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Photo by Carla Sedini

COMPETITION AND COLLABORATION

CampUS: co-designing spaces for urban agriculture with local communities

by Davide Fassi, Laura Galluzzo and Annalinda De Rosa

METADESCRIPTION

Co-designing community gardens as a means for social inclusion in urban public spaces: schools and universities as supporting labs for communities.

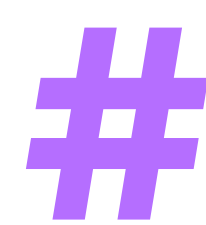
KEYWORDS

social innovation, strategic design, co-design, participatory action research, community-centred design

ABSTRACT

This paper aims at gaining insights and reasoning on social innovation-based experimentations developed within the research project “campUS. Incubation and settings for social practices” – at the Politecnico di Milano. The project is acting for a virtuous relation between university spaces and competence, and the local context in which they are located.

The authors start analysing the theoretical basis of participatory action research, its application in the research process and the reflective perspective of community-centered design approach supporting design activism for urban territories (social and spatial context). The paper focuses on the issues of urban agriculture developed specifically within the research project and more widely by the research team in general. It examines the design strategy, methodologies and impact, in terms of social innovation, of two experiments carried out in a nursery school and a middle school in Milan – zone 9. These were project-based experiments connected to specific contexts and goals; they were a step forward in a process working towards infrastructuring: “a more open-ended long term process where diverse stakeholders can innovate together”. (Hillgren, Seravalli, & Emilson, 2011). At the final consideration stage, almost at the end of the project, the authors reflect upon future steps to take in terms of outcomes and in terms of process development, starting by analysing the achievements and failures of the experiments. How can the experience gained in this and in previous research-actions on community-centred design for social innovation lead to a more strategic approach to developing urban territories through diffused hubs supporting communities?



BIOGRAPHIES

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Graduate in architecture at the Technical University in Munich, for 20 years he has been working in different design schools in Italy, Politecnico di Torino, Università di Ferrara and IED in Milan), in the field of Product Design and Applied Ergonomics for Design. Since 2012, he has been head of the Product Design Department at the Faculty of Applied Sciences and Arts of the German University in Cairo, Egypt.

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