

Good Practice Summary

1 The problem and proposed solutions

SOHO, Art District parts from an initiative of the neighbours and business holders, who became aware of the problems in their neighbourhood in 2010. These problems relate to loss of activity and misuse of public space in a very central and strategic area of the city. They created an association and made the institutions a requirement for action.

The project development started with the SOHO Art District Master Plan, where foundations were laid on the methodology for public and private participation. This Plan represents the framework for the strategic planning process, in which joint decisions –institutions with neighbours and local stakeholders- were made facing issues such as development, proper urban planning, artistic interventions and consolidation of the district's activities. To articulate this process of participation and design, two bodies were set up to represent both the citizens themselves and the different institutional stakeholders making up the multidisciplinary working teams: the Association of the SOHO Arts District and the Technical Working Committees.

The aim of this is to transform the Ensanche de Heredia (the historic name of the neighbourhood) into a vibrant cultural space, embracing the most avant-garde ideas in the city in terms of entrepreneurship and cultural programmes.

The main strengths of the project are, on one side, the geographical location of the district within the city of Malaga, close to the centre and the port, and, on the other side, the existence of the CAC (Contemporary Art Centre), one of the most outstanding contemporary art institutions worldwide. This fact will serve as a guideline to give identity to the whole project, and the very name *Art District*

The urban regeneration of SOHO Malaga and its conversion and strategic positioning as an innovative district involves establishing a series of urban planning actions that promote its strengths in terms of quality of life, cultural activities, the consolidation of trade and the improvement of services. This has involved planning actions that would offer optimum solutions to different problems such as traffic, accessibility, lighting and energy efficiency, communications and signage in the district, landscaping, urban furniture, etc. Through this re-urbanization project, there have been established new routes that encourage a rediscovery of SOHO in terms of the new values that define its strategic plan: innovation, culture and the regeneration of local businesses, with modernity and tradition condensed into the same space.

2 Timeframe, dates, important milestones

2010: Launching of the neighbours' association initiatives

2011: First plan layout from Urban Planning Department

2012: Master Plan launching. Launching of the business' programme. Start of the art events agenda

2012-2013: 1st phase infrastructure works

2013-2014: 2nd phase infrastructure works

2013: Start of MAUS Urban Art Program.

2015: MAUS festival (Urban Art)

2016: 3rd phase infrastructure works

3 The main outputs

One of the most outstanding activities has been the MAUS programme (Malaga Urban Art in SOHO). MAUS is, perhaps, the most decisive commitment to transform an urban district from a unique and groundbreaking approach rather than just urban development actions based on investments in major infrastructures. It is an example of genuine social innovation and of social transformation through art. The MAUS project, in very general terms, is a unique artistic and creative experience based on living creation and the power of performance of top-level national and international artistic as vehicles for cultural change and the generation of SOHO's own identity. (See links to you tube videos)

An essential aspect of the viability of a strategic repositioning plan is the ability to revitalize the business tissue of the district or region together with urban planning or cultural activities being carried out.

The case of SOHO Malaga is a living example of the process of the economic revitalization of the area. To do so, along with the other urban development and social actions abovementioned, the Business Uptake and Consolidation Plan is being rolled out, which goal is to promote the area from a commercial and business perspective and to support the creative-based industries that have already been established in SOHO.

Malaga Arts District, comprises other innovative initiatives to promote and diversify business activities, such as the establishment of a Bank of Business Ideas for New Formats and Trends for SOHO, which aims to positionate SOHO as a key alternative space for innovative business activities in the city of Malaga.

In conclusion, SOHO Malaga Arts District is an example of the city model to which Malaga wishes to aspire. This is a process in which Malaga already has considerable experience, given that since the mid-1990s the city has been undertaking urban regeneration projects guided by citizen participation within the framework of URBAL projects.

SOHO Malaga represents a commitment to a city model in which people and the human and social dimension of the city are at the very core of the process. A process which, in turn, entails innovating the ways in which wealth is generated while at the same time diversifying the economic structure and making a commitment to emerging sectors such as creative industries and art.