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Theme: *City support services to businesses*
Project title: *FabLab Lisboa*

City: Lisbon, Portugal

Target groups: Entrepreneurs, SMEs, designers, artists, students or individuals and all actors in the entrepreneurial ecosystem



Context, issue(s) to tackle

FabLabs are more than mere physical meeting places or production plants for innovators. These are platforms for connecting competences and expertise as well as for facilitating the exchange of ideas, which may ultimately foster technology-driven innovation. FabLabs also serve to boost and diversify the urban economy through the creation and consolidation of startups. They promote alternative ways of creating physical goods and innovation systems by focusing mainly on learning-by-doing, the sharing of information on technologies and tools, peer-to-peer design or social product development.

Objectives

FabLab Lisboa aims to be a laboratory that is accessible to ordinary citizens, a place for the sharing of knowledge and experience, enabling democratic access to innovation, entrepreneurship, discovery and creativity, with a view to social and economic development at both individual and community level. FabLab Lisboa is a manufacturing space for digital prototypes, where the main objective is to transform ideas into reality, enabling the creation of new products, which in turn can be transformed into value, employment and wealth generated in the city and the country alike.

Date of achievement - design, development, implementation

FabLab Lisboa was founded in July 2013. It is developed and implemented jointly with several partners, both public and private.

Key steps and activities

FabLab Lisboa is fully hosted by the Municipality of Lisbon. Its main aim is to support projects initiated by the local community, which in turn also profits from the events in which FabLab Lisboa participates by having a place to showcase their own projects to a wider audience.

Key activities:

- FabLab Lisboa organises two open days a week, where registered users can book the available equipment free of charge for experimentation and prototyping
- it provides assistance to projects beyond its field of activity by forwarding and referring them to a network of interested partners



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Budget and its origin

FabLab Lisboa is a municipality initiative. Therefore its budget is based on the city's budget, but it also counts on the financial support of its partners.

Results and impact

During the first year and a half of its activity, FabLab Lisboa has provided support to more than 350 projects. A total of 27 SMEs have developed their prototypes there, and they all succeeded in growing their business.

Economic benefits:

- direct impact on the manufacturing sector and on small-scale production; positive externalities in the network development and job creation capacity of the manufacturers/makers
- customisation, growing efficiency and cost-saving processes in priority areas
- development of services and e-commerce

Social benefits:

- stronger bonds within the community, boost to the co-creation movement
- better and more inclusive public service, broader scope for social innovation
- more effective municipal entrepreneurship strategy

Transferability tips for cities willing to implement a similar scheme

One of the most relevant aspects of this challenge is to integrate processes of 'urban re-industrialisation' based on creativity, innovation and new and renewable forms of production. The attention paid to the new makers' movement and to urban manufacturing connected with industry and commerce has enabled the resurgence of municipal public investment in partnerships with private entities and others in the city. It has helped Lisbon develop creative startups (Mouraria Creative Hub), provide workshop space for makers and manufacturers (fablabs, hackers' spaces), organise networking events (Lisbon hosted its first Maker Faire in September 2015) and offer mentoring and a venue for sharing ideas with future entrepreneurs and the community at large.

Contact

Bernardo Gaeiras
FabLab Lisboa director
bernardo.gaeiras@cm-lisboa.pt

References, sources, bibliography

fablablisboa.pt

Website, social media

fablablisboa.pt
<https://www.facebook.com/FabLabLisboa>
<https://twitter.com/FablabLisboa>
https://instagram.com/fablab_lisboa/



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