Established: March 7, 2019
Budget: 3 084 000 PLN
Period: 2019–2021
Location: Pomeranian Science and Technology Park,IVA
Grounding: a citywide program operated by Social Innovation Lab
Gdynia is a city in northern Poland. On February 10, 1926 Gdynia was granted city rights. Located by Gdańsk Bay on the southern coast of the Baltic Sea, it is a major seaport and the second-largest city in the Pomeranian Voivodeship after Gdańsk. Gdynia has a population of 246,348 citizens.

The city belongs to the Metropolitan Area Gdansk-Gdynia-Sopot with more than 1.5 million citizens.
For years, Gdynia has been continuously developing an urban innovation strategy.

The idea for creating Urban Lab was initiated by the Institute of Urban and Regional Development, located in Cracow. The Institute invited Gdynia to cooperate, aware of the city’s previous know-how experience in open data, civic participation, and social innovation. Testing the idea of UrbanLab was entrusted to the Social Innovation Lab.

Urban Labs in Gdynia and Rzeszów would thus contribute to the whole Urban Lab network in Poland.
SOCIAL INNOVATION LAB

• Social Innovation Lab is the autonomous budgetary unit of Gdynia City Hall responsible for developing and supporting innovative social solutions for citizens
• an embodiment of the idea grown from thinking that in order to develop sustainably and achieve durable results cities need not only new technological and economic solutions but also new ideas for social activities dedicated to the citizens
• developing, supporting and promoting innovative social solutions in order to improve living standards for all citizens of Gdynia – regardless of their age, address and social background
UrbanLab Gdynia is aimed at creating a space for dialogue between the citizens of Gdynia, NGOs and city institutions, including the scientific and business community. Each of the cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary components of UrbanLab consists of identifying challenges and searching for social innovations solving them.
OUR METHOD INVOLVES A VARIED RANGE OF STAKEHOLDERS TO CREATE INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO CITY CHALLENGES. EACH YEAR OF TESTING THE IDEA OF URBANLAB GDYNIA HAD A DIFFERENT AREA OF FOCUS:

- CITIZEN PARTICIPATION 2019
- ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE 2020
- URBAN LIFE AFTER THE PANDEMIC 2021
ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE
HOW TO COOPERATE, WORK AND EDUCATE CITIZENS WHO ARE NOT DIRECTLY INTERESTED IN THE PROBLEM?

„The effects of all the activities of UrbanLab and the city of Gdynia strengthen the demands of pro-climate movements, which create social pressure leading to the implementation of broader, central solutions. Even if the implementation of these solutions is not successful, or if it is too late, the city will be able to create a social network of efficient communities able to use some adaptation tools.” Filip Springer - member of the UrbanLab Gdynia Strategic Group, Polish writer and photographer, author of many reportage books
## Our Method

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<tr>
<th>MAYOR’S COMMITTEE and STRATEGIC GROUP</th>
<th>THEMATIC TEAMS</th>
<th>WORKING GROUPS</th>
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<tr>
<td>name the challenges</td>
<td>narrow the challenge to a set of issues/questions to deal with</td>
<td>turn the issues/questions into concrete tasks</td>
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<tr>
<th>„CITY COMPETENCIES” PROGRAM</th>
<th>„IDEA FOR IMPROVING THE CITY” PROGRAM</th>
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<td>develops new skills of local leaders and civil servants</td>
<td>fledges new ideas for solutions</td>
<td>innovative ideas tested and turned into prototypes</td>
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<tr>
<th>URBANCAFE</th>
<th>CIVIC TECH</th>
<th>DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION</th>
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<tr>
<td>engages stakeholders in knowledge-sharing &amp; dialogue</td>
<td>widens citizens’ access to public data and creates new technological tools supporting public participation</td>
<td>provides feedback and recommendations for future urban labs</td>
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New solutions for local co-operation
New networks, ideas, tools and understanding
New policies and practices
STRATEGIC GROUP

RESPOBISILE FOR STRATEGY AND SETTING DIRECTIONS FOR URBANLAB AND ITS OPERATIONS

1. Defines needs, challenges, and direction for city’s strategic development.
2. Selects thematic Focus areas for each year (citizen participation, adaptation to climate change, urban life after the pandemic).
3. Monitors and supports the innovation process.
4. Consists of 13 members, incl. mayor’s committee and national experts on urban planning, local development, social anthropology, civic activism.

THEMATIC TEAM

REPRESENTATIVES OF LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, ACADEMICS, BUSINESS AND NGOs CONNECTED BY/TO/WITH THE APPLIED THEME/CHALLENGE

Searches for solutions within the system or possibilities to be implemented within the already existing frames, which will demand a big engagement of local municipality and knowledge of city experts.
„CITY COMPETENCIES” PROGRAM

SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE COURSE FOR LEADERS WHO WANT TO IMPLEMENT CHANGE OR POSITIVE IMPACT

• (on-line) workshops introducing city integrated management tools and methods
• 6-7 meetings, 2-3 hours long

THE CITY – How does the city work? Formal/legal and financial conditions, etc.
THE CHALLENGE – civil society and citizens’ participation, adaptation to climate change, urban life after the pandemic
THE SKILLS – tools and methods for creating and developing social innovations (e.g. service design thinking), visual thinking, teamwork and leadership, social communication, and so on.
„IDEA FOR IMPROVING THE CITY” PROGRAM

MANAGING IDEAS THROUGH AN OPEN CALL FOR INNOVATIVE AND LOCAL SMART SOLUTIONS

• Simple application forms (rather „ideas” than „projects”)
• Budget for 1 „idea” up to 30 000 PLN budget
• managing ideas: IDEA > PROJECT > PROTOTYPING and TESTING by/in/with the city > EVALUATION > MODEL > IMPLEMENTATION
• open catalogue of innovations to be shared and tested by other cities under the condition of giving feedback to UrbanLab Gdynia
Events in UrbanCafe:

- film screenings accompanied by discussions, introductions of experts
- lectures by academics and members of the Strategic Group
- debates among experts, activists, city’s representatives
- workshops and trainings for city’s representatives & officials, citizens of Gdynia
- conference “Becoming the City – Global Challenges, Local Solutions”

Events take place in open space, which includes a shared kitchen.
URBANCafe

MAIN AREAS OF INTEREST: CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION – CIVIC PARTICIPATION – KNOWLEDGE OF THE CITY – "THINK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY"

• Lectures: The human epoch. What does Anthropocene mean?, Community gardens and edible plants in the city, Green city, Different types of playgrounds, Accessibility vs. climate change
• Debates: Economy after the pandemic, Drought – do we run out of water?, How to talk about climate change, Smog and air pollution in Poland
• Film screenings: "Human Energy – discussion with film authors and renewable energy expert, "The story of plastic" – film screening and debate, "Human scale – film screening with introduction by an architect

Interdisciplinary approach and improvement:
• city representatives' professional skills and knowledge
• cooperation & shared responsibility for the city, community, NGO

During the pandemic all events are organized online
UrbanLab Gdynia supports the development of the municipal open data system [otwartedane.gdynia.pl](otwartedane.gdynia.pl), organises educational meetings & promotes open data.
Implementing open-source dialogue platform DECIDIM (following Barcelona and Helsinki) for conducting civic budget procedure and other public consultation processes.
Dialogue about the Climate
citywide public consultations in Gdynia

What was the aim?

to develop solutions and recommendations

to collect opinions and ideas that would help to

limit the negative impact related to the climate crisis

to allow Gdynia to prepare for the climate crisis

It was also an opportunity to educate citizens,
exchange knowledge and create a space for
cooperation on three levels - citywide, local and individual.
The dialogue about the climate lasted six months - from November 2020 to May 2021. It consisted of 4 stages:

1. Diagnostic stage - informing residents about the process and collecting questions from residents about climate change

2. Social debate stage - a series of 3 meetings (online) for representatives of organizations, institutions, district councils or housing cooperatives

3. The stage of collecting comments and ideas from residents

4. The stage of developing solutions – Ideathon

5. Stage summarizing the entire process
Social debates / 2 months
3 on-line meetings for representatives of organizations, institutions, district councils or housing cooperatives – 34 participants; 54 recommendations and 34 ideas for action supporting climate and environmental protection.

The stage of collecting comments and ideas from the residents / 2 weeks
426 questionnaires containing the most important issues in the area of greenery & water

The stage of developing solutions – Ideathon / 2 days
Design thinking workshop; 3 solutions for reduction of carbon footprint.