

First of all I want to thank you for the opportunity to participate in your conference be it only digitally. I apologize that I can not physically join you, but today in the Netherlands, we celebrate Sint Nicholas, our own version of Christmas.

I want to briefly tell you today about Creative Urbans and it's background, I will keep my story short so I can show you a short movie of a participant in Creative Urbans, so you can see for you'r self in stead of my telling you about is.

September 2006 the first batch Creative Urbans started with 15 participants. It was March 2006 when I chaired a conference on behalf of Technical University off Delft; the theme was Democratization of Urban development.

During the conference I interviewed the Dean of the Faculty of Architecture, during this interview he said that it is a loss if future planners had a one-sided view of a city. Often the students at TU are upper middle class and he saw this as a danger to the general perception of a future urban planner. Between the Congress and September, we had multipull talks brainstorming about a possible solution or an intervention to perhaps enable other social economical backgrounds to study at the TU.

Somewhere in those conversations came the idea to organize a pre-educational project for TU Delft designed for Middelbare scholen (students 15-17 years). The idea was and still is very simple in its design, 15,16, 17-year-old high school students are coached by third year students at TU (20&21 year old) and together they again are coached by professionals (30+ years) from the fields of architecture, urbanism and landscape.

The aim is to involve scholieren in developments accuring in their district, our clients are the city and housing companies, the students are provided a practical environment for interaction and the professionals are exposed to a typology of citizens which they rarely come into contact.

Creative Urbans serves four simultaneous objectives:

- a deeper insight into the composition of the inhabitants of the design task both socially and culturally;
- youth exposure to TU Delft as a educational potential;
- Offering the students an directly applicable and experimental environment on a technical and communicative level;
- Offer the professionals a very concrete grassroots interaction platform

The educational program is design of 3 parts, the first one is the basic training which consist of a elementary introduction to the creative ability's and has a duration of 12 weeks.

The 2th part is a 15 weeks program during which the assignment becomes more the centre and all participants are assigned a function withing the design group being as a architect, city planner or landscape designer.

The 3th and last part of the educational program is 6 weeks long and is focused on the end presentation of the various plans as developed by the various design groups to the general public and the client representatives.

In the year 2011 our objectives are certainly achieved, but to be honest I get more energy from the fact that young people, students and professionals have surprised me more than I ever expected. Involving youngsters in urban assignments creates a network of involved citizens whom are able to rethink and redesign the fabrics of a city and thereby the fabrics of communities. Creative Urbans constitutes at 2011 of more than 160 alumni whom a permanent proof of a city that rely on creative and committed citizens.

It is a daily reward for me to see youngsters expand their world and grow in every sense of the word. Grow as individuals, grow in their knowledge and skills to create concepts and visions and also to be able to argument and defend their vision.

What I have learned in recent years by the participants of Creative Urban's is the fact that a city is an organic environment where communities likely to be separated. The lack of contacts and interaction between residents can victimize a city, and create a city off disinterest and disconnection.

By making individuals jointly responsible for the future of a city, we can create permanent links that remain in place long after Creative Urbans as a organisation, thereby contributing to a sustainable form of interaction and shared responsibility between the city inhabitants and hopefully create something what can be close to a ideal city.

I would like to end my talk by presenting a random youngster of Creative Urbans, so after talking about youngsters, let's here what they have to say for themselves.