Participative workshops: a co-design approach to the challenge

Among the activities that the Municipality of Bologna decided to organize in order to develop a proposal for the Bloomberg Mayors Challenge, **two workshops** have been organized to involve different stakeholders in the development of the project and investigate the social fabric of the sectors involved in the idea.

Around 70 people participated in the two workshops: the first workshop was organized to engage the creative and entrepreneurial community of Bologna: **startuppers, co-working managers, makers and hackers, representatives of cultural associations, foundations and institutions**. The second workshop was organized to engage two important groups of stakeholders: educational institutions (in particular local high schools and the University of Bologna) and big industries (excellences in the industrial and service sectors and trade associations).

In both workshops representantives of the Public Administration (Municipality, Province and Region) were actively participating too.

70 BRAINS
140 HANDS
1000 IDEAS

STARTUP CO-WORKING MAKERS HACKERS CULTURAL ASSOCIATION CULTURAL FOUNDATIONS & INSTITUTIONS

⚡ OBJECTIVES

The aims of the workshops were multiple and framed inside a larger project planning vision:

• **Refine and polish the proposal for Bloomberg Mayors Challenge and collect suggestions** around the core concept developed by the Municipality: improve and enrich the work-in-progress idea to be presented to the Challenge, testing it with different stakeholders, collect feedbacks and new ideas that arose during the process and incorporate them in the project, combining the Municipality's vision with the stakeholders constraints and interests.

• **Collect and map the needs and desires of the stakeholders involved** in the project (needfinding): gathering and sharing of the stakeholders' needs, desires, constraints, ambitions for what concerns the project idea and identify some insights that can inspire the development of the project.

• **Partnerships and critical mass of committed stakeholders:** create the occasion to develop new partnerships and reinforce old ones, with and among the stakeholders; incite interest, stimulate involvement in the project and in its future development, promote the activation of collaborations among the stakeholders and the sharing of common objectives to create an active core group that can proactively participate in the project.

• **Prototype and test a new model of collaboration:** try out a different way of project planning between the Municipality and the different stakeholders based on co-design and collaboration.

• **Prototype and test the use of design thinking methodologies:** these two workshops had the additional purpose to test and adjust for the first time the use of the methodology in the specific contest and to gather feedbacks on the process and investigate future applications.

💡 PROCESS & OUTPUTS

One of the outputs of the workshops was the definition of the prototype.

The prototype of the *4Angels4InformalEducation* project will be the creation of one of the network's nodes that will link three places representing different social contexts: a traditional manufacturing enterprise, schools located in a disadvantaged city district characterized by the highest concentration of foreigners and a public building located in a central public park. In the first phase 300 students from different school levels will be involved and we will offer them the opportunity to participate in laboratories, share a working method and competences, equipment, co-working spaces with the aim of creating a cross-cutting community of innovators, to offer work-targeted training, identifying further needs of both manufacturers and young people and building entrepreneurial mindsets.

📓 LEARNINGS

From both workshops **feedbacks were really positive**: participants were happy about the workshop session and their **active involvement** in the process; the format worked well, participants were asking the Municipality to organize similar events in the future.

Moreover, the workshops have been seen also as **an opportunity for networking and building new partnerships**.

All the materials developed during the workshop have been collected in a **multimedia report** that is going to be used as material for the future development of the process.

It will be important for the future **to be able to keep the community engaged** and reactive, a lively and **proactive community**.

⚙ METHODOLOGY

Design thinking: represents an approach to the resolution of problems and the ideation of innovative solutions, based on users' needs and the developement of insights elaborated from users needs and desires. In a context of participative and collaborative project planning, design thinking represents a powerful tool to put all different stakeholders on the same level, introducing an approach based on context awareness and identification and understanding of stakeholders needs and expectations.

Design with people not for people: starting from the fundamental design assets, the two workshops were organized in order to actively involve the stakeholders not as passive "users" of the project but as lively and early contribution to it.

👤 PARTICIPANTS

Sara Roversi co-founder You Can Group
Davide Baruzzi co-founder BAM Strategie Culturali
Gaspare Caliri co-founder Snark
Massimo Ciuffreda founder wiMAN
Marco Fabbri R&D wiMAN
Diego Perrone founder G- Com
Andrea Cattabriga co-founder Slowd
Davide Pietrantoni Immagine Ritrovata / Cineteca (Film archives)
Lorenzo Viscantico founder Mapendo
Federico Ravaldi AD IConsulting
Stefano Follador co-founder Kilowatt
Elena Vai PR/communication Youtool
Carmelo Presicce CoderDojo Bologna
Gabriele Lelli RaspinBo
Fabrizio La Trofa co-founder MakeinBo
Antonio Puglisi Cultural association Shape / ROBOT Festival
Giacomo Grassi Cultural association Kinodromo
Massimiliano Vignoli Student Delegate at Accademic Senate - Faculty of Mathematics - University of Bologna
Luca De Biase Foundation Ahref / NOVA Il Sole 24ore
Roberta Francheschinelli Foundation Unipolis
Paola Lanzarini CSR Manager G.D.
Paolo Castelli CEO Castelli SPA
Maria Luisa Parmigiani Sustainability Manager Unipol group
Dario Rea R&D Manager - Ima group
Valentina Marchesini Marketing – Marchesini group
Piero Ingrosso Innovation Manager - Voli group
Francesca De Sanctis Granarolo
Massimo Ferrante Secretary general CNA Bologna
Antonio Danieli DirectorMarino Golinelli Foundation
Elena Ugolini Prinicipal Liceo Malpighi (High School)
Salvatore Grillo Principal Istituto Aldini Valeriani (High School)
Maurizio Sobrero Professor of Management Engineering - University of Bologna
Marco Gaiani Professor of Industrial Design - University of Bologna
Isabella Angiuli Internationalization Manager CNA Emilia Romagna
Paolo Bonaretti Director ASTER (Consortium for Innovation and Technology Transfer in Emilia-Romagna)
Martina Lodi ASTER
Daniele Ara President Navile District
Pamela Lama Municipality of Bologna - International Projects
Dimitri Tartari Emilia Romagna Regional Government
Francesca Martinese Municipality of Bologna – International Relations
Michele D'Alena Municipality of Bologna - Communication
Matteo Lepore Deputy Mayor – Economic Development and City Promotion - Municipality of Bologna
Marilena Pillati Deputy Mayor - School and Education - Municipality of Bologna
Giacomo Capuzzimati Director General - Municipality of Bologna
Mauro Felicori Director Economic Development and City Promotion Department - Municipality of Bologna

Few **topics that emerged** during the workshop session were:
• The **metropolitan city** as an opportunity to create wider and stronger networks and collaborations among the stakeholders in the city but also beyond the city border, to create a generative city in constant expansion.
• **Need of mapping the creative and entreprenurial communities, activities and resources** and the consequent need to involve and connect them in a physical and virtual space;
• **Creation of "neutral" spaces to foster contamination:** physical or virtual spaces where personal interests are set aside in favor of resources sharing and knowledge and skills exchange among different subjects (students, enterprises, creative people, etc).
• **The city as open code** where every actor (public adminsitration, university, startup, etc) make some resources (like a lab, a professional figure, an idea, a space, etc) available in an open, hackable and modifiable way. The city becomes an alphabet to create new ideas generated by the creative re-combination of different pieces of "code", ad does the newly created open code city logo.
• **Education, work and students' capability** and the need to rebuild consistent links between schools and enterprises and to improve the educational system.
• **Spill-over**: promote spaces of contamination among SMEs, local industries and creative industries to generate new R&D departments that take advantage of the application of creative and lateral thinking methodologies and competencies.
• **Embedded incubators** that encourage entrepreneurship inside companies and among their employees and boost the creation of internal spinoffs, thanks to the collaboration with external actors like schools and creative industries.

The **main topics** that emerged during the second workshop session were:
• **Role of contamination**: a positive and crucial phenomenon that keeps a community alive and innovative, stimulated by curiosity, cross-disciplinary interactions, skills hybridation and "learning by doing".
• **Public Administration as encounters facilitator**, an entity that can support the partnership among educational and research institutions and local industries, that can become a connector for possibilities and talents. A system that enables encounters that are unlikely to happen naturally.
• **Company "adoption"**: big companies and enterprises can make an effort towards young startups, supporting their activities, for example providing mentorship programs, dedicating some procurement budget only to startup, etc.
• **Company "inside" the school**: to give value to the industrial and entreprenurial patrimony of the territory and to educate to entrepreneurship, schools and companies can implement new collaborations, new patch of value co-creation and new ways to shape education
• **Bologna as talent accelerator**, a city that supports projects, ideas and dreams. Bologna that attracts talents and has to allow the exchange of energies, skills and resources to initiate the creation of valuable initiatives.

SCHOOLS
UNIVERSITY
COMPANIES
TRADE ASSOCIATIONS
COMPANIES
SERVICE AND INDUSTRY SECOTR