Urban Design Thinking Challenge

Documentation of the 3-days international workshops at the Multihalle, Mannheim, 3rd to 5th of April 2019

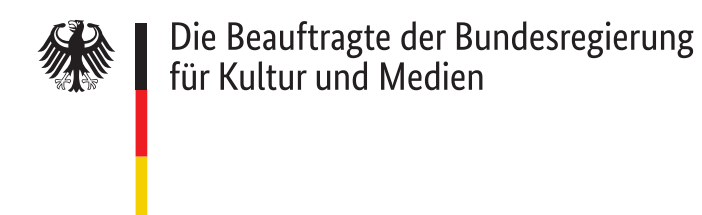**Dr. Bastian Lange**
Multiplicities - Berlin

Dr. Demet Mutman
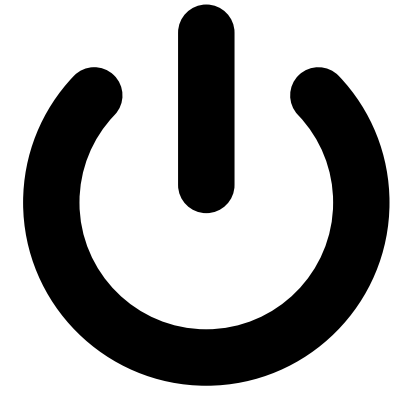**Ozyegin University Istanbul**

STARTUP **MANNHEIM**

EIN BEITRAG ZUM
EUROPÄISCHEN
KULTURERBEJÄHR 2018
SHARING
HERITAGE

EIN BEITRAG ZUM
EUROPÄISCHEN
KULTURERBEJAHR 2018
SHARING
HERITAGE

MANNHEIM ²

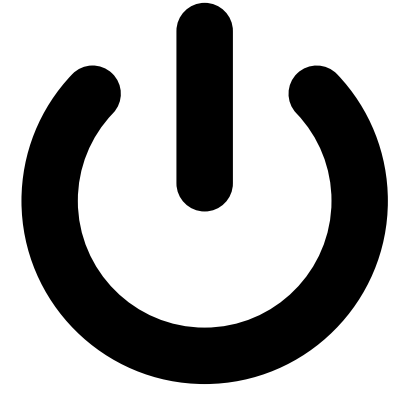Die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung
für Kultur und Medien

Multiplicities

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2. The main mission of the Challenge

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4. The importance of the Multihalle for Mannheim

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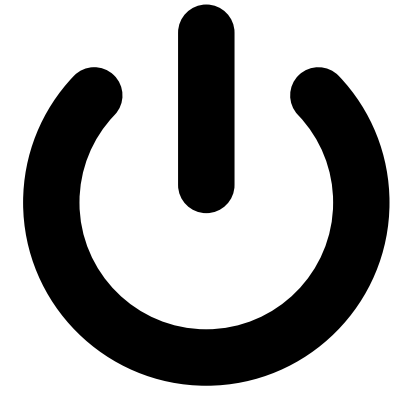
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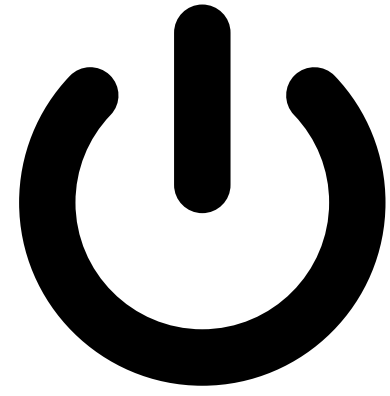8. Results, evaluations, outlook and expectations

Topic

Urban Design Thinking Challenge during the festival „Allez Hop"

How can the Multihalle and its park be activated?

An international working group headed for a user centered approach

Central aim was to find solutions and tools how various people and citizens can connect themselves with the area and vice versa anew.

Temporary activities then do create attention by pulling new user groups together.
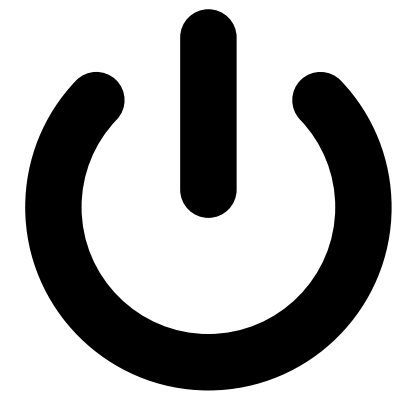
Topic

The starting point of the Urban Design Thinking Challenge held in the first week of April during the festival „Allez Hop" was how the Multihalle and its park can be activated.

An international working group headed for a user centered approach to find solutions and tools how various people and citizens can connect themselves with the area and vice versa anew.

The general aim was to showcase new perspectives how to activate the roof of the Multihalle, the park area as well as its symbolic role as a connecting zone for the surrounding districts with practical, processual but also digital tools.

In general, urban tools and toolkits are described as a set of infrastructures that allow user-groups to engage collectively on a site.

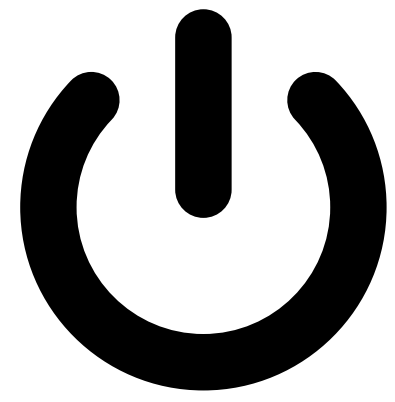Temporary activities then do create attention by pulling new user groups together.

Challenge

How can the Multi-halle be activated?

What are tools, tool-kits and strategies, that can be applied?

Challenge

**How can the Multi-halle be activated?**

What are tools, tool-kits and strategies, that can be applied?

An Urban Design Thinking Challenge held in the first week of April 2019 during the festival "Allez Hop!" invented a bottom-up strategy to prototype modes of activation for the Multihalle in Mannheim. The question at hand: how can the Multihalle and its surrounding Herzogenriedpark be made more accessible, inclusive, and catalyse social encounters?

An international facilitation team, constituted by Dr. Bastian Lange / Dr. Demet Mutman, headed for a user centered approach to find potentials, solutions and tools on how various people and locals can re-connect themselves with the area and with their daily practices.

The general aim was to showcase new perspectives to expose potentials and reactivating the spaces underneath and around the roof of the Multihalle and the Herzogenriedpark. The challenge was dedicated to developing small scale infrastructures that catalyse the hidden space Multihalle and to envision it as a connecting zone between the surrounding districts with the help of practical, processual but also digital toolkits.
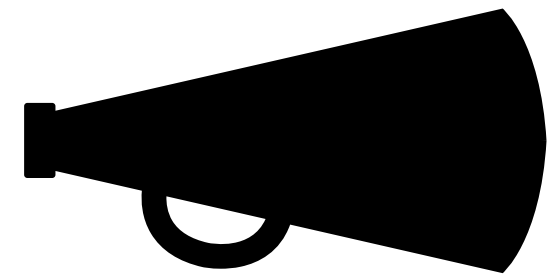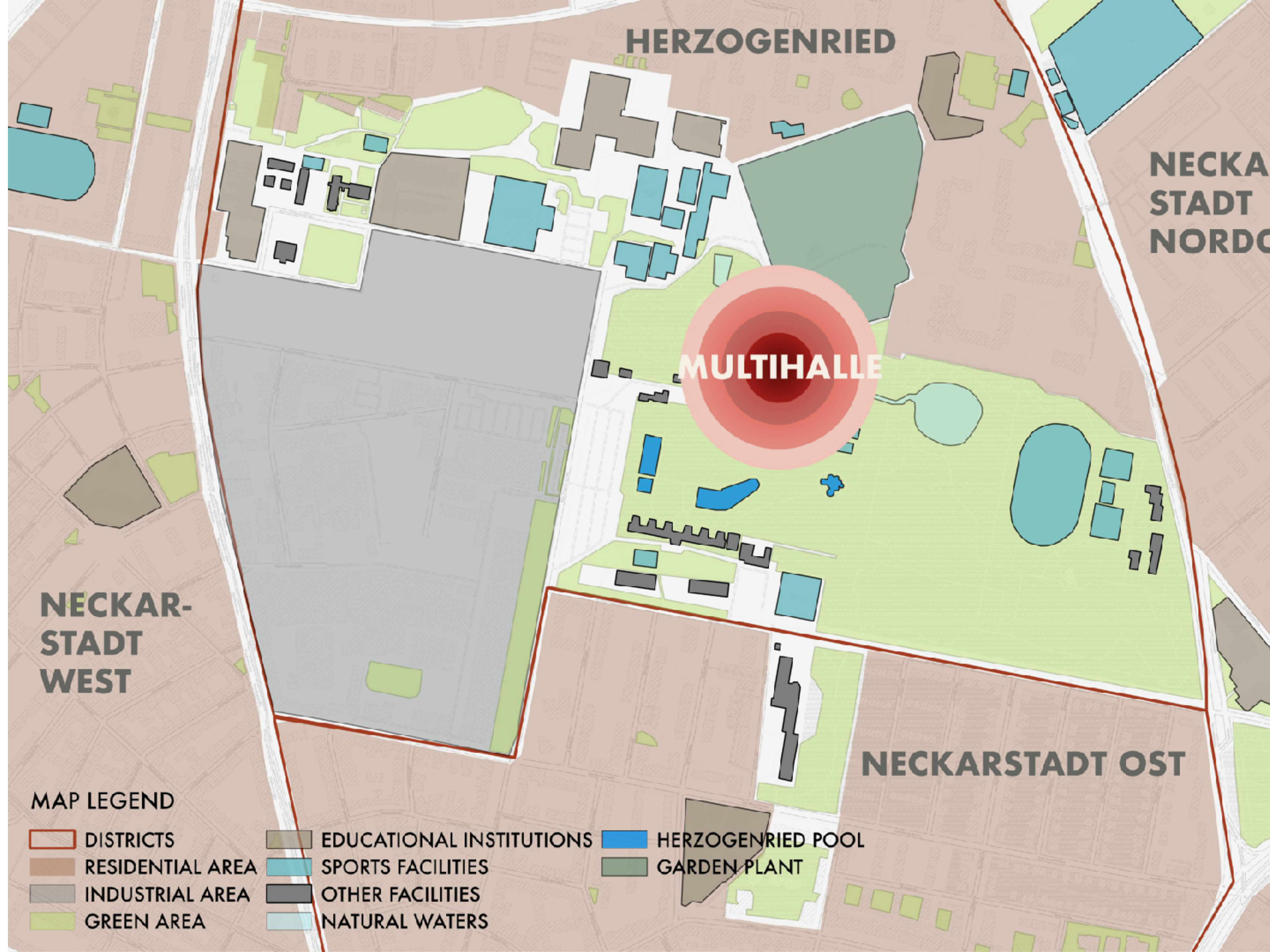
Multihalle

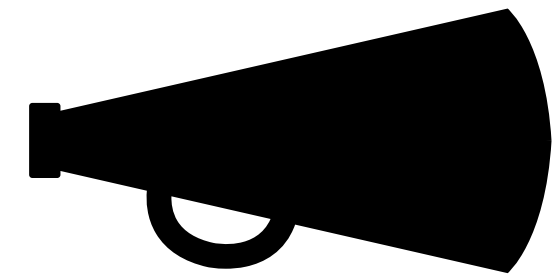Built by Frei Otto & Carlfried Mutschler in 1975

Renovation needed

Creating links to neighborhoods

Federal garden show 2023

In search for new urban narratives in the 21th century

HERZOGENRIED

NECKAR STADT NORD

MULTIHALLE

NECKAR- STADT WEST

NECKARSTADT OST

MAP LEGEND

|	
▭ DISTRICTS	▭ EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS
▭ RESIDENTIAL AREA	▭ SPORTS FACILITIES
▭ INDUSTRIAL AREA	▭ OTHER FACILITIES
▭ GREEN AREA	▭ NATURAL WATERS
▭ HERZOGENRIED POOL	
▭ GARDEN PLANT	

Multihalle

Built by Frei Otto & Carlfried Mutschler in 1975

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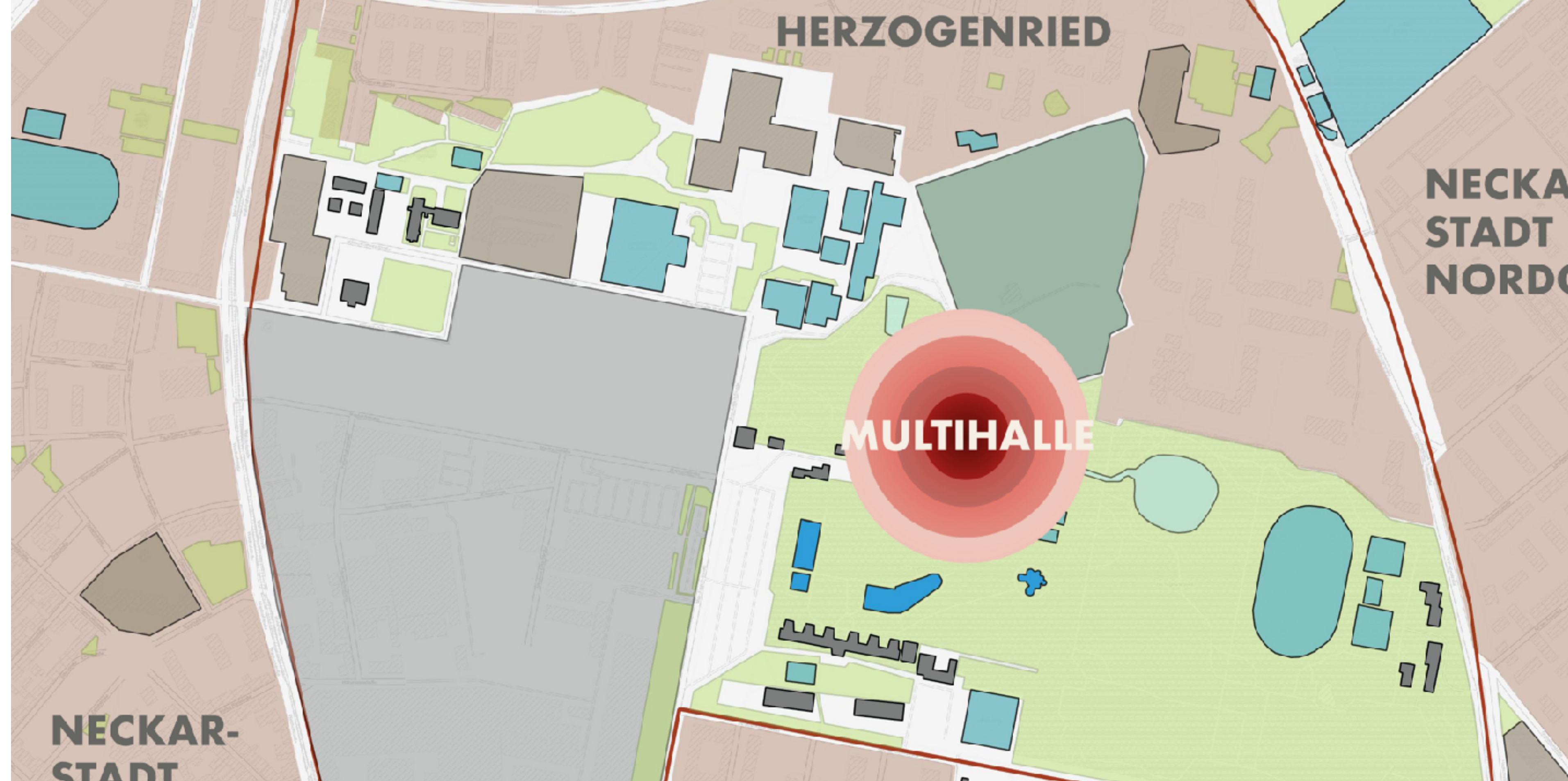
Since 2017, the city has begun a top-down expert driven process to develop agendas, narratives and concepts, that semantically allow the city to think anew about the architectural functions, the aesthetic realm, and the connecting policy pillars as such: In line with the role of increased democratic requirements, a needed aesthetic preservation, unclear functional usages, most of the efforts took place in expert context and among international oriented professional audiences:

They proposed to think ahead in directions of a so-called democratic umbrella, an agora and arena to negotiate future oriented urban questions, urban commons and future technologies in the context of digital times. Next to relevant expert hearings, international exhibitions as at the Biennale in Venice in 2018 or other international architectural and urbanistic venues, there have been only little efforts so far to shed light on the question how are the people of Mannheim and especially of the surrounding districts making use of and are profiting from such an urban resource? Who are the "people" for whom the experts and professional elites think in a joint way with policy makers and heads of the city?
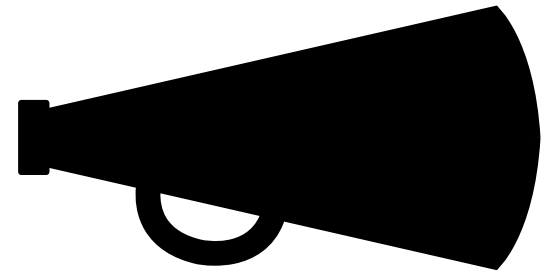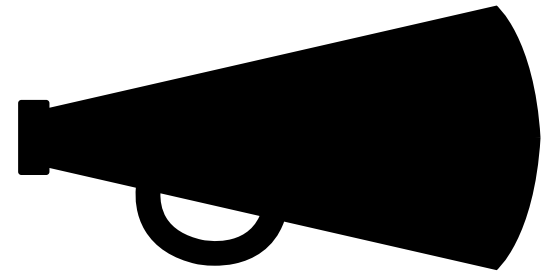
Objectives

Shedding light on various borders.

Finding zones of connection for the surrounding districts with practical, processual but also digital tools.

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Finding zones of connection for the surrounding districts with practical, processual but also digital tools.

The starting point of the Urban Design Thinking Challenge held in the first week of April during the festival "Allez Hop!". It has started to turn the described process upside down, by shedding light on the various borders that separate micro spaces and that determine the geographies of neighbouring districts around the Multihalle.

Asked how the Multihalle and its park can be activated, the international working group headed for a strict user centred approach to find solutions and tools how various people and citizens can connect themselves with the area and vice versa anew.

The general aim was to showcase new perspectives how to activate the roof of the Multihalle, the park area as well as its symbolic role as a connecting zone for the surrounding districts with practical, processual but also digital tools.

Guiding principle

The key is that social practices such as playing, making, relaxing, exercising, communicating, eating and engaging with the space have the potential to start transforming the previous functions.

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In general, urban tools and toolkits are described as a set of infrastructures that allow user-groups to engage collectively on a site. The key is that social practices such as playing, making, relaxing, exercising, communicating, eating and engaging with the space take place and have the potential to start transforming the previous functions.

Temporary activities then do create attention by pulling new user groups together. Activities at this very location aimed to expose the city belonging to its citizens, above the regulated plans and urbanistic ideologies as a common ground to share, to focus, to improve and to communicate in various manners.

The urban tools that the workshop was addressing was as a parallel attitude a narration of the cityscape as Debord's play with the city through the local flows. The potential of this form of reading and narrating the cityscape, helps to highlight the visible and invisible boundaries and obstacles for a sustained, participative planning implementation.

Definition

Urban Tools describe a set of infrastructures that allow user-groups to engage collectively on a site.

Social practices (playing, making, relaxing, exercising, communicating, eating…) are transforming the previous functions.

Temporary acitivities create attention by pulling new user groups together

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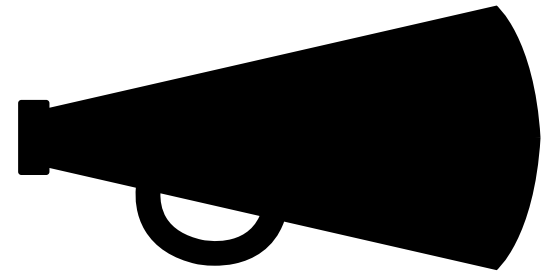
Understanding

There is an infra-structure hidden in urban space that isn't being used to its full potential yet: fire hydrants!
E.g.: Dimitri Nassisi designed a bright blue version to propose a new kind of drinking water source in the city (see top left)

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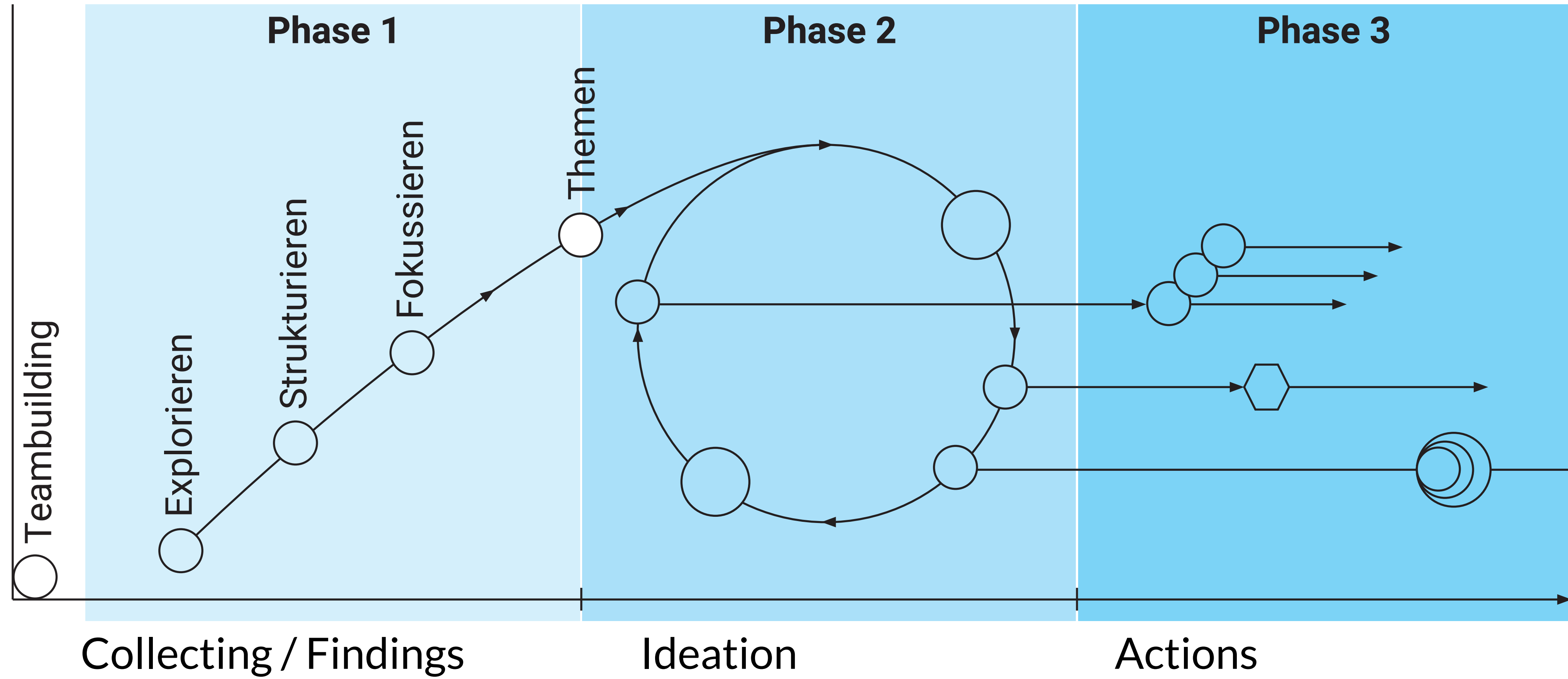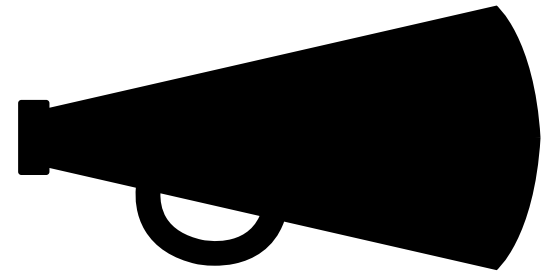
Interventions in urban space define temporary reflections of performative explorations of the city, urban narratives through the eyes and experiences of its users, the locals, the citizens. It holds the potential of a common platform of variations and shares, capabilities and obstacles, boundaries and encounters.

As a form of a social negotiation, public learning and exploration of problem diagnosis of social, political, economic and physical issues through the critical and reflexive urban acts, the temporary and small scale interventions define a way of assessing the challenges of formal planning approaches while offering a platform for sharing and participating collective solutions.
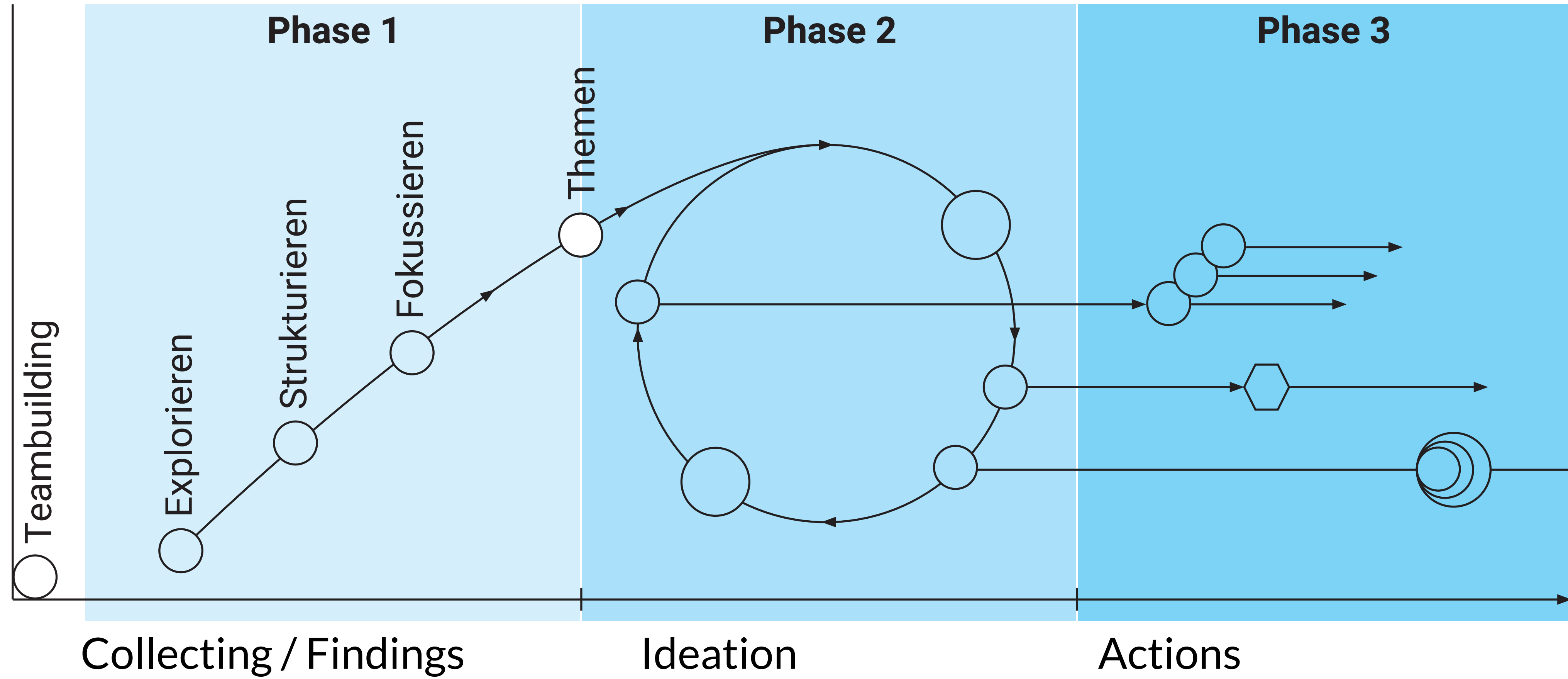
Methods

Phase 1 — Collecting / Findings

Phase 2 — Ideation

Phase 3 — Actions

Teambuilding · Explorieren · Strukturieren · Fokussieren · Themen

Methods

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3

Themen

Fokussieren

Strukturieren

Explorieren

Teambuilding

Collecting / Findings   Ideation   Actions

Collecting

The park and the Multihalle have slightly lost its mission to connect social milieus and to provoke mutual engagements of people from Mannheim.

Collecting

The park and the Multihalle have slightly lost its mission to connect social milieus and to provoke mutual engagement of people from Mannheim.

Over time, the park with its architectural site connection to the park and the Multihalle have slightly lost its mission to connect social milieus and to provoke the mutual engagement of people from Mannheim. Even more, we are convinced that during the last the cultural and architectural exclusivity within the Park has led to the erection of symbolic barriers and cultural boundaries. Our thesis is that any effort that addresses place-based improvements within the existing geographical boundaries (such as the district, the park, the Multihalle and so on) and looks to activate the desired space will have difficulties to succeed because of two reasons:

Firstly, because silo-thinking and silo-policies still tend to prevail: Silo with respect to a given geography, with respect to a given district, as well as silo with respect to sector thinking (social, culture, planning, finances, legal…) and so on. Secondly, because the supporting measures of the the municipality and the local state, although equipped with a positive and empowering framework, have not yet been successful and have rather contributed to the stabilisation of present social

Who are the people of the Multihalle and the park?

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At present, the Multihalle lays secretly and silently in the middle of the Herzogenriedpark, an inner-city green park. Around the object and the park, the socio-economic „problem" quarter of Mannheim, Neckarstadt-West gained dubious reputation as no-go areas due to drug dealers, crime and gangs.

To the north, the quarter of Herzogenried surrounds this architectural icon, formerly and recurrently called "Miracle of Mannheim". Hardly used, almost unknown, and in weak and diffuse connections to the lifeworld and the neighbourhoods of the people of these districts –– and therefore to many people from Mannheim. Awakening a sleeping beauty, as the city coined the miracle object, through its physical renovation is not only a costly endeavor, but also a challenge in terms of coming up with the appropriate planning strategies to be applied in this case.

How should one proceed in times of increased public interest in participation and engagement especially for a very special architectural design with respect to the surrounding urban development?

Findings

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Boundaries are blocking people to access the Multihalle and the park.

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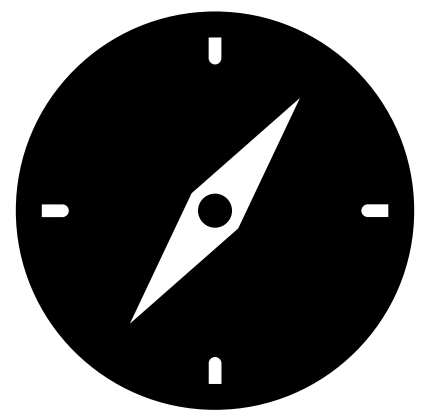
Boundaries are blocking people to access the Multihalle and the park.

There were visible and invisible boundaries in and around the Multihalle partially floating over barely touching or non-touching flows. The overall perspective of the whole workshop, therefore, addressed this very gap in between the focal 'gem' the Multihalle and the neighbouring non-aware actors of the 'gem': the citizens and their everyday activities.

Having the playfulness of the Multihalle in mind, we framed the workshop to focus on the common shares of the Herzogenried, the Multihalle, the relationship between the environing neighbourhoods, the city, the park and the citizens of different socio-cultural and economic backgrounds.

Re-inventing the Multihalle obviously faced challenges oscillating between pure design, urban planning, the city's urban politics and their reflections of the surrounding neighbourhoods consisting of different socio-cultural community groups, shared values, social structures, backgrounds and daily routines.

What is the role of the locals as participating actors?

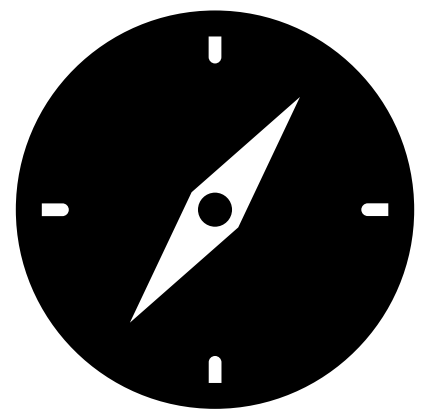EM CASO DE FUTEBOL
ABRA AQUI

BOLA DA RUA
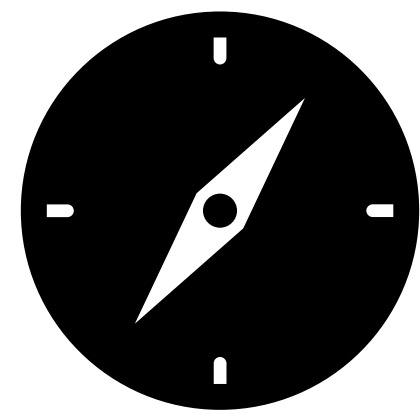
What is the role of the locals as participating actors?

The activities or 'possessions' of urban space uphold an understanding of the space, a claim that leads to an alternative way of operating with the cityscape, time, society and the imagination. A new typology of a space derives from an activity, derives from the wills or claims of the locals, the citizens, the 'shareholders'. It has the potential to increase awareness, through short term activations of the locals and catalyses new forms of capabilities in terms of interaction with and spatial improvement of the city, through its citizens via participative urban acts and activations.

Opposite the large scale formulated urban design decisions and planning principles, catalysing a space through smoothly regulated, loose flow of daily practices and local participants, however, brings into focus the communities, the practices, the socio-cultural acts and flows as a resource and lets the community build and rebuild, activate and reactivate their own spaces.
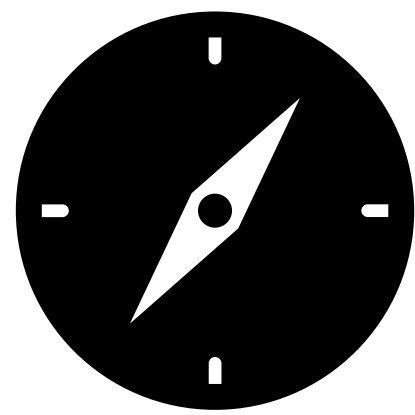
This might be seen as an alternative way of claiming the right to the city through claiming the planning process by temporary activities.

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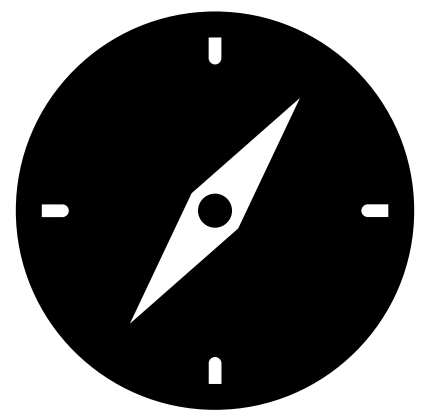
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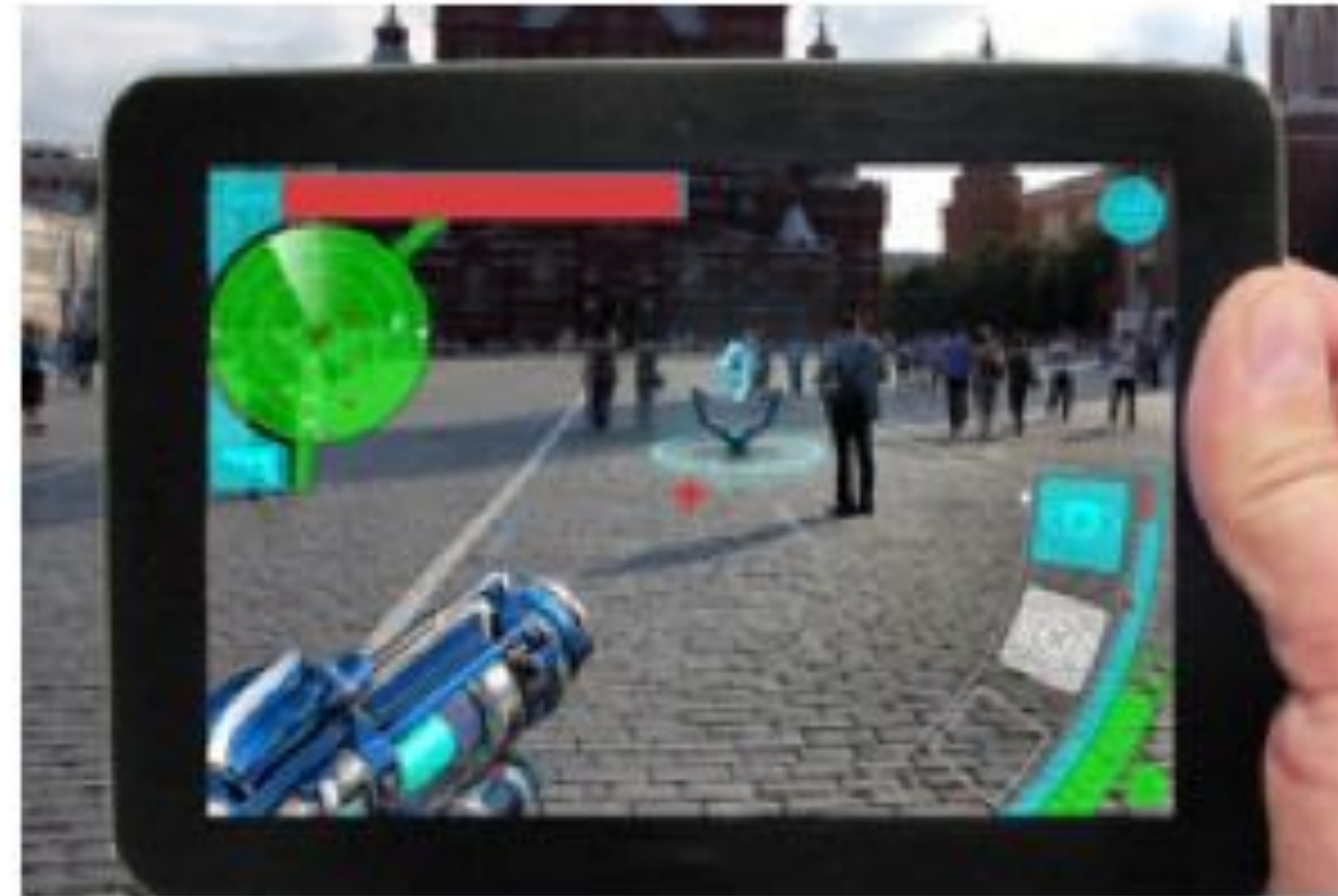
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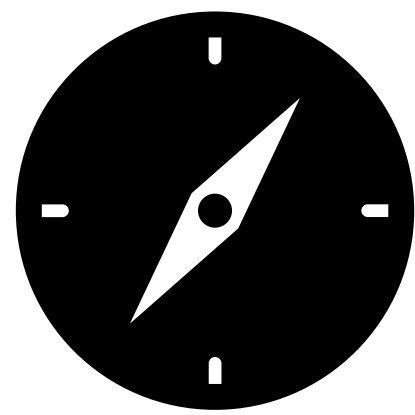
Actions and propositions

Results of the Workshop Group

„Faces of the Multihalle'

Actions and propositions
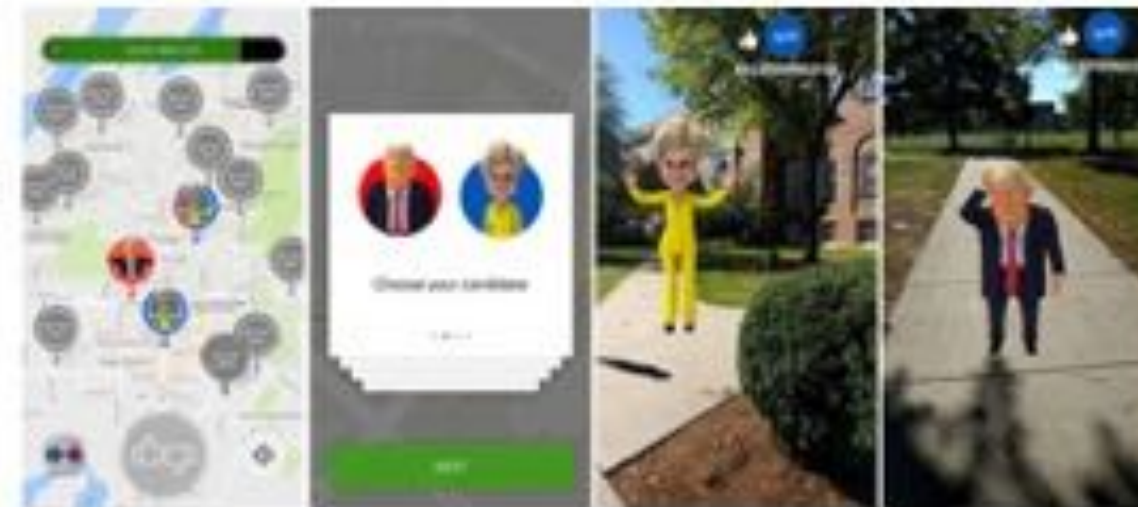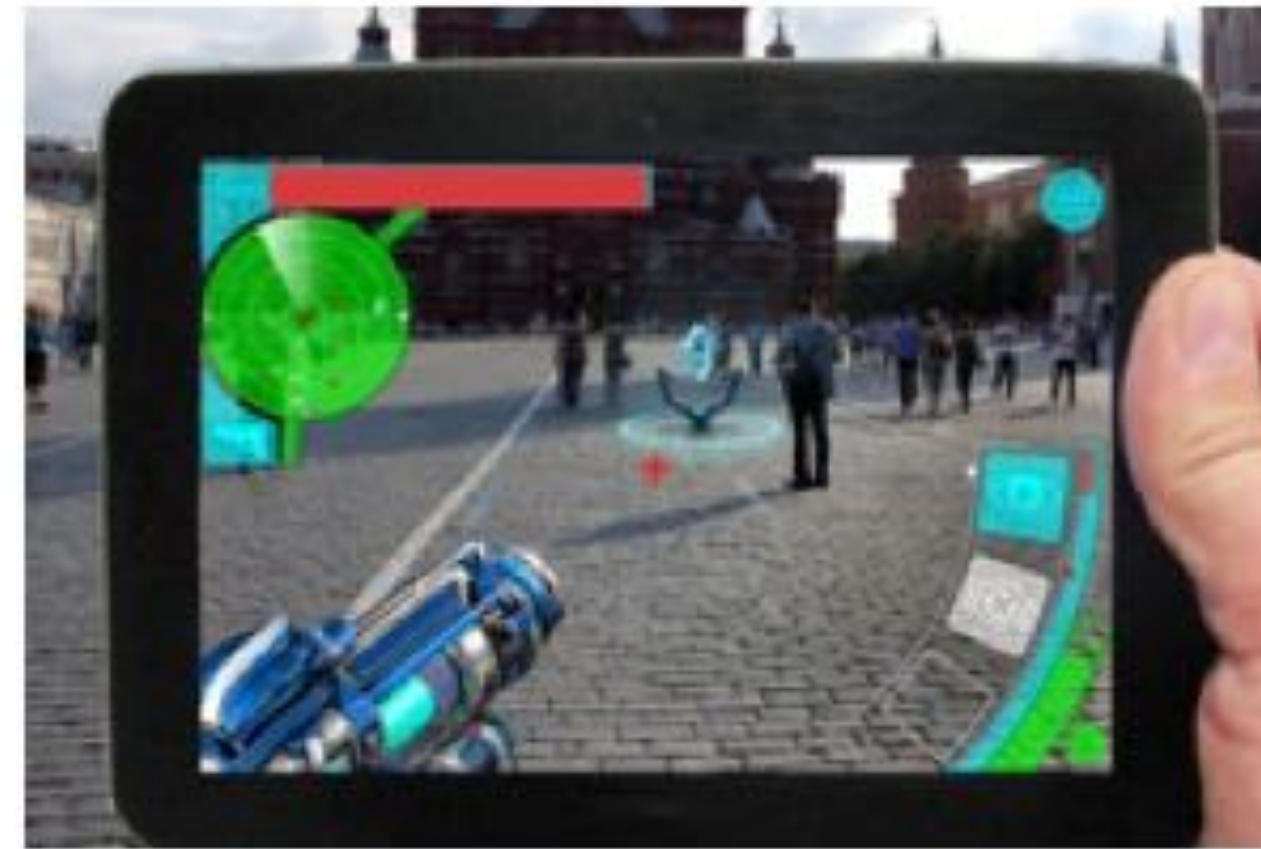
Results of the Workshop Group
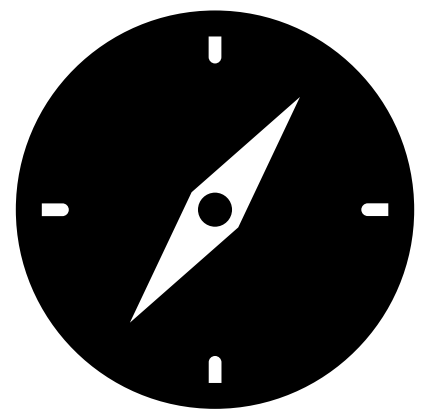
„Faces of the Multihalle"

Learn about the Multihalle

An Augmented Reality app can provide visitors from all over the world with detailed information on the history of this unique architecture.

Firstly, a wider realm of citizens of Mannheim and especially the people around the park and the Multihalle do not have a profound relationship with the park and the Multihalle:

The Multihalle is to be transported symbolically as an augmented space to the people who are not yet familiar with it and not vice versa. Along with stories and short texts to include in social media-based interfaces, the Multihalle reintroduces itself in places around the park and the city.
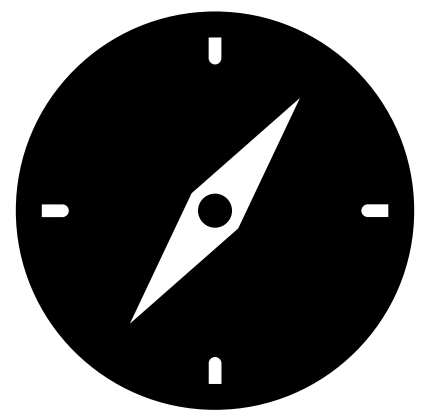
Actions and propositions

Results of the Workshop Group

„Local Value – Global Awareness"

Actions and proposition

Results of the Workshop Group

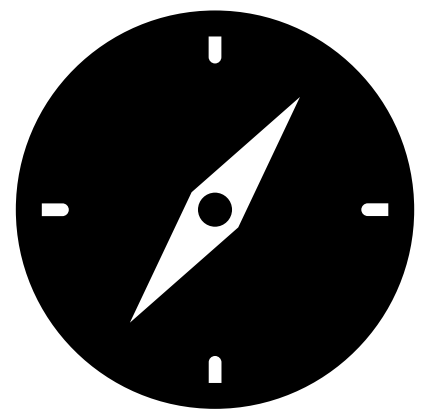### „Local Value – Global Awareness"

Make Old from New

"Upcycling" stands for the transformation of seemingly useless things into new and unique products. With such an "upcycling" approach, the Multihalle provides an inspiring roof for neighborhoods, local initiatives, NGOs and startups.

A more practical approach takes advantage of the existing fabric and its renovation phase. By questioning what to do with all of the existing materials, the concept of upcycling was the answer.

The wooden, steel and membrane materials are valuable resources to reuse ranging from wooden piers to wooden toys, from metal screws to construction tools or utensils, from the roof membrane to moveable carpets or fashion items.

Upcycling the Multihalle resembles the absorption and digestions of the entire of the Multihalle, by locals and for locals.
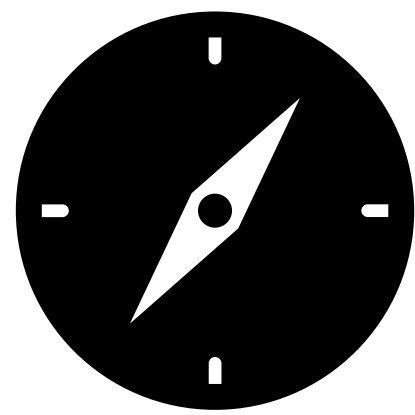
Actions and proposition

Results of the Workshop Group

„Wake Up"

Digital & analog!

Actions and proposition
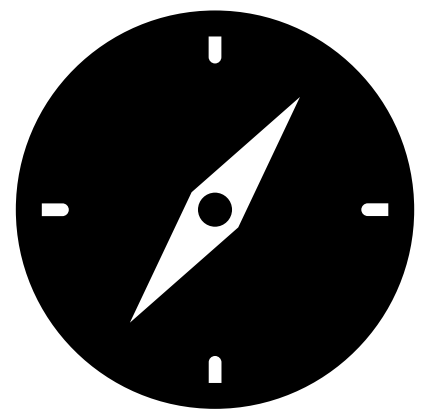
Results of the Workshop Group

„Wake Up"

Everything in a new light

Interactive lighting can make the roof of the Multihalle more visible in the city.

In keeping with the proposed second project prototypes, the "sleeping" artefact is being kissed and activated through lighting. Nowadays, interactive facades are relevant dynamic resources to create interactions between physical objects and the wider personal communication flows.

People can write notes, comments, wishes or reflect opinions and interact via the app. The proposal in this perspective awakens the Multihalle by using the concept of reflectivity.

Reflections of Mannheimers on screens and enlightening the structure through the density of digital activations exposes the roof as a symbol of a virtual city platform.
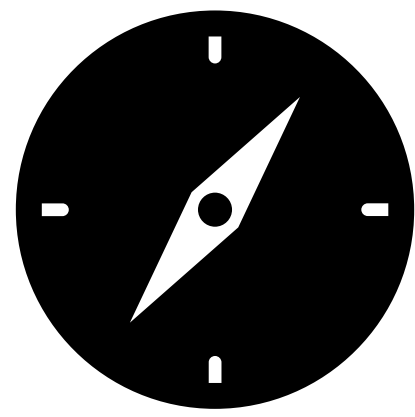
Learnings

New urban encounters are needed

Allowing more experimental and interactive everyday happenings

Learnings

New urban encounters are needed

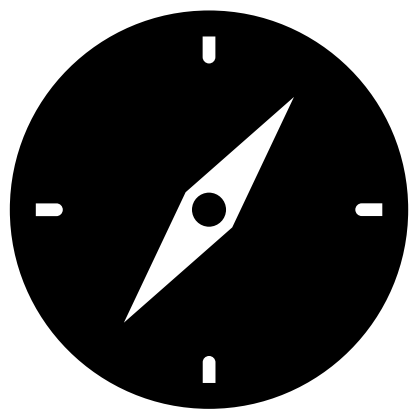**Allowing more experimental and interactive everyday happenings**

Why new urban encounters are needed

In sum, all of these projects' prototypes aimed at overcoming various spatial boundaries. As there were physical fences, entrance fees, large streets, small pavements, uncertain stones and inaccessible green spaces, forbidden spaces, and private spaces blocking or creating obstacles for accessibility.

The project proposals tried to overcome and transgress various functional, symbolic, and aesthetic boundaries. New meeting zones have been imagined which started to combine various fragmented spaces in an up-to-date approach: through technology, through imagination, but first and foremost through everyday practices.
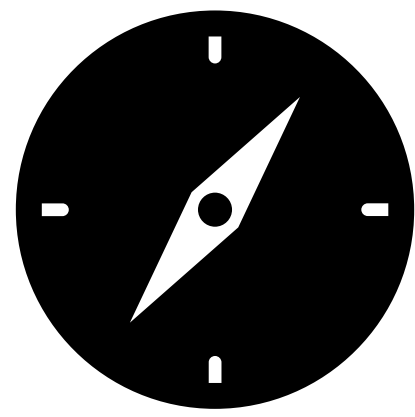Therefore, we recommend to shed light on various social practices and to allow more experimental and interactive everyday happenings such as sharing meals, playing sports, listening to stories and facilitating unintentional encounters as well as supporting spontaneous activities defined by citizens. The authorship of these local and urban encounters remains with the citizens and the contributors and not the municipality.

Outlook

**Small scale
interventions at
the Multihalle**

Outlook

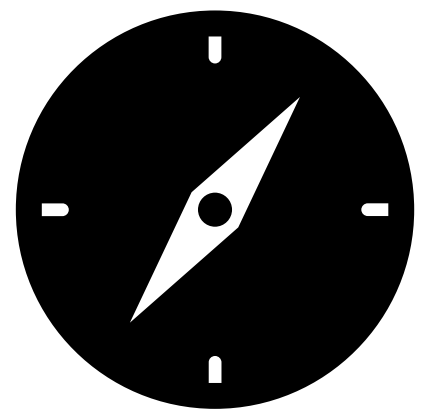## Small scale interventions at the Multihalle

Small scale interventions at the Multihalle

We argue for intensifying more micro social interventions, or, more precisely, temporary activities catalyzing new urban encounters at various points. However, these points have to be chosen cautiously.
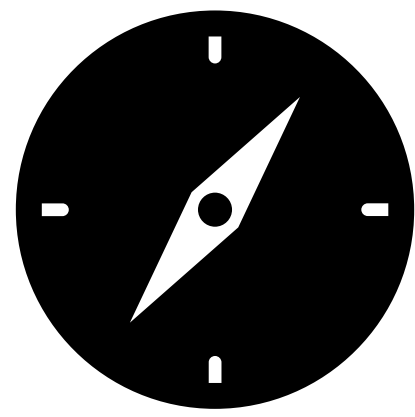
Based on our first analysis outlined above, it is clear that temporary actions and micro interventions should take place at those boundaries that hinder residents from the surrounding neighborhoods to engage with the Multihalle. Starting collective actions and activations under the roof of the Multihalle would disregard the fortress-like geography of the Multihalle and its symbolic asymmetries that separate the people from the Multihalle.

Reactivation of the Multihalle through participatory actions and interventions brings out the potential of the neighboring communities, their capacities in interaction, communication and contributes towards communities re-claiming the Multihalle as their own platform.

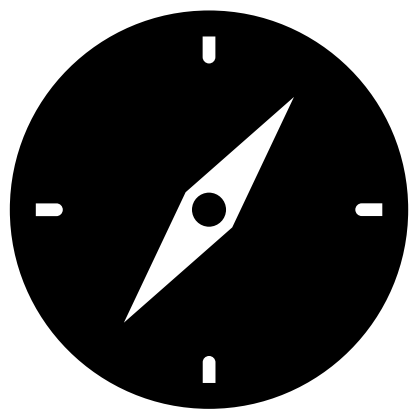# Elements of Small Scale Interventions

Elements of Small Scale Interventions

Placing interventions and shifting urban contexts

The presented cornerstones would allow new spaces of encounter. Social, narrative, and atmospheric niches can be designed in order to learn from those people that have fewer options due to a lack of spaces and due to the ongoing commercialization and cultural commodification of spaces.
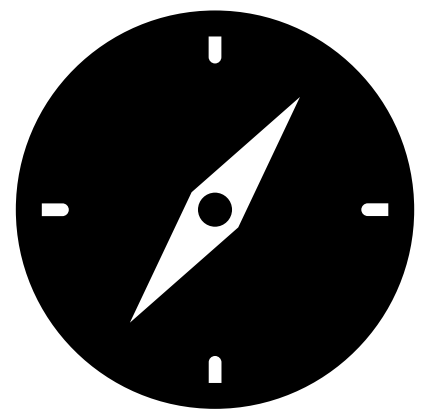
Saying this, planning in these asymmetrical spaces is a form of post-migrant community management within uncertain conditions. It requires different professions, shifting networks, and competent intermediaries that recombine and reconnect various stakeholders. Learning how to regain a shared common ground on which responsibility for spaces and places can grow, might be a first step towards an even more reflective and sensitive planning process facilitated through small scaled, participatory actions and interventions at the Multihalle.

Designing Interventions

We argue for intensifying more micro social interventions and more temporary actions and micro actions on and near the site.

Designing Interventions

We argue for intensifying more micro social interventions and more temporary actions and micro actions on and near the site.
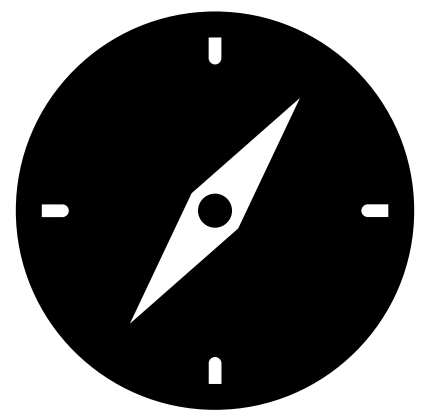

Small scale interventions at the Multihalle

We argue for intensifying more micro social interventions, meaning temporary activities catalyzing new urban encounters at various points. However, these points have to be cautiously chosen.

Based on the first analysis described above, it is clear that temporary actions and micro interventions should take place at the boundaries that hinder residents from the surrounding neighborhoods to engage with the Multihalle. Starting collective actions and activations underneath the roof would neglect the fortress like geography of the Multihalle and its symbolic asymmetries that separate the people from the Multihalle.

Reactivation of the Multihalle through participatory actions and interventions brings out the potential of the neighboring communities, their capacities in interaction, communication and contributes towards communities re-claiming the Multihalle as their own platform.
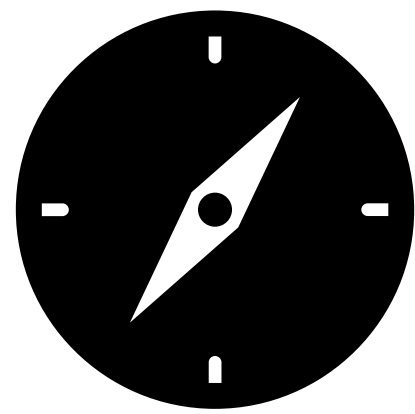
Framing
Making
Doing

Creating fields of play

Experiences create meaningful narrations
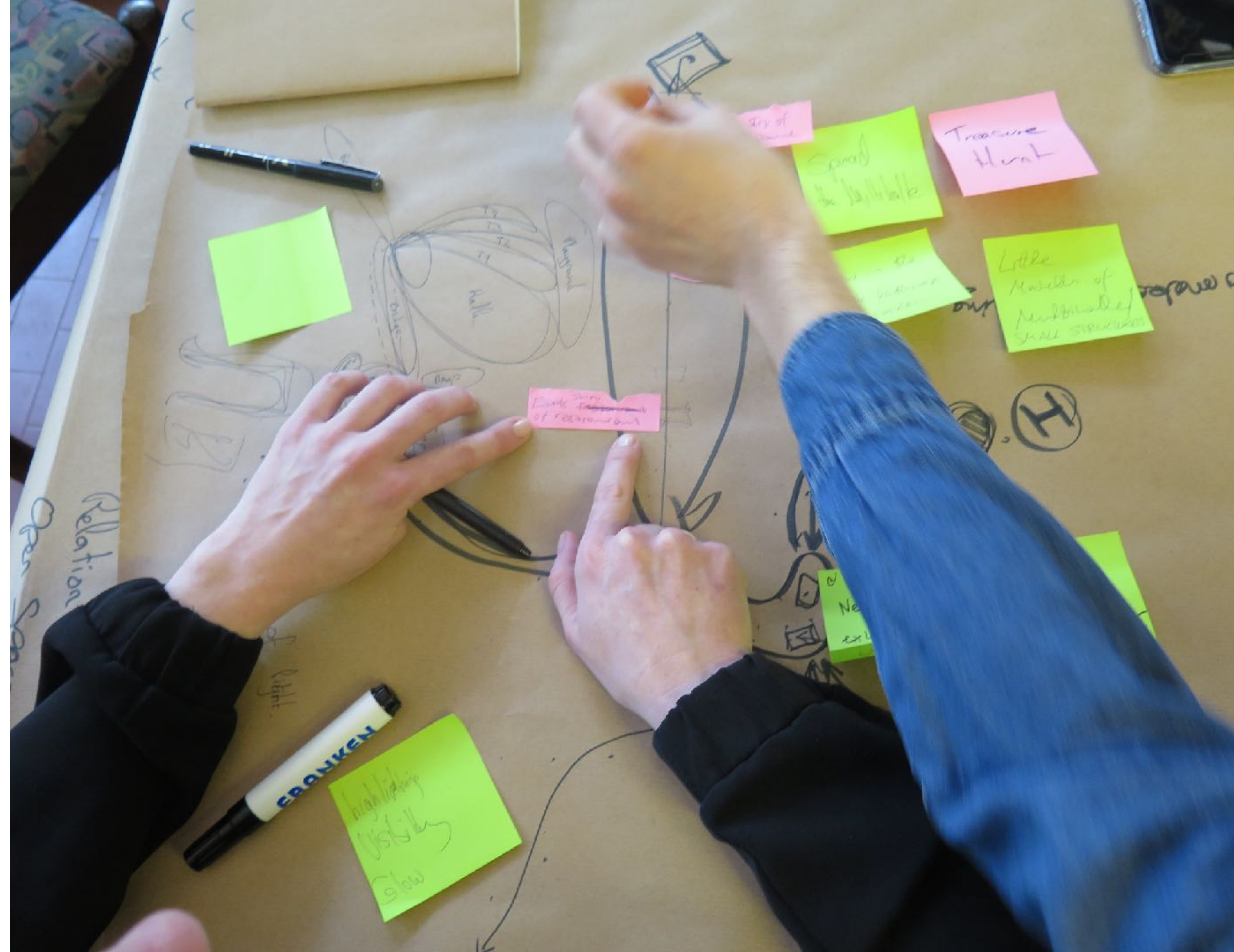
Framing
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Creating fields of play
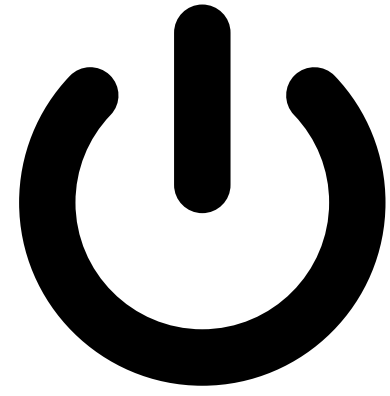
Experiences create meaningful narrations

Creating fields of play and interaction

Temporary activities in the public space envision a form of reducing psychological and milieu-specific barriers towards the socio-cultural foreign.

They provide learning experiences and open up a situative field of play. All participating players can go back in their domain and do not have to commit themselves to further involvements.

Experiences create meaningful narrations and are usually transported and communicated further and thereby form a new relation between social collectives, experiences and spaces where all this has taken place.
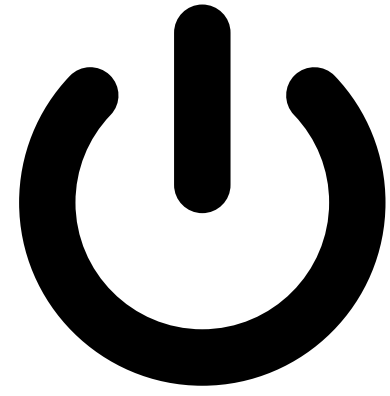
Conclusion

The Mannheimer Weg - The Multihalle as a model of urban activation

The activation of the Multihalle continues to progress dynamically in 2019: along the cornerstones of a democratic, cosmopolitan and future-oriented development, the preparatory work of the past years has been linked with concrete user involvement on site by the residents of Mannheim since spring 2019.

The expert ideas for the "democratic roof" of the Multihalle provide a way for the city of Mannheim to unfold a model for local and urban development oriented towards the common good in the form of the Multihalle:

Technologically smart, site-specifically geared to people's needs and sustainable.

The results of the international workshop on the activation of the Multihalle held as part of the Allez Hop! Cultural Entrepreneurship Summit in April 2019 show that access barriers between the neighboring quarters and the Multihalle must be overcome in order to advance this path with commitment.
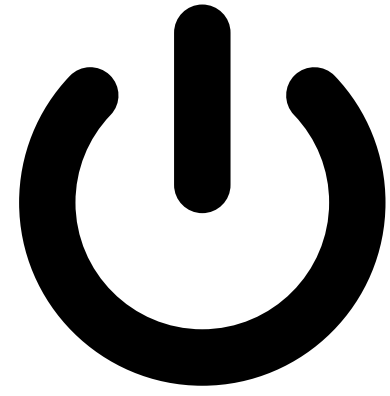
Conclusion

Activities such as the Summer School in August 2019, which will develop solutions for improving the spatial qualities around the Multihalle, point this way in this regard as well. Residents and neighbors to take a closer look at the open spaces and use them for their needs.

The stimulation is essentially based on processes of getting to know each other, meeting each other and experiencing everyday life. A cooperation is practiced, "small offers" (so-called Small Scale Interventions) invite and shift the attention of the neighbours and the Mannheim residents step by step towards the jewel Multihalle. Combined events, such as the summer school in association with neighbours from the surrounding neighbourhoods, a living lab or small meeting parties would occupy the spaces in between in the surroundings of the Multihalle through an attitude of participation and togetherness.

Collaboratively, the Multihalle is growing into a meeting place for the wider Mannheim population. Exciting educational and participatory projects in cooperation with local residents create confidence in a new location in the center of Mannheim. It is the people of Mannheim who are called upon in this place to act as models of how the future of Mannheim can be shaped democratically, participatorily and responsibly. For a broad and mixed citizenry, the utopian space of the Multihalle is complemented by a challenging attitude of "caring". In an exemplary manner, it focuses on the everyday concerns of the people in the neighborhood.
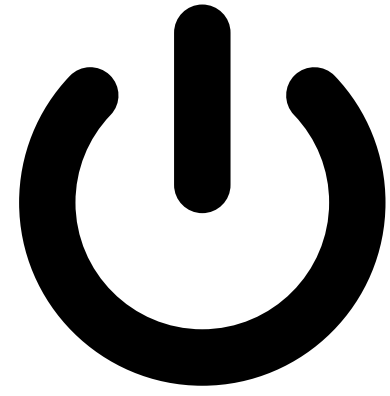
Fazit

Der Mannheimer Weg – Die Multihalle als modellhafter Ort der Begegnung

Die Aktivierung der Multihalle schreitet in 2019 weiter dynamisch voran: Entlang der Eckpunkte demokratisch, weltoffen und zukunftstauglich verknüpfen sich seit Frühjahr 2019 die Vorarbeiten der vergangenen Jahre mit konkreten Nutzereinbindungen vor Ort durch die Bewohner Mannheims.

Die Expertenideen zum „demokratischen Dach" Multihalle geben den Weg vor, um in der Stadt Mannheim mit dem Ort Multihalle ein Modell für eine gemeinwohlorientierte Orts- und Stadtentwicklung zu entfalten: Technologisch smart, standortspezifisch an den Bedarfen der Menschen ausgerichtet und modellhaft nachhaltig.

Um diesen Weg engagiert voranzubringen – so zeigen Ergebnisse des internationalen Workshops zur Aktivierung der Multihalle im Rahmen des Allez Hop Festivals im April 2019 – müssen Zugangsbarrieren zwischen den Nachbarquartieren und der Multihalle bewältigt werden. Richtungweisend dafür sind Aktivitäten wie die Sommer School im August 2019, die Lösungen für die Verbesserung der Raumqualitäten um die Multihalle herum entwickeln werden. Verweilangebote laden Nachbarn ein, sich intensiver mit den Freiräumen auseinanderzusetzen und diese für Ihre Bedürfnisse zu nutzen.
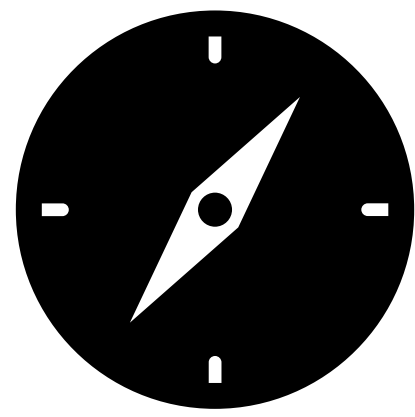
Fazit

Die Belebung gründet ganz wesentlich auf Prozessen des Kennenlernens, der Begegnung und der Erfahrung im Alltag. Ein Miteinander wird eingeübt, „kleine Angebote" (sogenannte Small Scale Interventions) laden ein und verlagern die Aufmerksamkeit der Nachbarn und der Mannheimer Schritt für Schritt auf das Juwel Multihalle.

Kombinierte Anlässe, wie z. B. die Sommerschule im Verbund mit Nachbarn aus den umliegenden Quartieren, ein Living Lab oder kleine Begegnungsfeste, besetzen die Zwischenräume im Umfeld der Multihalle durch eine Haltung des Mitmachens und des Miteinander gestalten.

Kollaborativ wächst die Multihalle zu einem Begegnungsort der breiten Mannheimer Bevölkerung. Spannende Bildungs- und Mitmachvorhaben im Verbund mit Anwohnern schaffen Vertrauen zu einem neuen Ort in der Mitte Mannheims. Es sind die Menschen Mannheims, die an diesem Ort modellhaft zu Gestaltern der Zukunft Mannheim aufgefordert werden, um ihre Zukunft demokratisch, partizipativ und verantwortlich zu gestalten.

Für eine breite und gemischte Bürgerschaft wird der utopische Ort Multihalle durch eine auffordernde Haltung des „sich Kümmerns" ergänzt. Modellhaft rückt er alltägliche Belange der Menschen im Quartier im 21. Jh. in den Mittelpunkt.

Credits

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Cook and family	Esat Keklik and Family, Owner of Multihalle Restaurant
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