

# Call for Participation

PS-U-GO – Education in Living Labs: Participatory Skills for Sustainable Urban Governance and AESOP Thematic Group PSUC - Public Spaces and Urban Cultures **International Conference 2026**

**Youth as Agents of Hope:  
Urban Living Labs and Community-Engaged  
Learning**

**29–30 October 2026**

 Larnaka, Cyprus

## The Conference

A two-day event is combined effort of 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).

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

## Conference Topics

Involving young people in public space and urban governance brings immediate concerns into long-term urban development agendas. Urban Living Labs (ULLs) offer a promising framework for inclusive urban decision-making, fostering collaboration among multiple stakeholders and young people, and creating situated learning environments that bridge formal higher education with engagement in space of everyday life.

The conference aims to address 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?**

## ***The Conference Format***

The conference comprises two days of activities encouraging encounters and constructive discussion among all participants. It is organized around roundtable discussions, each structured around one of the conference's core questions, with a moderator and a discussant. Roundtables bring together diverse participants who share their work in short interventions (10–15 minutes), followed by open discussion.

A mobile workshop at the end of Day 1 will take participants into the city to encounter an active Urban Living Lab site in Larnaka, connecting the academic discussions with live urban practice. Participants will also have the opportunity to engage onsite with the work of international artists participating in the Creative Europe project MedSea led by Larnaka2030. Day 2 closes with a synthesis session drawing together the threads across all roundtables.

The conference is small-scale, limited to approximately 30 participants, allowing for in-depth exchange and collaborative reflection.

## ***Who can Participate?***

Researchers, educators, students (including early-career researchers), practitioners, youth workers, policymakers, and community organizations engaged with:

- Youth participation in urban planning and decision-making
- Urban Living Labs as educational and governance spaces
- Participatory and community-engaged pedagogies
- Situated learning and experiential education in higher education institutions
- Co-creation, commoning, and civic empowerment in urban contexts

## ***Format of Participation***

Short interventions in the form of oral presentations, visual essays or videos (10–15 minutes). Contributions may address theoretical, methodological, educational, or practice-based perspectives related to the conference themes.

## ***Submissions***

**Participants are invited to submit abstracts for:**

- Paper presentations
- Practice-based project presentations/proposals

- Participatory or community-based case studies

### **Abstract Length: 250–300 words (Template provided)**

#### **Submissions should clearly indicate:**

- Title
- Author(s) and affiliation(s)
- Conference topic addressed (see questions addressed)
- Preferred presentation format
- 4-6 Keywords

and should be sent to: [charalambous.nadia@ucy.ac.cy](mailto:charalambous.nadia@ucy.ac.cy) and [mariamshulgamy@gmail.com](mailto:mariamshulgamy@gmail.com)

### ***Key Dates***

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| • 10 July 2026       | Open call for participation                          |
| • 1 September 2026   | Deadline for participation interests and submissions |
| • 15 September 2026  | Participation approvals                              |
| • 29–30 October 2026 | Conference   |
| • 30 May 2027        | Conference publication                               |

### ***Conference publications***

The conference findings, including all presentations and discussions, will be published online following the event. A book of abstracts will also be published prior to the conference. Both publications will have ISBNs.

### ***Fee***

There will be no registration fees for the conference. Participants are responsible for all travel and accommodation costs.

### ***The Venue***

The conference will take place in Larnaka, Cyprus, hosted by the Society and Urban Form Lab, Department of Architecture, University of Cyprus and supported by Larnaka2030.

## Why Cyprus?

The location of Cyprus in the Eastern Mediterranean offers a unique venue at the confluence of three continents and a multitude of cultures. Nicosia, a divided European capital with a prolonged history of urban transformation, migration, and socio-spatial conflict, provides an ideal context in which to explore how urban pedagogy, living labs, and community-engaged practices operate in complex, contested urban environments. SURF at the Department of Architecture, University of Cyprus in collaboration with Larnaka2030, has developed an active Urban Living Lab in the city of Larnaka, offering participants a live case study for discussion and first-hand exploration during the accompanying city walkshop.

## 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 project co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union and coordinated by the University of Cyprus. PS-U-GO implements Urban Living Labs as educational spaces where stakeholders from the quadruple helix collaborate to address urban challenges through experimentation and co-creation. <https://www.psugo.eu/>

## The PS-U-GO Project Consortium

 <b>University of Cyprus</b>	University of Cyprus (UCY)	Cyprus
 Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus - Senftenberg	Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg (BTU)	Germany
 Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche	Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (CNR)	Italy
	Social Fringe: interesting untold stories (SF:IUS)	Croatia
	Palermo Urban Solutions Hub (PUSH)	Italy



Urban Foxes

Belgium

## ***About the AESOP Thematic Group on Public Spaces and Urban Cultures (TG PSUC)***

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

## ***About Larnaka2030, European Capital of Culture***

Larnaka 2030 is the organization managing the design and implementation of the European Capital of Culture 2030 in Cyprus. Its programme centers on culture, community, and urban transformation, making it a natural partner for initiatives exploring youth participation, public space, and the role of creative urban practices in building sustainable futures.

## ***Scientific and Organizing Committee***

Nadia Charalambous, Professor, Department of Architecture, University of Cyprus

Michalis Psaras, Special Scientist, Department of Architecture, University of Cyprus

Mariam Schulqamy, Special Scientist, Department of Architecture, University of Cyprus

Dafne Berc, Researcher, SF:ius

Emilia Pardi, Associate Director, PUSH Design Lab

Bram Dewolfs, Director, Urban Foxes

Tihomir Viderman, research associate, BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg; representative of Thematic Group PSUC.

Stefania Ragozino, Senior Researcher, Research Institute for Innovation and Services for Development, National Research Council, Italy; representative of Thematic Group PSUC.

Andreas Karakatsanis, General Director, Larnaka2030.

## ***Contact for further information***

Nadia Charalambous ([charalambous.nadia@ucy.ac.cy](mailto:charalambous.nadia@ucy.ac.cy))

Mariam Schulqamy ([mariamshulqamy@gmail.com](mailto:mariamshulqamy@gmail.com))

Michalis Psaras ([psaras.michalis@ucy.ac.cy](mailto:psaras.michalis@ucy.ac.cy))

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