

# IFHP Housing Academy

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International Federation for Housing and Planning seeks cities as partner for The Housing Academy to host an implementation lab in 2016-17 as well as actively engage in labs in other cities.

Cities are in transition due to many drivers: changing family patterns, changing demographics, influx of migrants, platform economy to mention some. The stability of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is replaced by a time of uncertainty as the old paradigms are running out.

Absorbing newcomers and vulnerable groups into the housing stock e.g. is a challenge. Currently it is greater in Europe due to the influx of refugees. It is a complex challenge concerning integration, interdisciplinary approaches and solutions, which unintentionally are challenging rules and regulations. On the other hand, this challenge also consists of great potential to innovate, to accelerate developments and rethink the city and housing provision. It is a chance to take advantage of the urgency to solve other contemporary issues/pressing issues like the general lack of affordable housing stock and developing social inclusive cities. Solutions and knowledge from previous experience with the housing of marginalised groups are related, and made accessible.

We - as professional community - believe that collectively we *must* and *can* change behaviour and habits, step out of our comfort zone and engage the right actors in finding solutions and transforming the city.

We believe there is no right nor wrong, but rather solutions fit to match local needs.

## IFHP – who are we

The International Federation for Housing and Planning (IFHP) originated in the Garden City Movement, - a social movement wanting to develop better housing for the working people. Ebenezer Howard founded IFHP in 1913, and to this day IFHP is passionate about creating better cities for people.

As an international professional network, we wish to contribute to the current challenges cities and citizens are facing across the world.

We base our activities on the needs of the IFHP Community and support each other in solving the local challenges by sharing, listening to and challenging each other on the subject matter in an unbiased way that is irrespective of political ideology or bureaucratic power play. The IFHP Community consists of members, stakeholders, organisations alike and foremost of professionals with interest in urban habitat.

## The IFHP Housing Academy

IFHP Housing Academy aims to gather the relevant urban professionals throughout 2016 -17 to work together on how to better accommodate marginalised groups (refugees, homeless, elderly etc.) in the European cities. The IFHP Housing Academy has a network with more than 50 professionals engaged in working daily on this topic. It is about turning a house into a home and a combination of housing, integration, connectivity and social coherence.

The aim of the programme is to develop a plan and find solutions to a selected concrete case in the host city. Local and international experts and professionals join forces and can skip corners due to the interactive process in which we will meet, work, share and learn. The combination of working together and learning is the core of the activity; The Academy.

The partner cities both host an implementation lab and travel to visit the other partner cities to participate in their labs. All labs are also joined by a group of international, relevant, selected experts and professionals. They will bring with them a critical understanding of the policies and practices around Europe which will be matched with the local expertise and knowledge.

## The Urban Implementation Labs

The IFHP urban implementation lab brings together the urban planners and housing professionals from other European cities that share the challenge of housing of marginalised groups.

The host city brings in a specific case, which all participants will focus on, and try to solve together by producing a plan or a solution during the lab. By

sharing knowledge, reference cases and expertise all will experience accelerated learning.

The organizers of the urban implementation labs have extensive experience with this format which enables the quick dissemination of practical know how. (see [www.iiinstitute.nl](http://www.iiinstitute.nl))

## The added value for participating cities

For the hosting city, the outcome of a lab will lead in a very short period of time (3 days) to an unbiased professional set of recommendations or considerations for a road map to a better thought-out trajectory.

We can achieve this as the IFHP is able to facilitate a multidisciplinary approach and showcase the learning of good and bad practises from cities that are confronted with similar housing problems.

Besides that, the hosting city will contribute to the development of a network of professionals that can be called in for support.

## Step by step - How the LABs are carried through:

1. The city contacts the IFHP with one or more possible case studies;
2. Preparatory visit (1-2 days). Through the preparatory visit, the IFHP explores and assesses the existing challenges and demands.
3. The IFHP and the city, based on the preparatory visit, formulate a Problem Statement together and invite the relevant stakeholders and experts for a (2-3 day) LAB/workshop. The aim of this LAB is to assess the case and provide the tools, recommendations and possible solutions for the city to solve the existing problems/challenges.
4. The IFHP, together with the city, produces a publication (final report) with the results from the LAB.  
It is up to the city to implement the solutions provided.

## A conference – a recap of the labs

The labs is to our knowledge an effective way of producing new needed solutions to complex challenges. A learning approach is required to tackle the current challenges. The method is the investigation of the main challenges and opportunities in the city context – because each city has its own characteristics and problems, and to support urban professionals in their daily work with the housing refugee situation. The aim is to provide tools and recommendations for each specific case for the city in question.

As a result from the LABs carried through 2016-17, in 2017 we will invite all those involved and those that have not been involved, but are interested to learn from the outcomes to a conference, to broaden the access to the work of the Academy. It will be an interactive conference where each city will have the opportunity to showcase the work and results from the LABs developed there, spread the knowledge gathered through the different cities and engage a larger network in further discussions.

## Budget

To participate in IFHP Housing Academy you need:

- To be a city with a specific case in need of a solution.
- The case needs to be within housing refugees and/or other excluded groups.
- To have back-up to execute the lab and to participate in the Academy.
- To have the intention to implement (it is finally up to the city to decide whether or not to implement).

To participate, a city must pay € 20.000 to cover costs for the planners, provide the Academy with a venue and catering during the stay and pay for transport and accommodation when visiting the partner cities in the Academy.

Interested in more information about the IFHP Housing Academy and a detailed budget? Please contact:

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## Why we do this & findings

*“Europe is facing the challenges of an unprecedented scale of migration which cannot be reversed. The International Federation for Housing and Planning wishes to contribute to current debates on housing refugees by identifying lessons from research and practice through its international professional network.”*

IFHP Deventer Statement on Refugee Housing – October 20th 2015

- We have conducted a baseline analysis covering 10 European countries
- We have conducted a LAB investigating the findings of the first report, October 19-20 in Deventer, Netherlands.
- Our findings, the baseline and our considerations are wrapped up in our report to be downloaded [www.ifhp.org/sites/default/files/staff/IFHP\\_ones\\_Refugees\\_final.pdf](http://www.ifhp.org/sites/default/files/staff/IFHP_ones_Refugees_final.pdf)

- We have pitched our initial work at the 51<sup>st</sup> ISOCARP congress in Rotterdam, October 22, 2015, and enlarged our community by encouraging more people to join.
- Community building among those who have signed up (60 professionals have signed up).
- An IFHP [blog](#) where the community can post and comment.
- A focus on the Housing Refugee situation in Berlin at the IFHP Summit, November 12<sup>th</sup>.

Our initial work has pinpointed three findings, which are broadly acknowledged obstacles, preventing feasible solutions to be integrated.

- *Housing & integration* are an inseparable couple when aiming at creating a social cohesive community/city/ society.  
Europe has fine examples of how to successfully accommodate a growing diversity in society and create harmonious communities.
- *Housing Policy & allocation of affordable housing*: there is a general shortage of housing, especially in the social and affordable sectors. It is time to consider new approaches, which requires a multi-agent approach.



We need also to consider that the availability of accommodation involves not only considering available stock, but also creating new stock, e.g.

- Conversion of empty properties
- Exploration of the possibilities of encouraging self-built housing
- Consider developing more flexible accommodation options

*Planning & associated regulations* guide the way our cities are developed and set standards to ensure the safety and health. However, it could be advised as a response to the current circumstances to allow a certain degree of plasticity to both planning strategies and physical solutions. It may be advisable to consider that

- Planning regulation should allow for tailored options for (the provision of) affordable housing.
- Focus on how reallocation of zoning for affordable housing can access mixed land use and building design with a focus on housing of different groups.
- Associated building regulations can be met in a phased manner allowing for the incremental development of housing solutions to meet the available resources of tenant groups.