

Terms of Reference

Call for Good Practices

Open: 15 April - 30 June 2024



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1. Introduction

URBACT IV is a European Territorial Cooperation programme serving the EU Cohesion Policy for the period 2021-2027, and in particular Policy Objective 5: a Europe closer to citizens, by supporting locally-led development strategies and sustainable urban development across the EU. It is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance, the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument, and the EU Member/Partner States.

URBACT's mission is to help cities develop sustainable and integrated policies to urban challenges, by networking activities (transnational networks); capacity-building activities (trainings, tools, guides); and by knowledge-sharing and communication activities (thematic events, EU City Labs, URBACT City Festivals, articles, publications, etc). For more information about these activities please visit <https://urbact.eu/>

Back in 2016-2017 (1 December- 31 March), the URBACT III Programme launched its first Call for Good Practices. The Call aimed at identifying good practices successfully put in place by EU cities with potential to be transferred to other EU cities through URBACT Transfer Networks. Following Call for Good Practices, 270 applications were received with 264 being considered eligible. Following assessment, 97 of them were awarded an "URBACT Good Practice" label, as decided by the URBACT III Monitoring Committee. 23 of these selected Good Practices were transferred to a total of 188 European cities through 23 URBACT Transfer Networks from April 2018 to April 2021, and through seven pilot URBACT Transfer Networks of shorter duration from June 2021 to December 2022.

Under URBACT IV, the Call for Good Practices **from 15 April to 30 June 2024** aims to identify Good Practices implemented by European cities. Good Practices in the sense that they have positive impact at local level, they are participatory and integrated, relevant at EU level, and transferable to other EU cities.

Cities that will be awarded the "URBACT Good Practice" label will:

- gain in visibility at EU and national levels
- will have the possibility to act as Lead Partners of URBACT Transfer Network to transfer their good practice to other European cities and further improve their practice from 2025 onwards.

The principle underpinning the Transfer Networks – drawn from the URBACT III experience – will be "Understand, Adapt, Reuse." This principle is important. It makes it clear that URBACT's end goal is not only the gathering of good practices, but their effective transfer across Europe's cities. In other words, why risk wasting precious resources reinventing the wheel, when another city might already have taken steps to solve the problem.

2 . Why apply ?

Successful cities will have their good practices promoted by URBACT and other EU institutions, and they will have the opportunity to share and even improve their practice within the framework of URBACT Transfer Networks.

This call invites cities to come forward with their good practices in the field of sustainable integrated urban development to:

- Be part of the pioneering group of URBACT Good Practices to be widely promoted at EU and national levels,
- Be able to take part as Lead Partners in the upcoming Call for Transfer Networks (from April to June 2025)

Following the assessment of applications, selected cities will be awarded the label **URBACT Good Practice**. They will then be promoted through the following activities:

- **An URBACT City Festival, 8-10 April 2025 in Wroclaw, Poland**, under the auspices of the Polish presidency of the Council of the European Union. All the selected cities with good practices will take part and have the opportunity to network with European and city policy-makers. The event will promote the good practices and allow partner match-making for the call for Transfer Networks. One delegate representing the selected Good Practice will be refunded by URBACT to take part in the event and play an active role.
- **A series of promotional activities highlighting the selected good practices**, notably:
 - An infographic of the URBACT Good Practices
 - Press releases about the URBACT Good Practices
 - Individual webpages for all URBACT Good Practices to be showcased on the [URBACT database of good practices](#)
 - Presentation of selected good practices in national contexts through events organised by National URBACT Points
 - Videos and other visual communication tools
- **Dissemination through European Commission's channels**, mainly through:
 - DG Regional and Urban Policy social medial accounts
 - DG Regional and Urban Policy external communication channels: Panorama, Inforegio and RegioFlash
 - [Portico Urban Practices website](#)
- **Public European and international events** where the representatives of the good practices will act as advocates of sustainable integrated urban development (for example European Week for Regions and Cities)

AND,

- **URBACT Transfer Networks**, where the city with an awarded URBACT Good Practice will have the opportunity to act as a Lead Partner with the objectives to:
 - Transfer their knowledge and know-how about the good practice to other European cities

- Lead and mentor the process of understanding, adapting and reusing the good practice.
- Refine and improve their own methodology through peer reviews and with the support of an URBACT expert.

3. Who is eligible ?

Eligible cities for the Call for Good Practices are “cities” from EU Member States, EU Partner States (Norway, Switzerland), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Ukraine, and Moldova.

Under URBACT IV programme, “cities” are defined as the public local authority representing:

- Cities, municipalities, towns;
- Infra-municipal tiers of government such as city districts and boroughs in cases where they are represented by a politico-administrative institution having competences for policy-making and implementation;
- Local agencies defined as public or semi-public organisations set up by a city, partially or fully owned by the city authority, responsible for the design and implementation of specific policies (economic development, energy supply, health services, transport, etc.).
- Metropolitan authorities and organised agglomerations in cases where they are represented by a politico-administrative institution having delegated competences for policy-making and implementation.

There is no size limit in terms of population in order to apply to this Call for Good Practices.

4. Thematic coverage

This Call looks for practices that have been implemented by cities on any policy area(s) concerning urban development (economic development, social inclusion, green transition, energy transition, digital transition, gender equality, cultural heritage, migration, urban renewal, and others). Even if a practice has a main thematic entry the applicants shall demonstrate how the practice also contributes to other thematic policy areas at the same time through an integrated approach¹.

¹ Examples and guidance on the integrated approach can also be found in the [Handbook of Sustainable Urban Development Strategies](#), published by the European Commission, Joint Research Center, in 2020.

5. Criteria for the selection of Good Practices

A good practice as understood in URBACT is a practice that has been proven to work well by ensuring desired results, and could be recommended as a model. It is a successful experience, which has been tested and validated, and deserves to be shared so that a greater number of cities can adopt and adapt it.

The following four assessment criteria are designed with the intention of establishing a clear focus for the assessment of good practices. The criteria are equally important and equally weighted, meaning that each criterion will weight a maximum of 25 points.

5.1. Relevance at European level

Over the last decades, the European Union has consolidated a common integrated approach towards sustainable urban development thanks to milestones such as the Leipzig Charter, and the Urban Agenda for the EU. EU Cohesion Policy contributes to strengthening economic, social, and territorial cohesion, and correcting imbalances between regions and cities in the European Union. With the EU Cohesion Policy for 2021-2027, this is done with 5 policy objectives that explicitly mention the urban dimension, with at least 8% of ERDF at national level to be spent on sustainable urban strategies, and with instruments like Integrated Territorial Investments, Community-Led Local Development, and other territorial tools designed at national level.

The assessment panel will evaluate how each practice serves the [EU Cohesion Policy 2021-2027](#) and its objectives, the [Sustainable Development Goals](#), and topics addressed by the partnerships of the [Urban Agenda for the EU](#).

5.2. Fit with principles of integrated and participatory urban development

The assessment panel will evaluate how a practice is participatory (which and how other people outside the city administration are involved) and how the practice addresses at least environmental, economic, social aspects at the same time (horizontal integration) and whether the practice was/is developed/implemented thanks to multi-level dialogue amongst local/regional and national level when relevant (vertical integration).

5.3. Impact at local level

The assessment panel will evaluate the level of positive impact that the practice has brought or brings to an urban area or to the entire city. When possible, it will also consider the number/percentage of people that benefit from the practice. Applicants should indicate what problems or needs were addressed by the practice and therefore the added value of the specific practice, ideally documented by evaluations, studies, or other supporting evidence.

5.4. Transferability

The assessment panel will evaluate whether the practice has potential for adaptation and transfer to other European cities. To this end, the panel will seek to understand whether the conditions of implementation of the practice in the city are conditions that can usually be found in other EU cities. For example, a practice that's being implemented only thanks to donations/resources of a

citizen or a local foundation would have limited transfer potential to another EU city.

NOTA BENE:

All candidates submitting proposals will be asked whether they are **interested in** transferring their good practice through an URBACT Transfer Network. Although not a formal criterion for selection, the programme aims at getting a high number of cities willing to lead a Transfer Network.

6 . Submission procedure

To submit a Good Practice, candidate cities must fill in an online application form on EUSurvey in English by **30 June 2024 14.00 CET the latest**.

The link to submit a good practice is available on urbact.eu/get-involved

NOTA BENE:

An applicant can submit more than one proposal for Good Practice. However, the cities with several awarded good practices willing to take the role of the Lead partner in a Transfer network will have to choose one among their awarded good practices and apply for a single Transfer Network.

7 . Eligibility check

The eligibility check will be carried out by the URBACT Secretariat and will verify whether:

- The applicant organisation in charge of the good practice is eligible as defined under section 3 of this call “Who is eligible?”.
- The application form is filled in and submitted in English through EUSurvey by 30 June 2024 14.00 CET.

8 . Assessment process

For the assessment of submitted applications, an assessment panel will be set up.

This assessment panel will rate all the eligible proposals for good practices linked to the criteria stated above, and will recommend the good practices to be selected and awarded by decision of the URBACT Monitoring Committee.

The assessment panel will be mainly composed of experts (following a call for experts), but also of URBACT Secretariat members, members of the [URBACT Monitoring Committee](#) interested in

taking part in the panel, and representatives of URBACT cities that have **not** applied to the Call for Good Practices.

The assessment panel will be also responsible of giving feedback to each applicant about whether their application fulfilled or not the criteria and why.

Following the conclusions and recommendations of the assessment panel it will be up to the Monitoring Committee members to approve the URBACT Good Practices.

9 . Important dates for candidate cities

Applicants are invited to take note of the following milestones:

- **Submission of applications**

Good practice applications shall be submitted by 30 June 2024.

- **Selection of good practices**

Eligible proposals for good practices will be assessed by the assessment panel based on the criteria stated above. The selection of the Good Practices will be made in October 2024.

- **URBACT City Festival, 8-10 April 2025, Wroclaw, Poland**

All the cities with selected good practices will have to present their Good Practices at the URBACT City Festival that will take place in Wroclaw, Poland, on 8-10 April 2025. Costs of one person representing the selected Good Practice will be covered by the URBACT programme.

- **Call for URBACT Transfer Networks, April-June 2025**

Cities awarded as “URBACT Good Practice” will have the possibility to submit application as Lead Partners of URBACT Transfer Network to transfer their good practice to other European cities and further improve their practice.

10 . Useful resources

- **URBACT Secretariat**

For all questions concerning the Call for Good practices, applicants are invited to contact the URBACT Secretariat on the following email address: goodpractices@urbact.eu

- **URBACT Good Practices selected in 2017**

If you are wondering what a Good Practice looks like, discover the 97 URBACT Good Practices selected in 2017: <https://urbact.eu/good-practices>

- **URBACT Transfer Networks**

23 Good Practices selected in 2017 were transferred to a total of 188 European cities through 23 URBACT Transfer Networks from April 2018 to April 2021, and through seven pilot URBACT Transfer Networks of shorter duration from June 2021 to December 2022.

Discover these URBACT Transfer Networks, their partners, activities and work [here](#). A publication gathering examples of how transfer of good practices has happened in different cities is available [here](#).

- **URBACT IV Programme Manual**

Applicants are invited to consult the [URBACT IV Programme Manual](#), and in particular “Book one: URBACT networks”.

- **National URBACT Points:**

These are representatives of Ministries, of national associations of cities, or of Universities, in charge of communicating about URBACT activities and calls in their countries and in national languages. They also support URBACT beneficiaries and give information to potential beneficiaries.

Their contact details can be found [here](#).

All documents, templates and direct links needed for the submission of Good Practices are available on the webpage dedicated to the call: urbact.eu/get-involved

Annex: Questions in the online application form for the submission of Good Practices

The present application form should be submitted in English through EUsurvey. The direct link is provided on the dedicated webpage: urbact.eu/get-involved

The responses provided by the candidate cities to the questions below will be visible on the URBACT website only for the awarded URBACT Good Practices.

1. Information about the city

- 1.1. Country: *choose from menu*
- 1.2. Name of the city:
- 1.3. Population:
- 1.4. Type of EU region (more developed/transition/less developed): *choose from menu (question not applicable for candidates from Ukraine/Moldova/IPA countries)*
- 1.5. Contact details of people in charge of the practice: name, function, email
- 1.6. Contact details of official who authorised this application: name, function, email
- 1.7. Other contact details you think are necessary to share
- 1.8. Interested in transferring your practice to other European cities as a Lead Partner of an URBACT Transfer Network (2025-2027)? *yes/not sure yet/no*

2. Good practice summary

- 2.1. Title of the practice (max 100 characters)
- 2.2. One-line presentation: please present your good practice in a sentence (max 200 characters)
- 2.3. Practice pitch: please present the essence of your good practice in 800 characters max
- 2.4. Detailed presentation of the good practice: In max 1 500 characters please further present your good practice, any link with a city's strategic document, important milestones, activities and outputs, results and needs addressed, and possible axes for improvement.
- 2.5. Was/is the practice funded by funds from the EU Cohesion Policy (European Regional Development Fund, European Social Fund, ERDF-Interreg, Just Transition Fund etc.)?
(question not applicable for candidates from Ukraine/Moldova/IPA countries)
Yes, during 2014-2020
Yes, during 2021-2027
No
- 2.6. Start and finish date of the practice: *open question to fill in when the project ended, or when it is foreseen to end, or if it's of undetermined duration*
- 2.7. Budget of the practice: *please indicate only budget for functional costs related to the practice. Instead of mentioning the staff costs, please mention number of staff needed for the successful implementation of the practice.*

- 2.8. Please upload one or two pictures illustrating the good practice (*for the URBACT website/promotional activities in case the practice is awarded*)
- 2.9. Please upload any supporting documents/materials that give further information about the practice. (optional)

3. Relevance at European level

- 3.1. To which of the following Policy Objectives of the EU Cohesion Policy for 2021-2027 does the practice contribute the most? (one choice only) (*question not applicable for candidates from Ukraine/Moldova/IPA countries*)
- a more **competitive** and **smarter** Europe
 - a **greener**, low carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy
 - a more **connected** Europe by enhancing mobility
 - a more **social** and inclusive Europe
 - a Europe closer to **citizens** by fostering the sustainable and integrated development of all types of territories
 - to none of the above
- 3.2. Was/is the Good Practice (co)funded by:
- European Regional Development Fund
 - European Social Fund
 - Cohesion Fund
 - Just Transition Fund
 - Recovery and Resilience Facility
 - A Cohesion policy Interreg programme (URBACT, Interreg Europe, Interreg crossborder, etc)
 - European Urban Initiative (including Urban Innovative Actions)
 - Horizon 2020
 - Horizon Europe
 - Life programme
 - Other EU-funded projects or programmes
 - A Cohesion policy programme (regional or national)
 - Local resources
 - None of the above
- 3.3. Why do you think this practice is relevant for other European cities? (max 1000 characters) *Specify if the practice contributes to Sustainable Development Goals, Urban Agenda for the EU, EU Territorial Agenda, etc.*

4. Fit with principles of integrated and participatory urban development

- 4.1. How does the practice use an integrated approach to tackling urban challenges (tackling at least environmental, economic, social dimensions at the same time)? (Up to 1500 characters)

- 4.2. What evidence is there of a participatory approach in project development and implementation? Which stakeholders are involved and how do they work together? (Up to 1500 characters)
- 4.3. Does the practice address gender equality? Does the practice involve digital technologies? Does the practice address green transition? If so, how? (up to 1000 characters for these three questions)

5. Impact at local level

- 5.1. What impact has the practice made at local level? Please provide details about the impact, added value (what needs/problems the practice addressed), results achieved, number or percentage of people having benefitted from the practice, evidence about the situation before the practice and after the practice implementation. (Up to 1500 characters)
- 5.2. How is the practice documented? (up to 500 characters) *Please consider uploading or sending links of relevant outputs/studies/reports. If no independent evaluation has taken place please explain how the practice was monitored.*
- 5.3. Please upload any evaluations, reports or studies about the practice (optional)

6. Transferability

- 6.1. Is the practice linked to any specific national governance/legislative context? (up to 500 characters) *Please explain if/how this impacts on the potential of transfer to other cities*
- 6.2. Is there scope to amend the practice to suit other city contexts? (up to 500 characters)
- 6.3. What do you think it is needed for the practice to be transferred to other cities? (up to 500 characters)
- 6.4. Have you already transferred your practice in a way or another? If so where and how? (up to 500 characters)

DISCLAIMER:

By submitting this application, the applicant confirms the accuracy and correctness of the information provided, and accept to share the information with the URBACT Secretariat, European Urban Initiative and the European Commission's DG Regional and Urban Policy.