



Placemaking in the Nordics

– A co-creation project about creating safe and attractive places with strong identity and value

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Why placemaking? Why this project?

Neglected and unsafe places are a well-known problem. Around the globe, placemaking has been an approach to meet this challenge with very positive results. It is a matter of leveraging the assets and resources of a place to improve the well-being of the inhabitants and create a safe place, with a defined identity, making it more attractive and valuable.

How can a method that has worked so well in cities like New York, Tokyo and Bradford be applied in the Nordic countries?

Together with the participants in the project from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden we will discover how this can be achieved. We do not believe that placemaking approaches can be copied-and-pasted directly to Nordic conditions, but need to be adapted to our climate, our population density and culture and to the planning processes.

In the project we will learn from past and current placemaking projects and best practices, explore the challenges and success factors and together assemble a common, innovative toolkit – adapted to Nordic conditions. This practical toolkit will enable the participants to start implementing solutions designed for Nordic conditions.

The initiative comes from LINK Arkitektur, Future Place Leadership and the Safer Sweden Foundation.

What is placemaking?

Placemaking means creating attractive and inclusive urban environments by designing multiple activities and mixed uses for a place on a continuous basis.

It's a multi-disciplinary approach with ground in urban design, planning and place management. PPS (Project for Public Spaces) describes placemaking as “a collaborative process that brings people together to create the great public spaces at the heart of their communities.”

The objective is to create vibrant public spaces that contribute to people's health, happiness, safety and well-being.

In the context of this Nordic project we want to highlight the multi-stakeholder aspect – it brings together not only the people in the community but also the municipality/city and the property owners. Furthermore, we want to highlight the cross-disciplinary aspect of the process – that different practitioners with a mix of skills are important. Finally, the perspective of the Nordic placemaking project is not only socially and environmentally sustainable but also financially sustainable (triple bottom line).

A pioneering co-creation project

The project will give the participants:

- Insights into how placemaking can be applied in the Nordics
- An innovative toolkit with strategies, tools and methods, adapted to Nordic conditions – a toolkit which we co-create
- A cross-disciplinary network with different actors who work with placemaking, e.g. municipalities, real estate businesses and NGOs
- Hands-on knowledge about placemaking to enable you to make your place projects attractive and safe, while yielding identity and value.

We will achieve these objectives by:

1. Learning and being inspired by those who have succeeded: What can we learn from the cities, property owners and architects in Europe and beyond who have applied Placemaking successfully? How can we translate that experience to a Nordic context?

2. Learning from and inspiring each other: A structured exchange of experience between the participants from different Nordic countries and different disciplines will ensure new perspectives, insights and ideas.

3. Innovating future solutions together: Based on the best practices which we identify and the exchange of experience between the participants we enter a creative process of assembling a practical and innovative toolkit for placemaking in the Nordics. Your participation in its development will give you a deep understanding and knowledge of how the tools can be applied to your own projects and initiatives.

Project description

The purpose of the project

The purpose of the project is to learn from past and current placemaking projects and best practices, explore challenges and success factors and develop and innovative toolkit adapted to Nordic conditions.

Preliminary focus

The project scope is the Nordic region with a focus on the experiences of the participants and case studies. Our experience is that the Nordic countries are sufficiently similar as societies to be able to learn from one another, and dissimilar enough to give new and creative perspectives.

Best-practice case studies will be made of relevant and successful examples both in the region and internationally. We will concentrate on how attractiveness, safety and identity are achieved and how they impact long term value creation.

In the project, we will highlight the following or similar topics:

1. Which challenges and success factors are important for placemaking in the Nordics? How can tools and methods that have been effective in other places in the world be applied in the Nordics?
2. How can different stakeholders (citizens, businesses, visitors etc.) be engaged in a placemaking process? How can *co-creation* work in practice? Who takes the initiative regarding new projects to develop a place?
3. How can placemaking initiatives in the Nordics be managed in the long term? Can concepts like Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) be applied?
4. How can you improve the identity/reputation of a place/area?

The final topics will be decided during the first part of the project in dialogue with the participants in the project. The project will be based on the needs and preferences of the participants.

What do you, as a participant, get out of the project?

Participating in the project will give you:

- deep understanding and knowledge about the tools and methods which are used to achieve attractive and safe places with a clear identity and increased value. Also an understanding of the challenges, obstacles and success factors involved.
- a role in the process of co-creating a common toolbox and terminology unique to Nordic conditions
- an opportunity to share experiences with other participants and practitioners facing the same or similar challenges as you do
- a wide, cross-disciplinary network with other actors who work with placemaking in the Nordics – both public and private
- inspiration enabling you to see opportunities to create more attractive and safer areas/places close to you

This is included in the programme:

- Participation for up to three people in the co-creation and experience exchange workshops in the project. These will take place in different places in the Nordics, in convenient locations with respect to travel.
- Continuous exchange of experience through a digital project platform run by the project management.
- Direct access to a concrete and useful 'Placemaking in Nordics toolkit'.

Time plan and project phases

The recruitment of project participants will begin in January 2019, and individual start-up meetings with the participating organisations will be held. At the beginning of 2019 we proceed with experience-sharing, strategy work and inviting guest speakers. Case studies will be produced during this period, and form the basis of developing methodology and tools. Before and after the summer 2019, the project will have had its two main workshop seminars focusing on case studies, workshops and tools.

Project timeplan

1. Discovery phase: January 2019 – March 2019

In the Discovery phase start-up meetings (typically telephone or video conferences) are held with each individual team of participants in order to inform about the project, understand the context and challenges regarding the attractiveness and safety of the places they work with.

The meetings are documented in order to allow project management to adjust the project focus to meet the needs and expectations of each organisation.

2. Research phase: March 2019 – May 2019

In the research phase, which partially runs in parallel with the Discovery phase, we analyse successful placemaking cases, in order to identify good examples, success factors and methods. We focus on understanding mechanisms and components that are not always evident which you read about a case in the media or other contexts.

The purpose is to glean practical knowledge from the case in order to apply it in real place projects in the future. The case studies will be complemented with surveys/questionnaires sent to practitioners in order to better understand the challenges, opportunities and success factors in Placemaking.

3. Workshop 1 – inspiration and co-creation: May 2019

The purpose of the first meeting is to bring all the participants together for two days and network. We will decide the final exact focus of the project, share experiences and start the co-creation of new tools, methods and strategies. The best practise case studies will be presented and inspiring guest speakers will be there.

4. Conceptualisation: May – September 2019

In this phase the project management produces additional case studies and start conceptualizing new tools and methods for the placemaking toolkit based on the insights and contributions of the participants at Workshop 1. The project management will have an on-going dialogue with the participants during this phase to ensure that the outcome matches the needs of the organisations in the project.

5. Workshop 2: September 2019

In this workshop, case studies are presented and discussed, and the exchange of experience continues. Co-creation intensifies and takes place in the light of the lessons learned from both the case and the exchange of experience. This workshop also holds lunch-to-lunch, with a joint dinner in the evening.

6. Workshop 3 – toolkit kick-off: December 2019

During this workshop focus is on discussing and fine-tuning the placemaking toolkit and how the participants in their daily work can apply it in practice. Inspiring guest speaker will shed additional light on placemaking in practice.

7. Add-on: Local implementation: September – December 2019

This phase consists of supporting and inspiring the participants as they proceed to apply the

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placemaking toolkit, the insights from the case studies and the shared experiences in their own future place projects.

For more information

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