New European Bauhaus lighthouse project, Desire - Designing the Irresistible Circular Society. It has been prepared as part of *Task 6.3 Scale out: Nurturing and expanding the ecosystem*.

The ICL replaced the originally planned Memorandum of Understanding (Milestone 13) based on feedback from the city administrations included in dialogues during the first part of the project. The ICL as a concept was developed, resulting in a redrafting of purpose, aims and objectives of the original planned MoU. The Strategy & Launching Plan is the tangible outcome of this process, and it supports the actual implementation of the ICL stretching beyond the project period. The ICL is mentioned in *D6.2 Financial Plan* but does not have its own and independent deliverable format within the Desire project. This document substitutes the format of a deliverable.

The ICL Strategy & Launching Plan was prepared during the second phase of the project period (M19-M26). It feeds from dialogues and interactions with the Desire consortium at consortium meetings and monthly coordination meetings, following the monitoring plan that was required as part of the RP1 recommendations.

PM/BLOXHUB will take responsibility for running the ICL during the first part-project period. This responsibility has flavoured the key elements within this strategy, aligning it with the overall strategy for BLOXHUB. However, a more permanent strategy needs to be defined to maintain ICL as a community of relevance for a broader network. Therefore, the strategy is defined to the first 1-2 years beyond the project period to allow for a more permanent strategy and plan to emerge from its growing community of members.

DESIRE DIGITAL LEARNING HUB (DLH)

The Desire DLH functions as a meeting place for those who want to learn from our experiments and dive into new ways of thinking about and working with the cities of our future.



'Connect' will be the interface between all the tools, stories, podcasts and other textual and audio-visual content from Desire and the people behind, who have been part of producing all this.

The Digital Learning Hub and the Irresistible Cities Lab are interconnected entities. This is how we see it:

Desire DLH must be a learning lab - not just a place where learning is collected, but a place where learning occurs. This happens through 'connect'.

Connect is about contact - it is through meetings/dialogues/participation that learning occurs.

Inspiration arises in a community - a place where you collaborate on something or with people you know or trust.

Irresistible Cities Lab is the infrastructure or the format through which the activation of learning happens - ICL is our name for the meeting place where the activities take place, where the meetings and dialogues happen and where learning occurs. In that sense, 'Connect' and DLH act as a business card

ICL STRATEGY AND LAUNCHING PLAN

This long-term strategy and launching plan cover three phases:

- **Encourage** - which concerns establishing the infrastructure, planning the first activities, and make the integration between DLH and ICL work in practice, and invite to take part
- **Engage** - this concerns harvesting from the fresh-in-mind observations, learnings and motivation for continuing through continue the interactions within the established community and engaging beyond Desire
- **Enlarge** - this concerns expanding the DLH and ICL with further stories, tools, learning, communities of practice interested in following the New European Bauhaus and Desire inspired transformations.

Encourage - establish the interconnection between DLH and ICL and encourage to take part

Content for the 'Connect' subpage:

- Who will people meet when they 'connect' with Desire?

Information about the Irresistible Cities Lab:

- What is it?
- What do you get?
- How does it work?
- How to get involved?

Timing:



- November 2024 - February 2025 - to establish the interconnection
- 2025 and onwards for a continued encouragement to take part

Objectives:

1. Visitors take contact to the 'Desire pioneers' by mail;
2. Visitors complete the form to become part of the ICL

Launching activities:

- Communication campaign when the Digital Learning Hub is up and running (2025)
- Connect it with the first activities / initiatives within the ICL - invite to take part
- Present upcoming activities (2025)

Engage - prepare and conduct the activities through the ICL

Prepare activities for the first year following the conclusion of Desire (2025)

- Invite through the Desire community and wider
- Connect activities with opportunities for future collaboration or cross-sectoral / cross-national interaction
- Connect with the NEB Lighthouse projects / NEB community

Consider and prepare for enlarging the community

- Integrating the activities with e.g. the NEB Hub (to be established in 2025) and other networks - seeing synergies and acting upon them
- Identify and explore external funding opportunities

Consider the future governance structure

- How to run activities in the future? How can we keep the engagement and motivation alive?
How can we decentralise the responsibility?

Timing:

- 2025

Objectives:

1. Keep the Desire community active and alive
2. Make the learnings and outputs relevant to city-makers beyond (including the BLOXHUB ecosystem)

Enlarge - establish new communities of practice within the ICL

Define a mode of operation and a code of conduct

Identify and integrate new stories of practice, new tools, new interactions into the community and the Digital Learning Hub

Timing:

- 2026 and onwards - should also be part of 2025 ambitions

Objectives

1. Establish ICL as a self-sustaining community guided by members' needs.
2. Serve as a collaborative meeting space for new urban projects.

ACTIVITIES

These activities are defined for 2025 but may change or evolve according to interest and relevance of those engaged in the community.

A graphic overview of the different activities are included below.

Pioneer webinars:

Timing:

- 1 hour webinars, 8.30-9.30 AM or 3.00-4.00 PM
- Once every third month (March, June, September, December)

Content/purpose

- Inspiring stories from Desire demonstrators to foster learning and connection.

Format (suggestion)

- 5 min welcoming and setting the scene
- 10 min breakout dialogues to reflect and connect.
- 15 min sharing of stories - one or more of the Desire pioneers share their experiences and learnings and what has happened since
 - Do this as panel debates or use Fish Bowl technique, depending on what the presenters prefer
- 5-10 min Q&A from the audience
- 10 min exit dialogues - building relationships and taking next steps. Break-out rooms with the same participants as for the wake-up dialogues
- 5 min wrap-up and to introduce the next event

ICL co-creation sessions

Timing:

- 2-3 hours online
- Once or twice every 6 months - depending on expressed interest within the community

Content/purpose:

- Co-creating new initiatives together (conferences, projects, proposals for new projects) - define a first outline of interest, roles and desired outcome
- Use upcoming calls or funding opportunities as baseline or community members' expressed interest in or suggested topics for new projects/collaboration opportunities

Format

- Facilitated online session with interactive engagement and use of virtual boards for designing new initiatives
- The format will be designed specifically for each session

ICL Special events:

Timing:

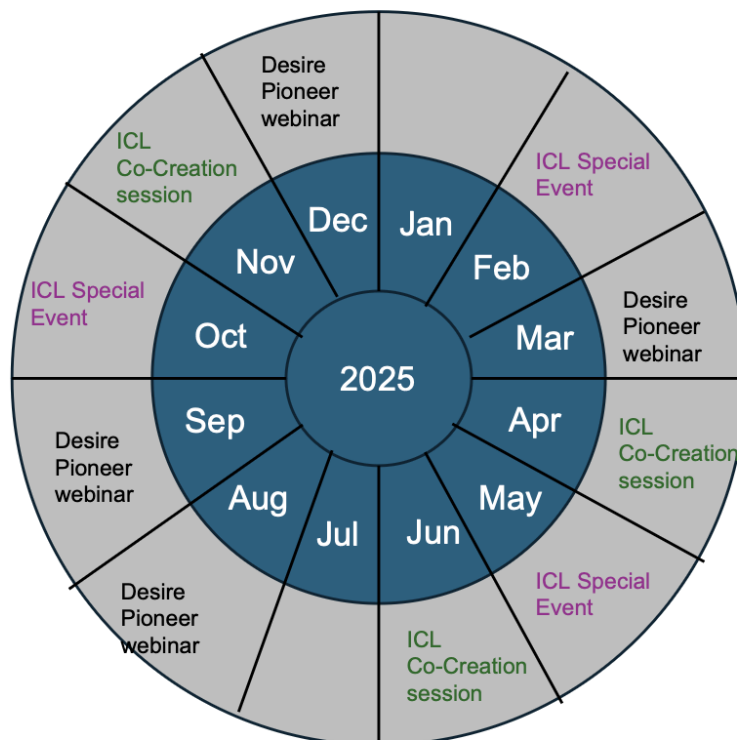
- 45-60 min (e.g. AM from 8.30 or PM from 15.00)
- Frequency depends on interest and capacity

Content/purpose

- Updates on NEB policies, EU policies or other topics of relevance for the Desire community
- Topics can be defined/suggested at the quarterly webinars based on expressed interest (that could be a topic to discuss in the exit-dialogues)

Format

- 5 min welcoming and setting the scene
- 30 min presentation by external speaker (or more speakers)
- 10-15 Q&A and discussion about how to use the information within the community



CALENDAR 2025 (preliminary)

MONTH	DATE	TYPE	CONTENT	NOTES
FEB	20/2	Desire Special Event // Science Talk - 15.00-17.00	Daniel Christian Wahl	In collaboration with Jacob Rask, Science team (BLOXHUB)
MAR	27/3 (Thu)	Desire Pioneer Webinar - 15.00-16.30	Design & Do Groups - how to design and do urban planning with citizens - inspirations from Wildeman neighbourhood, Amsterdam	Diana Krabbendam, The Beach
APR	24/4 (Thu)	Co-creation session 14.00-16.30	NEB Facility call - explore opportunities for bringing Desire outputs and learnings further	
MAY	15/5 (Thu)	Desire Special Event 15.00-17.00		
JUN	19/6 (Thu)	Co-creation session 14.00-16.30		
...	HOLIDAY - NO ACTIVITY			
AUG	28/08 (Thu)	Desire Pioneer Webinar 15.00-16.30		
SEP	25/09 (Thu)	Desire Pioneer Webinar 15.00-16.30		
OCT	30/10 (Thu)	Desire Special Event 15.00-17.00		
NOV	20/11 (Thu)	Co-creation session 14.00-16.30		
DEC	11/12 (Thu)	Desire Pioneer Webinar 15.00-16.30		