

PS-U-GO and AESOP TG PSUC International Conference 2026

Youth as Agents of Hope:

Urban Living Labs and Community-Engaged Learning

Larnaka, Cyprus, 29 – 30 October 2026

International conference co-organised by the Erasmus+ project PS-U-GO – Education in Living Labs: Participatory Skills for Sustainable Urban Governance and the AESOP Thematic Group on Public Spaces and Urban Cultures (TG PSUC).

Hosted by the Society and Urban Form lab (SURF), Department of Architecture, University of Cyprus, and supported by Larnaka2030, European Capital of Culture 2030.



1. The Conference's Aim

Involving young people in public space and urban governance brings immediate concerns into long-term urban development agendas. Urban Living Labs (ULLs) offer a framework for inclusive urban decision-making and for situated learning that bridges formal higher education with engagement in everyday urban space. The conference addresses the following questions:

- How do young people gain a meaningful role in public space and urban governance?
- What role do Urban Living Labs play in bridging formal education with real-world urban contexts?
- How can participatory methodologies support civic responsibility among students and young urban professionals?
- What pedagogic frameworks best support situated, experiential learning through ULLs?
- How can students and young people contribute to urban change by co-creating urban solutions and imagining hopeful urban futures?
- What institutional, spatial, and relational practices make ULLs with young people effective?

2. Keynote Speakers

Kelly Diapouli Keynote, Day One (Thursday 29 October)

Community-based Art Practices



Artistic Director, Larnaka 2030 European Capital of Culture

Kelly Diapouli is a curator and cultural manager based in Greece and Cyprus. She has been an international cooperation manager in the Hellenic Culture Organisation – Cultural Olympiad (2004 – 2008) and the artistic director of Eleusis 2021 ECoC (2014 – 2020) in Greece and since 2022, she is the artistic director of Larnaka 2030 European Capital of Culture (CY). Her work focuses on international cooperation and networking, participatory design processes and community-based work. She holds an MA in European Cultural Policy and Administration from the University of Warwick (UK) and a BA in Theatre Studies from the University of Athens (GR).

Tihomir Viderman Keynote, Day Two (Friday 30 October)

Watch Out for Affects: Youth Participation in Places of Concern



**Research associate at BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg, Germany;
Representative of the AESOP Thematic Group Public Spaces and Urban Cultures.**

Tihomir Viderman is a research associate at the Chair of Urban Management at BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg. His work engages with public space, urban cultures, patterns of spatial appropriation, and the everyday politics of urban transformation. In research and teaching, he develops the concept of affective urbanism, an approach based on thick analysis of material urban forms, affective relations between unequally positioned bodies, and representations of continuously unsettled urban space. It offers an analytical perspective on spaces of possibility. He is co-editor of *Unsettled Urban Space: Routines, Temporalities and Contestations* (Routledge), *Public Space Unbound: Urban Emancipation and the Post-Political Condition* (Routledge), and *Urban Conflicts and Peace: Everyday Politics of Commons* (Tracce Urbane 17). From 2024 to 2026, he coordinated the AESOP Thematic Group Public Spaces and Urban Cultures.

3. Why Larnaka?

Cyprus sits in the Eastern Mediterranean at the confluence of three continents and many cultures, with a long history of urban transformation, migration and socio-spatial conflict. This makes it a telling context for exploring how urban pedagogy, living labs and community-engaged practices operate in complex urban environments.

SURF, Department of Architecture, University of Cyprus, in collaboration with Larnaka2030, has developed an active Urban Living Lab in Larnaka. The refugee housing estate of Ayioi Anargyroi, visited during the Day Two walkshop, offers participants a live case study for discussion and first-hand exploration.

4. The Conference Format

The conference comprises two days of activities encouraging encounters and constructive discussion among approximately 30 participants.

Each day starts with a **keynote talk** and continues with **roundtables**, each structured around one of the conference's core questions, with a moderator and a discussant. Participants share their work in short interventions (15-20 minutes: oral presentations, visual essays or videos), followed by open discussion.

On Day Two, the **PS-U-GO partners' roundtable** brings together the project's consortium to discuss its Urban Living Labs.

On Day Two, a **walkshop** in the refugee housing estate of Ayioi Anargyroi connects the discussions with live urban practice. Participants also engage on site with the international artists in residence of the Creative Europe project MedSea, led by Larnaka2030. The walkshop is preceded by a **synthesis session** drawing together the threads across all roundtables, and followed by an on-site event hosted by the MedSea artists in residence program.

5. The Venue

The conference takes place at : Allilodidaskalio, next to Saint Lazarus Church, Larnaka.



The workshop will be at Ayioi Anargyroi, Larnaka; a bus will take us from Allilodidaskalio.

There is no registration fee. Participants cover their own travel and accommodation.

For any additional information or question, please contact:

Nadia Charalambous (charalambous.nadia@ucy.ac.cy), Mariam Schulqamy (mariamshulqamy@gmail.com), Michalis Psaras (psaras.michalis@ucy.ac.cy)

6. Programme

Day One: Thursday 29 October 2026

MORNING SESSION

9:00 – 9:30

Registration of participants

9:30 – 9:45

Welcome notes

9:45 – 10:45

Community-based Art Practices - Keynote lecture by Kelly Diapouli

10:45 – 11:15 COFFEE BREAK

11:15 – 13:00

Roundtable One: How do young people gain a meaningful role in public space and urban governance?

Moderator: [Marina Pasia, University of Cyprus]

Discussants: [Maria Karagianni, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki; Raquel Guerra Aragonés, SURF]

Interventions:

- **Youth Claiming Urban Space: Lived Experiences, Everyday Practices, and Urban Governance in the Exarcheia Neighbourhood** – Katerina Konstantinidou, Panteion University (MA graduate), Greece
- **Girls & the City: An Urban Living Lab with Adolescents in Parma's Ducal Park** – Renata Boeri (University of Naples Federico II), Florencia Andreola (Sex & the City APS), Italy
- **Young People Don't Seek Community: Theatre of the Oppressed as an Urban Living Lab** – Steffen Hehn, HafenCity University Hamburg (graduate), Germany

13:15 – 14:45 LUNCH BREAK

AFTERNOON SESSION

14:45 – 16:15

Roundtable Two: What pedagogic frameworks best support situated, experiential learning through Urban Living Labs?

Moderator: [Rafael Maximiliano Flores de Leon, BTU]

Discussant: [Tomislav Augustinčić, SF:ius; Gabriella Esposito, CNR]

Interventions:

- **From Classroom to City: The EPIC_LAB Course as a Situated Urban Living Lab** – Maria Karagianni, Evie Athanassiou, Georgia Pozoukidou, Amy Stamatopoulou, Panos-Arion Hatziprokopiou (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece), Georgia Alexandri, Aysegül Can (Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, Germany)
- **Education and Engagement of Youth for Urban Futures** – Valentina Gulin Zrnić, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, Zagreb, Croatia
- **What Might Regenerative Education Look Like? Cultivating Continuity, Participation, Belonging and Care in the Feed4Food Urban Agriculture Living Lab** – Chrystalleni Loizidou, Emmanouela Christofi, Dimitris Sarris (KES Research Centre), Katerina Televantou, Chrystalla Antoniou, Myria Nikolaidou Tzoni (Apostolos Varnavas Primary School), Vassilis Litskas (VL Sustainability Metrics), Cyprus

16:15 – 16:45 COFFEE BREAK

16:45 – 18:15

Roundtable Three: What role do Urban Living Labs play in bridging formal education with real-world urban contexts?

Moderator: [Stefania Ragozzino, CNR, PSUC]

Discussant: [Vassilis Litskas, VL Sustainability Metrics, Emilia Pardi, PUSH Design Lab]

Interventions:

- **Education-Based Urban Living Labs as a New Venue for Transdisciplinary Collaboration and Engagement: COCO – Commoning Cottbus as a Prototype** – Hendrik Weiner, BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg, Germany
- **Cultivating Young People's Participatory Habitus between Inclusive Ideals and Institutional Expectations** – Rafael Maximiliano Flores de Leon, Tihomir Viderman, BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg, Germany
- **ULLs as Situated Configurations of Practice: A Reflexive Analytical Perspective on Youth Empowerment** – Tomislav Augustinčić (University of Zadar / SF:ius), Dafne Berc, Layla Munitić (SF:ius), Croatia
- **The Architectural Design Studio as an Urban Living Lab: Co-Creating Urban Commons through Situated Learning** – Marina Pasia, Nadia Charalambous, Giorgos Kyriazis, Michalis Psaras, University of Cyprus, Cyprus

Evening FREE

Day Two: Friday 30 October 2026

MORNING SESSION

9:00 – 10:00

"Watch Out for Affects: Youth Participation in Places of Concern "

Keynote lecture by Tihomir Viderman

10:00 – 10:30 COFFEE BREAK

10:30 – 12:00

Roundtable Four: What institutional, spatial, and relational practices make Urban Living Labs with young people effective?

Moderator: [Dafne Berc, SF:ius]

Discussant: [Hendrik Weiner, BTU; Renata Boeri, University of Naples Federico II]

Interventions:

- **Who Can Participate? Rethinking Sensory and Cognitive Inclusion in Urban Living Labs** – Raquel Guerra Aragonés, Larissa Ribeiro Cunha, SURF Research Lab, University of Cyprus / RETHINK Normal Design, Cyprus
- **What Spaces, Tools, and Conditions Enable Younger Generations to Shape the City? Two Practice-Based Projects in Milan and Rome** – Emma Loi, Cristiana Luciani, Avanzi – Sostenibilità per Azioni, Italy (visual essay)
- **From an Ordinary Parking Lot to an Autonomous Circus Space: The Skate Park Parking Space of Larnaca as a Weekly Juggling Gathering** – Juggling Cyprus initiative, Cyprus (presentation and mini documentary)

12:00 – 13:30

PS-U-GO Partners' Roundtable

Moderator: [Nadia Charalambous, UCY]

Participants:

- University of Cyprus (UCY), Cyprus – [Michalis Psaras]
- Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus–Senftenberg (BTU), Germany – [Tihomir Viderman]
- Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (CNR), Italy – [Stefania Ragozino]
- Social Fringe: interesting untold stories (SF:ius), Croatia – [Dafne Berc]
- Palermo Urban Solutions Hub (PUSH), Italy – [Emilia Pardi]
- Urban Foxes, Belgium – [tbc]

13:30 – 14:45 LUNCH BREAK

AFTERNOON SESSION

14:45 – 15:45

Synthesis session: drawing together the threads across all roundtables

17:00

Transfer to the refugee housing estate of Ayioi Anargyroi

EVENING SESSION (AYIOI ANARGYROI, LARNAKA)

17:30 – 19:00

Walkshop: [SYNIKISMOS]. With Larnaka2030 and the MedSea artists in residence

19:00 – 21:00

On-site event hosted by the MedSea artists in residence

7. The Sessions at a Glance

	Roundtable One	Roundtable Two	Roundtable Three	Roundtable Four	PS-U-GO Partners' Roundtable	Walkshop
Date / time	29 Oct, 11:15 – 13:00	29 Oct, 14:45 – 16:15	29 Oct, 16:45 – 18:15	30 Oct, 10:30 – 12:00	30 Oct, 12:00 – 13:30	30 Oct, 17:00 – 19:00
Question	How do young people gain a meaningful role in public space and urban governance?	What pedagogic frameworks best support situated, experiential learning through ULLs?	What role do ULLs play in bridging formal education with real-world urban contexts?	What institutional, spatial, and relational practices make ULLs with young people effective?		Ayioi Anargyroi refugee housing estate, Larnaka
Moderator	Marina Pasia (UCY)	Rafael Maximiliano Flores de Leon (BTU)	Stefania Ragozino (CNR)	Dafne Berc (SF:ius)	Nadia Charalambous (UCY)	Larnaka2030, MedSea artists in residence
Interventions	Katerina Konstantinidou; Renata Boeri et al.; Steffen Hehn	Maria Karagianni et al. (EPIC_LAB); Valentina Gulin Zrnić; Chrystalleni Loizidou et al. (Feed4Food)	Hendrik Weiner; Rafael Maximiliano Flores de Leon et al.; Tomislav Augustinčić et al.; Marina Pasia et al.	Raquel Guerra Aragonés et al.; Emma Loi et al.; Juggling Cyprus	UCY, BTU, CNR, SF:ius, PUSH, Urban Foxes	–
Discussant	Maria Karagianni (AUTH); Raquel Guerra Aragonés, (SURF)	Tomislav Augustinčić (SF:ius); Gabriella Esposito, (CNR)	Vassilis Litskas (VL Sustainability Metrics); Emilia Pardi, (PUSH Design Lab)	Hendrik Weiner (BTU); Renata Boeri (University of Naples Federico II)	–	–

Scientific and Organising Committee:

Nadia Charalambous, Michalis Psaras, Mariam Schulqamy (University of Cyprus)

Dafne Berc (SF:ius)

Emilia Pardi (PUSH Design Lab)

Bram Dewolfs (Urban Foxes)

Tihomir Viderman (BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg; TG PSUC)

Stefania Ragozino (CNR; TG PSUC)

Andreas Karakatsanis (Larnaka2030)

8. About the PS-U-GO Project

PS-U-GO – Education in Living Labs: Participatory Skills for Sustainable Urban Governance (Project No. 2023-1-CY01-KA220-HED-000158284) is an Erasmus+ Cooperation Partnership co-funded by the European Union and coordinated by the University of Cyprus (1 January 2024, 36 months). It implements Urban Living Labs as educational spaces where stakeholders from the quadruple helix collaborate on urban challenges through experimentation and co-creation. <https://www.psugo.eu/>

Consortium: University of Cyprus (UCY), Cyprus; Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus–Senftenberg (BTU), Germany; Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (CNR), Italy; Social Fringe: interesting untold stories (SF:ius), Croatia; Palermo Urban Solutions Hub (PUSH), Italy; Urban Foxes, Belgium.

9. About the AESOP Thematic Group PSUC

The AESOP Thematic Group on Public Spaces and Urban Cultures introduces a research and design focus on lived space and everyday life in and beyond member schools of the Association of European Schools of Planning. The group meets regularly in workshops, seminars and conferences combining academic exchange with field-based practice. <https://aesop-planning.eu/thematic-groups/public-spaces-and-urban-cultures>

10. About Larnaka2030

Larnaka2030 manages the design and implementation of the European Capital of Culture 2030 in Cyprus. Its programme centres on culture, community and urban transformation.

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.