Pro SHARE | Enhancing Diversity, Inclusion and Social Cohesion through Practices of Sharing in Housing and Public Space
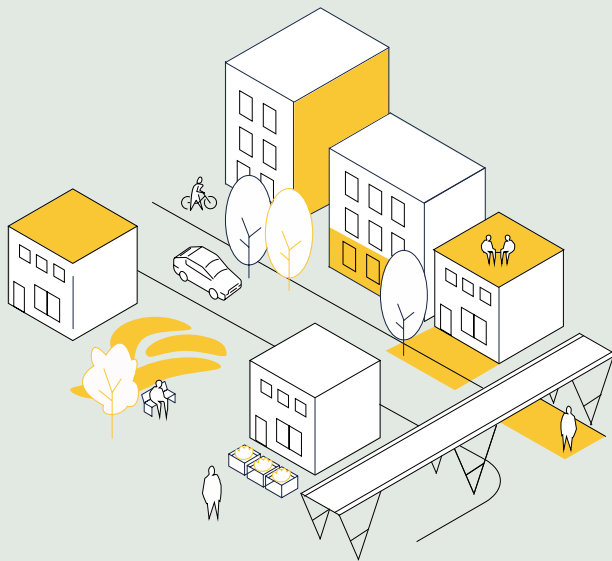
d.3.2. ProShare-Lab Berlin

Final report

Authors: Florian Koch, Nada Bretfeld
28.9.2022

URBAN EUROPE

Content

1. Introduction: ProShare labs

Part of the research project "ProSHARE: Enhancing Diversity, Inclusion and Social Cohesion through Practices of Sharing in Housing and Public Space" (https://stadtteilen.org/proshare/) was the establishment of so called ProSHARE Labs. The labs aim at sustaining existing sharing and urban commoning practices in the field of housing and public space, exploring how existing sharing practices can be extended towards new migrant communities and experimenting with different forms of sharing practices (Petrescu et al. 2022).

The different ProSHARE local teams were conducting four ProSHARE-labs as open physical and virtual spaces for interaction and exchange. These spaces function as a platform for collaborative experimentation and learning about (new) sharing practices, forms of self-organizational structures within processes of commoning.

ProSHARE-labs took place in four cities, anchored in two already existing civic hubs in Paris and London, a family- and neighborhood center in Berlin and an urban initiative in Vienna. This report highlights the activities and findings of the ProSHARE Lab in Berlin, which was conducted by HTW Berlin in cooperation with local stakeholders. Throughout the Lab activities the community center Kiezanker 36 (see Figure 1) played a pivotal role for networking and multiplying its impact. The Kiezanker 36 invited its networks to participate in the Lab activities and connected Labs actions and research with local initiatives and stakeholders. The ProSHARE lab in Berlin builds upon the results and networks of the StadtTeilen project (funded by Robert Bosch-Stiftung from 2018-2023, for details see Cermeño et al. (2022) or Koch et al. (2020). Therefore, the Lab is interconnected with the transdisciplinary StadtTeilen research team, conformed by Germany-based academics, social workers, architects, and planning practitioners.

Figure 1: The family- and neighborhood center Kiezanker 36 (Credit: Nada Bretfeld)

2. Project Duration

01.04.2021-30.09.2022

The ProSHARE research project started on April 1st, 2021. The main focus of the work of the HTW Berlin was the participation in WP 3 (ProSHARE-labs), which took place mainly from September 15th, 2021 until June 30th, 2022.

3. Background and Area of the Berlin Lab

The Lab is located in the "Wrangelkiez" and "Reichenberger Kiez" in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg. Those inner-city neighborhoods are characterized by high building densities, multi-story Wilhelmine residential buildings, retail and offices on the ground floor and scarce public spaces (see figure 2). In the 1990s, both neighborhoods were known for their alternative, left wing, and working class residents and their high percentage of Turkish migrant population. Since the 2000s, gentrification processes increased, caused by growing real estate prices and rental values. Currently, various citizen initiatives fight for protecting non-commercial spaces and rent limitation.

From September 2021 to June 2022 the Berlin ProSHARE-Lab has developed several actions to gain community and tacit knowledge on existing sharing practices in public spaces—i.e., on the subjective experiences of inhabitants about sharing and space-commoning places—and to reflect on the ways in which existing and new (non-commercial) forms of space-sharing could be supported and expanded.
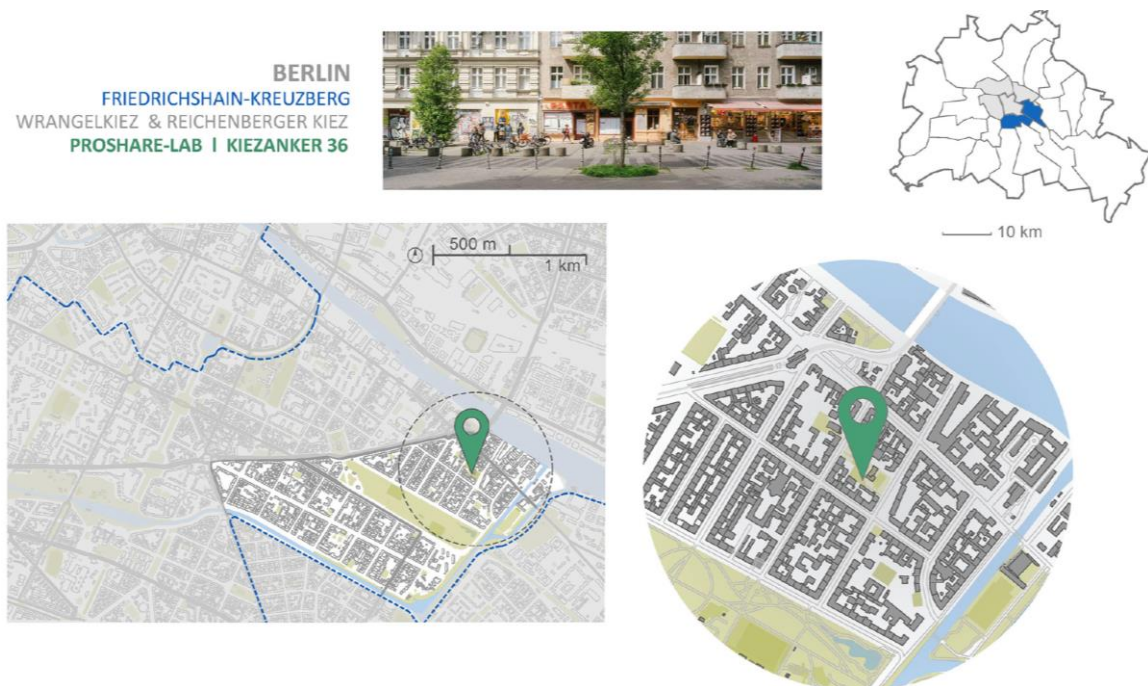

Figure 2: Location of the Berlin ProSHARE Lab, adjusted from (Petrescu et al. 2022)

4. Project Activities

The Berlin Lab builds upon previous spatial analyses as well as expert and sectoral knowledge gained from interviews with local politicians, representatives from civil society organizations/ initiatives and housing companies that informed the Labs early actions. The Lab consisted of different, yet interrelated activities:

First activity: Participatory mapping process

In the initial activity, participants of the Lab explored and mapped spaces that constitute locations for sharing in the neighborhood, as well as additional places and forms of sharing desired by local residents. First via a web-based open source digital mapping tool developed by the NGO Adhocracy/Liquid Democracy, later via analogue formats (Figures 3-8), residents could flag places they experience as important for sharing and for coming together with different people in the district such as parks, playgrounds, sidewalks, convenience stores, cafes and bakeries as well as community gardens and/or comment on existing entries. We communicated this digital Lab-processes through a poster campaign in the neighborhood (Figure 3) and achieved a platform-based co-production process, which allowed to generate tacit and community knowledge on the individual perceptions of space-related sharing practices in the neighborhoods. The digital process was accompanied by events where analogue participatory mappings took place. Part of the analogue activities were temporary installations such as an exhibition of successful urban sharing practices and the contribution of an artist who accompanied the events drawing visualizations of desired sharing spaces expressed by participants. The latter was expanded with a second digital tool: the user's 'sharing wish list' of residents' desired sharing practices.

Figure 3: Poster campaigns in the neighborhood

Figure 4: Digital and analogue co-mapping in the Berlin Lab (Credit: Nada Bretfeld)
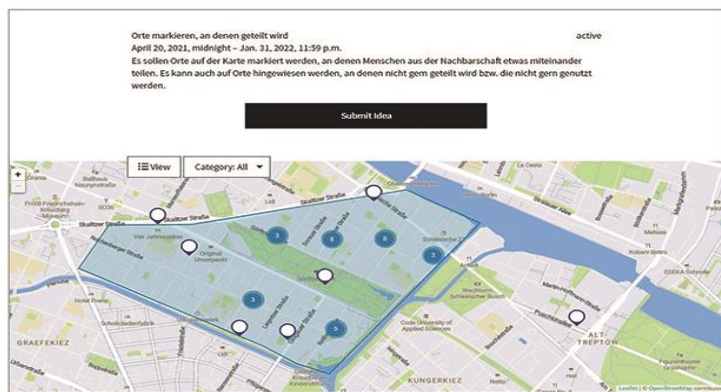

Figure 5: Digital co-mapping in the Berlin Lab (Credit: Adhocracy)

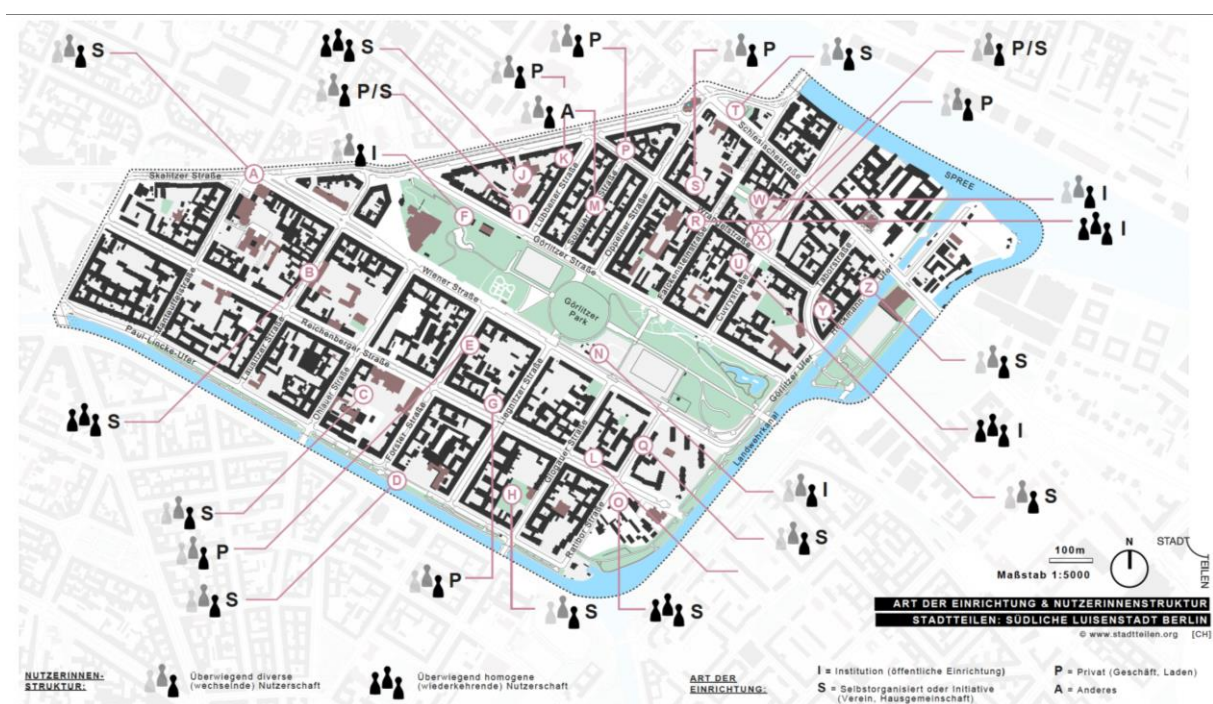*Figure 6: Digital wish list of sharing places (Credit: Adhocracy)*

Figure 7: Sharing practices in the neighborhood (Credit: Constantin Hörburger)

Figure 8: Participatory collection of sharing ideas (Credit: Nada Bretfeld)

Second activity: Establishing the basis for a DIY neighborhood intranet

Mazi, a Do-It-Yourself equipment for a neighborhood intranet, can be used as a means of communication in group processes. As a local intranet (potentially located in the neighborhood center Kiezanker 36 or in a mobile, temporary environment), it is used to access information from the research project (such as the above-mentioned results from the mapping processes). It is equipped with a corresponding input and output station (tablet).

Mazi has various functions: the collection of contributions in the guestbook can be filled with text, audio and video formats, the digital questionnaire can be called up, an archive area is intended to become a learning and knowledge platform (such as the well-know Moodle-system for different user groups). With Mazi, users can decide for themselves what, how and for whom they provide information about sharing digitally. In the project phase, the technical prerequisites for Mazi have been established and during different neighborhood events, the concept of Mazi has been explained to the interested public (see figures 9 and 10).

Figure 9: The neighborhood Intranet (Credit: Nada Bretfeld)

Figure 10: Flyer for an event in which Mazi was explained (Credit: Nada Bretfeld)

Third activity: Preparation and support of the StadtTeilen practical laboratory

Within this activity, the project team established contacts to members of a neighborhood group, who were interested in re-designing a part of a public space located in the Wrangelkiez. The group, which is linked to the church community, would like to green the

area in front of the church. The quality of stay should be increased and neighbourhood meetings as well as the exchange of material and immaterial goods should be made possible. For this purpose, structural interventions such as a round raised bed and a mobile information, exchange and transport box "Kiezbox" were designed and built. The longer-term unsealing and redesign of the area was outlined with a construction plan and discussed with stakeholders.

During 5 construction workshops and 3 coordination and networking meetings the participants shared ideas on how sharing can be fostered in the public space. In addition, a networking meeting with local organizer's of small-scale street greening (parklets, backyard gardens, planting plots) took place. The specific results were the construction of 2 prototypes (a seed bed as well as a mobile "Kiezbox") and the architectural sketches, which were elaborated in cooperation with members of the StadtTeilen team. The figures 11-13 show details on the process and the results.
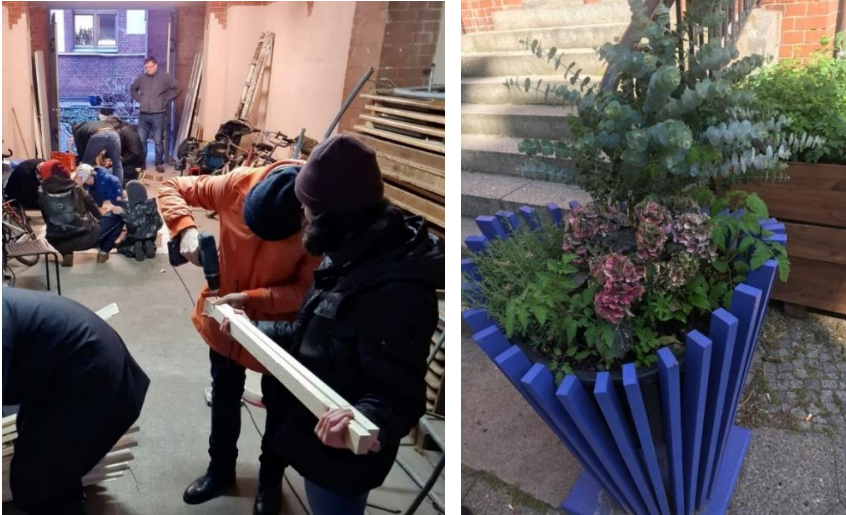

Figure 11: The construction process of the seed beds (Credit: Nada Bretfeld)

Figure 12: Architectural sketch for re-designing the public space (Credit: Josefine Buzwan)
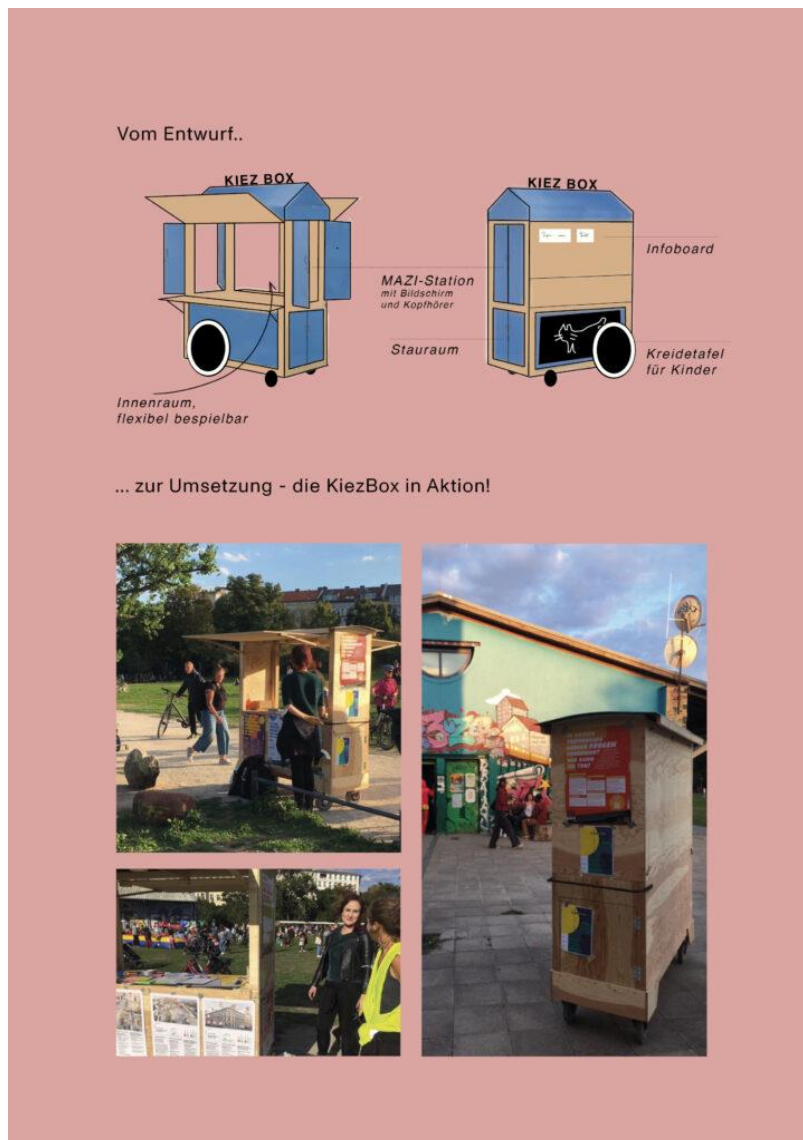
Figure 13: The design and use of the Kiezbox neighborhood Intranet (Credit: Nada Bretfeld)

Fourth activity: Interviews with less represented groups

We conducted interviews with less represented groups and asked about their perceptions of sharing. In total, 6 face-to-face interviews with representatives of the particularly relevant or difficult-to-reach target groups in the Berlin study area (migrants, neighbors at risk of exclusion, homeless people, etc.) were realized. We recorded, transcribed and analyzed those interviews. Every interview has then been analyzed regarding the question of what is shared, why it is shared, what are the conditions of sharing and which obstacles exist concerning the sharing especially in relation to the mainstream community. We interviewed representatives of the following groups: Turkish women group „Wednesday-Group", elderly people group, representative of the streetwork-organization CoLab, Coffee owner, representatives of a Muslim church community and members of the youth group "No school without feminism"). The interviews took place in March and April 2022.

5. Dissemination and Outreach

In line with the main objective of the research project ProSHARE, all the activities should be disseminated widely, especially transferring the main ideas, approaches and results of the project back to the neighborhood.

Therefore, the ProSHARE team organized and/or attend a variety of events taking place in the neighborhood (see for example Figure 14). During the events, mapping activities, explanation of the MAZI system, a temporary exposition of good-practice sharing projects and general discussion with interested persons took place.

List of events:

- 30th September 2021: Bei-Spielräume des Teilens (event was organized a dialogue event of the StadtTeilen project, approximately 60 persons attended the event)
- 4th May 2022: Ramadan und Kiez-Soli Fest. The ProSHARE team participated at the event and had an own booth at the event. In total, 500 persons attended the Ramadan and Kiez-Soli-Fest and
- 25th of June 2022: Wrangelstraßenfest: During this festival, we could discuss with more than 30 people, who visited the ProShare booth about sharing practices (see figure 9)
- 3. September 2022 Görli-Jam: During this festival, the mobile intervention Kiezbox was tested and presented to the neighborhood. Over 500 persons participated at the festival
- 24. September 2022: Reichenberger Kiezfest: around 200 people came together at the this street festival. The Kiezbox was presented and possible equipment of the Kiezbox, that could promote sharing in the neighbourhood were discussed - ideas were collected and networks promoted (as cooperation with the initiative "Iniradar").

Figure 14: ProSHARE/StadtTeilen booth at the Wrangelstraßenfest (Credit: Nada Bretfeld)

The following further dissemination activities will take place in the next couple of months:

- Presentation of the project at the scientific conference of the European Sociological Association Research Network 37: Urban Sociology Seeing Like a City/Seeing the City Through" which takes take place at the Georg Simmel Center for Metropolitan Research of the Humboldt University Berlin from the 5th to the 7th of October 2022.
- Preparation of a scientific article on the findings of the interviews with the less-represented groups, submission planned in January 2023

6. Projects Results and Policy recommendations

The participatory mapping process revealed that neighbors identify a broad range of locations as important for sharing activities. The type of location differ: While public spaces and parks were identified as important sharing places, also less obvious places such as the side-walk in front of a supermarket or existing coffee-bars and school yards, as well as semi-public spaces such as community gardens are considered as sharing places. This heterogeneity of (small scale) places, where sharing takes place, should be considered in urban planning practices. Especially in neighborhoods facing gentrification issues, it is often those less-obvious and hidden places for sharing which are at risk of being displaced.

The interviews with less represented groups such as Muslim communities, elderly people and youth groups with problems accessing traditional community services showed that sharing activities are widely existent among those groups. Sharing activities emerge often as a reaction to discrimination experiences, lack of access to other forms of support and the will to organize something for a specific, clearly defined community. Sharing goods are mostly immaterial and the members of the less represented groups share time, knowledge and experience. The stability of those neighborhood groups is astonishing: Some of the groups exist already for decades. Furthermore, exchanges between the different less represented groups or other neighborhood groups or initiatives hardly takes place. The less represented groups highlighted the need for physical spaces, were they can meet and define the usage of these spaces by their selves. Non-commercial oriented (indoor) spaces, which are offered by public institutions or by church communities and which provide a feeling of security for the members of the less-represented groups are a pre-requisite for the sharing activities.

The neighborhood-based construction process was based on discussions between members of the ProSHARE-Team and the priest of a local protestant church community. A group of church members (the so called Paradiesgarten-group) wanted to re-design the public space in front of the church building. In different design workshops, volunteers and members of the reserach project SatdtTeilen and ProShare constructed a prototype of a raised bed, designed an architectural plan for the public space in front of the church and also built a mobile "Kiez-Box", in order to improve the shared use of public space and to be a proposal for a side-by-side usage of the public space, e.g. also with the homeless people, who regularly use the church offer to stay overnight. The challenge now is to use and implement those results beyond the experimental phase of a research project in everyday urban planning and development practice and spread good-practices, ideas and spatial experiences

with the small scale and partly mobile spatial interventions for sharing the public spaces with different neighbors.

7. Literature

Cermeño, Helena; Bretfeld, Nada; Bernhardt, Floris (2022): Knowledge Practices Within and Beyond Sharing and Commoning Urban Initiatives. In: *Front. Sustain. Cities* 4, Artikel 767365. DOI: 10.3389/frsc.2022.767365.

Koch, Florian; Hampel, Lea; Keller, Carsten; Bernhardt, Floris (2020): StadtTeilen – Öffentlicher Raum und Wohnen als neue Gemeingüter in sozial gemischten Nachbarschaften. In: Anton Brokow-Loga und Frank Eckardt (Hg.): Postwachstumsstadt. Konturen einer solidarischen Stadtpolitik. München: oekom verlag, S. 224–237.

Petrescu, Doina; Cermeño, Helena; Keller, Carsten; Moujan, Carola; Belfield, Andrew; Koch, Florian et al. (2022): Sharing and Space-Commoning Knowledge Through Urban Living Labs Across Different European Cities. In: *UP* 7 (3). DOI: 10.17645/up.v7i3.5402.

Pro SHARE | Enhancing Diversity, Inclusion and Social Cohesion through Practices of Sharing in Housing and Public Space

Researchers (in alphabetical order)

Timo Baldewein
Andrew R. Belfield
Floris Bernhardt
Nada Bretfeld
Helena Cermeño
Sina Doukas
DI Denise Goff
Prof. Dr. Alexander Hamedinger
Dr. Emma Homqvist
Prof. Dr. Carsten Keller
Prof. Dr. Florian Koch
Dr. Carola Moujan
Prof. Dr. Doina Petrescu
Prof. Dr. Meike Schalk

Non-funded supporting partners

Bezirksamt Friedrichshain – Kreuzberg von Berlin
Municipality of Uppsala, Urban Development Office
Gebietsbetreuung Stadterneuerung für die Bezirke 16, 17, 18, 19 / Urban Renewal Office
Buzwan Morell Architekten PARTGmbB
tatwort nachhaltige Projekte GmbH (Pocket Mannerhatten)
Atelier d'Architecture Autogerée (AAA), Paris
Public Works, London
Berlin University of the Arts (UdK), Design Research Lab

Funded partners:

Funded by: