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Press release from Desire

150 people from all over Europe share how to make the green urban transition desirable

Artistic approaches and co-design methods can help engage both young people and adults in shaping the green and attractive urban spaces of the future. This is demonstrated by the Danish-led, EU-supported project Desire, whose partners will gather in Copenhagen next week to take stock. On September 10, Desire will hold a sold-out conference at BLOX to share experiences and allow participants to try some of the methods and tools we have used.

Desire - Designing the Irresistible Circular Society - is one of six New European Bauhaus lighthouse projects. Over two years, 24 partners from six countries have experimented with new ways to create green transitions.

"The Desire partners represent a broad community of practice, ensuring a holistic approach to future sustainable architecture and green initiatives when creating active urban spaces and revitalizing areas. Our methods align with the new New European Bauhaus investment guidelines from the European Commission, making construction and renovation projects inclusive, sustainable, and aesthetically attractive," says Torben Klitgård, CEO of BLOXHUB and Desire lead.

The work has primarily taken place in eight different locations in Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovenia, and Latvia within the themes of Creating Social Inclusive Housing, Transforming through Symbiotic Relationships, and Reconciling Cities with Nature. Along the way, the partners co-created five principles that have functioned as lenses or perspectives promoting circularity, biodiversity, movement, aesthetics and belonging in our concrete experimentations.

Kalundborg, Denmark and Amsterdam have gained completely **new and self-aware groups** of citizens who have learned that they too can have **a voice in the green transformation**. Activities in **Riga** have taught the municipality how **to build trust between authorities and citizens**, which is a prerequisite for renovating the many Soviet housing blocks in a sustainable, inclusive and qualitative way.

The business and shopping area **BTC City Ljubljana** has learned the value of working across companies, authorities and educational institutions and through experiments has developed a strategy for how the city can become greener and

Desire
Bryghuspladsen 8
Entrance C, 3rd floor
DK-1473 Copenhagen
+45 22 22 46 36
[Irresistiblecircularsociety.eu](https://irresistiblecircularsociety.eu)



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thus more **resistant to climate change** with more heat waves, besides becoming attractive to future generations.

Learnings from the social housing area, **Gadehavegaard** in Høje-Taastrup, Denmark show that if you customize co-creation processes to **involve young people** you may end up with completely **new and wild ideas**. This has inspired GXN, an architectural firm, to formalize the working method into a **free design toolkit**.

Artistic and design practices are key to engaging communities and transforming places. An example is the **Garden Caretaker in Herlev**, Denmark, where artists used various methods like fictional writing, sculpting, performance, and audio walks to deepen connections between stakeholders and non-human beings. The urban farming site **Cascina Falchera near Torino** also lets an artist speak to new audiences with the desire to connect people with nature. In the **MIND Milano Innovation District**, prominent yellow "Desire benches" follow the thoughts in a **'Beauty for All' framework** to help decision-makers incorporate beauty and inclusiveness when expanding the area's enormous main street Decumano.

All outputs and learnings will be shared at the Desire website <https://www.irresistiblecircularsociety.eu/> along with new tools and stories to inspire others to get involved in the movement creating an irresistible, circular society.

Contact: Aase Højlund Nielsen, Desire Project Manager

Email: aho@bloxhub.org

Phone: +45 3161 6709



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