

Civic crowdfunding – Milan, Italy

In 2016 the City of Milan supported a bottom-up crowdfunding initiative by allocating EUR 400,000.00 as co-funding in favour of projects of public interest with a social impact. In the first phase a crowdfunding platform was chosen through a public procurement tender. In the second phase innovative projects were gathered through a public call; 54 projects were received and assessed by an Evaluation Committee. The call was open to both non-profit organizations and profit companies, and the incoming projects came from both groups in a balanced way.

The best projects were selected according to the following criteria:

- creation of a city without tangible and intangible barriers;
- use of technological innovations for urban connectivity;
- ways of bridging the digital divide (citizens and enterprises) to enhance the possibilities of economic growth and development by using ICT;
- Innovative ways to better promote information about mobility and cultural activities improving the quality of citizens' lives and social inclusion;
- Innovation of care services and ideas to improve time management (to manage work-family life balance) so as to use resources more collectively;
- Development of social and community networks that develop initiatives of sharing, reciprocity and collaboration.

Eighteen projects went into the crowdfunding platform in 4 different rounds - each round lasted 50 days - in order to gather the donations by the community. Those who collected 50% of their budget from donations, would get from the City of Milan a co-funding equal amount to the remaining 50%.

The budgets' amounts varied according to each project, and the maximum contribution of the City to each one was EUR 50,000.00.

As a final result, 16 projects out of 18 reached the goal (88%) of collecting at least half of their budget from donors, and the total amount raised from private citizens during the campaigns was EUR 333,136.00. The contribution from the City was EUR 323,413.00 and therefore the investment in the territory was EUR 656,549.00.

The initiative of the Civic Crowdfunding in Milan represents the first case in Italy of a local government using the crowdfunding tool in match-funding with the Administration. It has been an occasion to experiment innovative ways to finance projects of public interest by encouraging the pooling of public and private resources to support high-impact social projects, and by promoting a direct citizens' involvement in the choices of the decision of a Public Administration on where to allocate the money.

The City of Milan is now thinking to replicate the experience .

Website to the projects on the crowdfunding platform:

<https://www.eppela.com/it/mentors/comunemilano>

<https://www.eppela.com/it/news/61-crowdfunding-civico-del-comune-di-milano-ci-siamo>

Additional information on tools for Social Innovation in Milan can be found in the White paper of Social Innovation (among them, the civic crowdfunding is described at page 16)

http://www.milanosmartcity.org/joomla/images/white%20paper%20mi_social%20innovation.pdf