—Beyond

*A Service + Spatial design approach to co-design
public spaces with local communities*

public—
spaces

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public–
spaces

PSSD PRODUCT-SERVICE SYSTEM DESIGN   **POLITECNICO** MILANO 1863

*Il solo antidoto alla desertificazione sociale
è una rinnovata capacità di cura, la cura,
per definizione, richiede prossimità.*

Manzini (2021)

ABSTRACT

Public spaces have been recognised as one of the most critical components of sustainable and thriving societies, and are even more fundamental when speaking about rural and remote (i.e. non-urban) territories. The significance of public spaces extends beyond their material function, acting as powerful symbols of collective identity and fostering a sense of community: they serve as relational platforms for social interaction, a reflection of broader societal dynamics. The fast-paced and technology-driven society we are currently experiencing decodes the built environment as a relational and experiential component, part of a much bigger ecosystem of services, experiences, interactions, flows, and information. In order to define and embark on these complex entities, designers must leverage collaboration and cross-contamination between disciplines.
For this thesis, the Service+Spatial Design transdisciplinary approach, proposed by Fassi et al. (2018) and De Rosa (2022), is analysed to define the value of the combined methodology. Spatial Design can find the much-needed strategic and resilient methods already embedded in the Service Design discipline, practical to tackle the complex socio-technical system, expanding the opportunity for value creation in the design of spaces and integrating the service soft components into it. Through the theoretical framework and case studies, the literature review explores the systematical implementation of co-design activities in Spatial Design, actively engaging communities throughout the design process and building a sense of ownership of the space and cohesion among individuals.
The Service+Spatial design approach finds practical experimentation in a series of co-design activities within SMOTIES - Creative works with small and remote places, a Human Cities Network project funded by the Creative Europe programme, working in partnership with the small and remote town of Albugnano, Italy, on creating culture-led regeneration processes. The co-design workshops aimed at including the whole Albugnano community in designing a new public space, including their voices throughout the whole process and letting people become the designer of this new gathering place for the town. During the workshops, the transdisciplinarity of S+S allowed for a holistic understanding of the relationships between spaces, services, and people, fostering long-term, sustainable, and responsive strategies. In this way, designers can create environments that genuinely serve the communities' needs, aspirations, and experiences.

Gli spazi pubblici sono considerati una delle componenti più critiche delle società sostenibili e fiorenti, e sono ancora più fondamentali quando si parla di territori rurali e remoti (ovvero non urbani). Il significato degli spazi pubblici va oltre la loro funzione materiale, agendo come potenti simboli di identità collettiva e promuovendo un senso di comunità: essi fungono da piattaforme relazionali per l'interazione sociale, riflesso di dinamiche sociali più ampie. La società frenetica e tecnologica che stiamo vivendo decodifica l'ambiente costruito come una componente relazionale ed esperienziale, parte di un ecosistema molto più grande di servizi, esperienze, interazioni, flussi e informazioni. Per definire e intraprendere queste entità complesse, i progettisti devono sfruttare la collaborazione e la contaminazione tra discipline. Per questa tesi, l'approccio transdisciplinare Service+Spatial Design, proposto da Fassi et al. (2018) e De Rosa (2022), viene analizzato per definire il valore della metodologia combinata. Lo Spatial Design può trovare i tanto necessari metodi strategici e resilienti già incorporati nella disciplina del Service Design, pratici per affrontare il complesso sistema socio-tecnico, ampliando l'opportunità di creazione di valore nella progettazione degli spazi e integrandovi le componenti soft del servizio. Attraverso il quadro teorico e i casi di studio, la revisione della letteratura esplora l'implementazione sistematica delle attività di co-progettazione nello Spatial Design, coinvolgendo attivamente le comunità durante il processo di progettazione e costruendo un senso di proprietà dello spazio e di coesione tra gli individui. L'approccio Service+Spatial design trova una sperimentazione pratica in una serie di attività di co-design all'interno di SMOTIES - Creative works with small and remote places, un progetto dello Human Cities Network e finanziato dal programma Creative Europe, che lavora in partnership con la piccola città di Albugnano, in Piemonte - Italia, per creare processi di rigenerazione guidati dalla cultura. I workshop di co-progettazione miravano a coinvolgere l'intera comunità di Albugnano nella progettazione di un nuovo spazio pubblico, includendo le loro voci durante l'intero processo e lasciando che i cittadini diventassero i progettisti di questo nuovo luogo di aggregazione per la città. Durante i workshop, la transdisciplinarietà di S+S ha permesso una comprensione olistica delle relazioni tra spazi, servizi e persone, favorendo strategie a lungo termine, sostenibili e reattive. In questo modo, i progettisti possono creare ambienti che servano realmente i bisogni, le aspirazioni e le esperienze delle comunità.

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Creativity for small and remote places

Referring to the European Rural Development Plans for 2040, Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, states: "Rural areas are the fabric of our society and the heartbeat of our economy. They are a core part of our identity and our economic potential. We will cherish and preserve our rural areas and invest in their future" (European Union, 2023).
The European Union defines rural areas and small and remote places as those with a population density below 150 inhabitants per square kilometre, where 50% of the residents cannot reach the centre of a city of at least 50.000 inhabitants within 45 minutes (European Union Regional Policy, 2008; OECD, 2020) [FIG. 01].
Although often overlooked, these areas comprise 25% of the European population, according to Eurostat's 2021 report.
This significant number necessitates equal attention and resources for strategic, economic, and sustainable development as their urban counterparts.

↓ FIG. 01.
EU criteria for the definition of small and remote places. Adapted from EURP (2008).

This thesis, and the subsequent research, stems from multiple points of interest that I had the chance to encounter and foster during my university education.
Thanks to my involvement in *SMOTIES – Creative works in small and remote places*, a project carried out by part of the Design Department and the DESIS Lab of Politecnico di Milano, to which I would like to express my gratitude from the outset. Within the context of the project, I was able to explore various fields that sparked my interest: the opportunities held by rural and remote territories, something that in design is not explored enough in comparison to the extensive amount of research and examples at the urban and city level; public spaces, reconnecting with my bachelor studies and personals interests in the liveability of shared environments; design theory and Service Design, more recent interests that I explored in depth thanks to the many projects and people I had the chance to encounter during my Master's Degree.

EU CRITERIA / Small and remote places
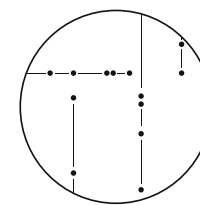
1 Population density **below 150 inhabitants** per square kilometer
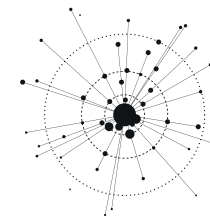
2 **50%** of the residents **cannot** reach the center of a city of at least **50.000 inhabitants within 45 minutes**

To build on top of these places' economic and social values, we must remember the immense cultural heritage and irreplaceable traditions that these places hold. These areas may be sparsely populated and disconnected but hold real and intangible cultural treasures. They offer valuable resources to human life while remaining untouched by human influence and are home to diverse ecosystems and Indigenous communities (OECD, 2020).

Small and remote places lay their greatest heritage in the ancestral knowledge of the locals, in their witness presence as inhabitants of places. Small towns guard treasures, precious traditions, rituals from the old times, and specific craft techniques. Unfortunately, small and remote towns' material and immaterial culture often risks being undervalued, not consolidated, not handed down, and hence lost.

De Rosa in Human Cities (2022a, p.74)

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of culture and creatvity's vital role in shaping the political agendas of cities and regions. Culture is now widely regarded as a powerful tool for driving economic growth and enhancing the overall well-being of residents (OECD, 2018). As such, it has become an increasingly important focus for policymakers and urban planners alike, who seek to leverage the transformative power of culture to create thriving, sustainable, inclusive, vibrant communities. Whether through the promotion of the arts, the preservation of historical landmarks, or the celebration of diverse cultural traditions, cities and regions are increasingly turning to culture to achieve their social, economic, and political goals (Voice of Culture, 2023). Similarly, encouraging and promoting social innovation within rural areas is of utmost importance, driven by community participation mainly: through various consultation processes, it has been made clear that bottom-up approaches are crucial in addressing the unique needs of rural communities and fostering local engagement (OECD, 2020). By recognising and valuing local knowledge, skills, and culture, these approaches can transform small and remote places into vibrant, self-reliant, and connected communities. Recent experiences show the need to work on the cultural revitalisation of small rural towns.

This starts with renovating the built environment (OECD, 2018), for instance, through developing creative works within public spaces. The non-urban areas – often within more open settings than urban spaces allow – are themselves an inspiration for creative work and the specific public environments of the villages and towns (Voices of Culture, 2023). Thus, many projects at the intersection of creative and social innovation are flourishing in the European landscape.

→ FIG. 02.
A glimpse of the small and remote Albugnano.

For instance, *SMOTIES - Creative works with small and remote places* is a four-year project co-funded by the European Union's Creative Europe Programme. The project aims to investigate the implementation of cultural and creative innovations in public spaces in small and remote areas for effective collaboration with local stakeholders.

> *This process is supported by participatory design and social innovation practices and is based upon the belief that culture-led regeneration and development strategies can transform places. [...] A city or region's economic and social growth is the primary emphasis of culture-led regeneration and development programs, which encourage and facilitate cultural and creative activities.*
>
> De Rosa & Fassi (2022)

The project, through the triggering action of co-design, participatory engagement, and training and education by the partners, is directly involving designers/artists/cultural operators throughout the entire process in terms of concept development, capacity building, and mobility to define the creative works in public spaces and support the continuous dissemination process (Human Cities, 2022b). Starting from creative innovation in public spaces based on Social Innovation and design thinking, SMOTIES tries to support the creation of short- and long-term strategies for these remote places, creating new relationships, forms of community, sustainable development, transnational mobility, and reconstruction of public spaces.
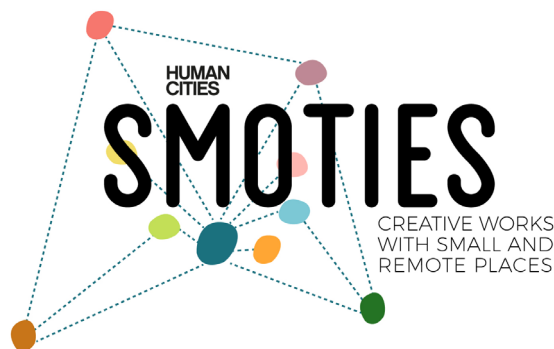
← FIG. 03.
The SMOTIES logo.

Focusing on public spaces, the topic has garnered considerable attention in research over the past few decades, becoming a subject of interdisciplinary discussion between different disciplines. Public places are essential environments where individuals and communities can gather to exchange experiences and ideas and experiment with innovative solutions aopportunities for social interaction and improve their quality of life (Meroni, 2011). While commonly linked with urban settings solely, the notion of public space should not be exclusively associated with urban areas, as rural communities also harbour public spaces, such as small squares and local green areas, to serve as gathering points and catalysts for social interaction and engagement (Soszyński et al., 2021). Rural communities, unfortunately, sometimes lack this kind of open space for leisure and recreation, mainly because of the degradation of previous facilities that lost the appeal and meaningfulness to its citizens. In most cases, they are also deprived of representative spaces where locals may identify and where they can assemble, organise activities, and exercise their rights to participate (Micek & Staszewska, 2019).

Regardless of the current state of public spaces in rural areas, which is yet to be clearly defined, it is undeniable that the enormous opportunity social innovation projects have in supporting these places' communities in finding alternative and creative strategies to activate or regenerate new public spaces. After COVID-19, these non-urban alternatives have been rediscovered as places of living, working, and leisure time activities. However, their assets have also been re-evaluated through new lenses and considered more often (Human Cities Network, 2022), opening many new questions about living in remote places, their communities, and their public realm. The development of more liveable public spaces in non-urban contexts that are emblematic of their citizens is closely linked to these recent movements of rural rediscovery. This kind of project needs its own stage and moment for discussion within the design profession, which has recently expressed interest in more local-based projects, supported by a growing number of people in constant search and rediscovery of local traditions, products and cultures (Manzini, 2016).

Setting the research context

Considering the importance of public spaces in general, but specifically for small and remote places, as remarked within the SMOTIES project, it becomes a dominant necessity to define innovative processes and approaches to the design of public spaces. The broader and more systemic understanding of design happening in the XXI century could answer this. The field of design is a constantly evolving and interdisciplinary area that reflects and interacts with the current socio-technical changes; as the world continues to shift and change, the traditional objects of interest in design are also transforming.

Moreover, modern design showcases an inclination towards non-designers and local communities becoming agents and resources for the whole design process. Focussing on communities has led us to talk about a Community-centred Design, "where the attention shifts from the individual' user' to the 'community' as the new subject of interest for a design that is more aware of current social dynamics" (Meroni & Trapani, 2011), and support communities having a voice in the decision-making and being able to generate value for themselves for the early stages of design. The designer must be able to manage collaborative processes and have transdisciplinary skills. This involves facilitating collaborative design practices and promoting discussions about systemic changes (Meroni, 2011; Manzini & Meroni, 2014).

Returning to public spaces, to ensure that the environments designed meet the requirements and desires of the community, the Spatial design discipline should adopt co-creative and participatory methodologies –rooted in community-centred design – to include citizens and communities throughout the whole design process. This approach involves including the user (i.e. the community) in the project right from the beginning, resulting in more qualitative and more effective spaces. It also creates opportunities for dialogue between various actors and communities towards

achieving a common good (Meroni & Trapani, 2011). The inclusion of these practices calls for the necessity for the disciplines to find connections and cross-contamination with other design disciplines that have participatory practices already embedded in their theories and methodologies, such as Service Design.

SERVICE AND SPATIAL DESIGN

Thus, the main research area for this thesis explores the connections between the disciplines of Service Design and Spatial Design outlined in recent design theory. The two disciplines share the same design and cultural background but derive from two different field branches. "Service design barely encounters Spatial design since it arose in the '90s growing economy of the service sector in clear contrast to the then dominant practices and cultures of design, which still focused on the physical and tangible output of the traditional industrial sectors" (Fassi, Galluzzo, & De Rosa, 2018).

The involvement of end-users in crafting spaces and services can vary greatly, depending on the importance given to their input. Historically, spatial design has prioritised the production of physical outcomes, which can lead to the exclusion of end-users from the design process; this exclusion can often result in less effective and user-friendly spaces. Furthermore, spatial design methods often lack the continuous prototyping and testing, central

to the service design discipline. When the user is not involved in the concept and design process, they miss out on the chance to provide valuable input and suggestions to guide the designer. At the same time, the designer may not wholly understand the user's needs and preferences without their active participation in the design process (Sanders & Stappers, 2008). By prioritising citizens' input in decision-making, continuous prototyping and testing, designers can create more effective and community-friendly spaces that meet the specific needs of the individuals.

In this regard, the foundational theory for S+S (Service+Spatial design) defined by scholars such as Fassi, Galluzzo and De Rosa is instrumental: "Spatial design encounters Service design in urban planning, in the design of workplaces, retail settings, private interior spaces, public services, and infrastructures. In this range of settings, spaces host relational entities and vice versa, services take place in physical environments and determine tangible outcomes" (Fassi, Galluzzo, & De Rosa, 2018). Moreover, "Spatial design can find today in the strategic and resilient approach of service - needed to tackle the complex socio-technical system (D. A. Norman and Stappers, 2015) - that approach which expands the design and value of the places and integrates the soft service components" (Fassi, Galluzzo, & De Rosa, 2018).

These premises set the foundation for a series of hypotheses that could be explored in this thesis. By contextualising them in the SMOTIES framework of small and remote places, a research question can be outlined to structure the theoretical background and practical experimentations at the centre of the thesis work:

What is the value of a Service+Spatial design approach that emphasises co-designing public spaces with local communities?

The objective of this thesis is to investigate, therefore, the recently born approach between Service Design and Spatial Design, following the theoretical work done by academics such as Fassi, Galluzzo (2018), and De Rosa (2019, 2022), and then applying and experimenting with co-design of public spaces in the remote context framed within SMOTIES. The small village of Albugnano, in the Basso Monferrato, becomes the perfect field of experimentation for this activities with the local community to design a new cultural and gathering space for the town.

To do so, the research process was structured in different phases [FIG. 05]. At first, preliminary research was conducted to frame the overall context previously presented in this chapter, starting from the European framework and exploring the opportunities around innovative approaches to the design of public spaces. Subsequently, the literature review research began by exploring the value of public spaces and the relational connections between places and communities. From here, innovative approaches to the design of spaces were searched, shifting the attention towards design theory and the recent positioning of modern design. The recent Service+Spatial Design framework concludes the literature review by offering a co-design and community-based approach to the design of public spaces. In parallel with the theoretical review, a reflection was developed around case studies showcasing relevant co-creative approaches, analysing their processes and community engagement. The learnings obtained in the literature review became the foundation to structure a co-design process within the SMOTIES project to design a new public space for the town with the local community. After a contextual research focused on the geographical area of the site, Albugnano and the Basso Monferrato, the project work took place. I supported three workshops with the community, accompanied by three parallel sense-making workshops for the SMOTIES team, and designed the activities and tools for the WS3. Unfortunately, the co-desgin process continued beyond the time limitations of this thesis. For my contribution, specific research about S+S co-design tools and activities was done to gain practical references to be implemented in the process. The whole co-design process is followed to conclude with a short analysis and reflection of the activities and tools used in each workshop.
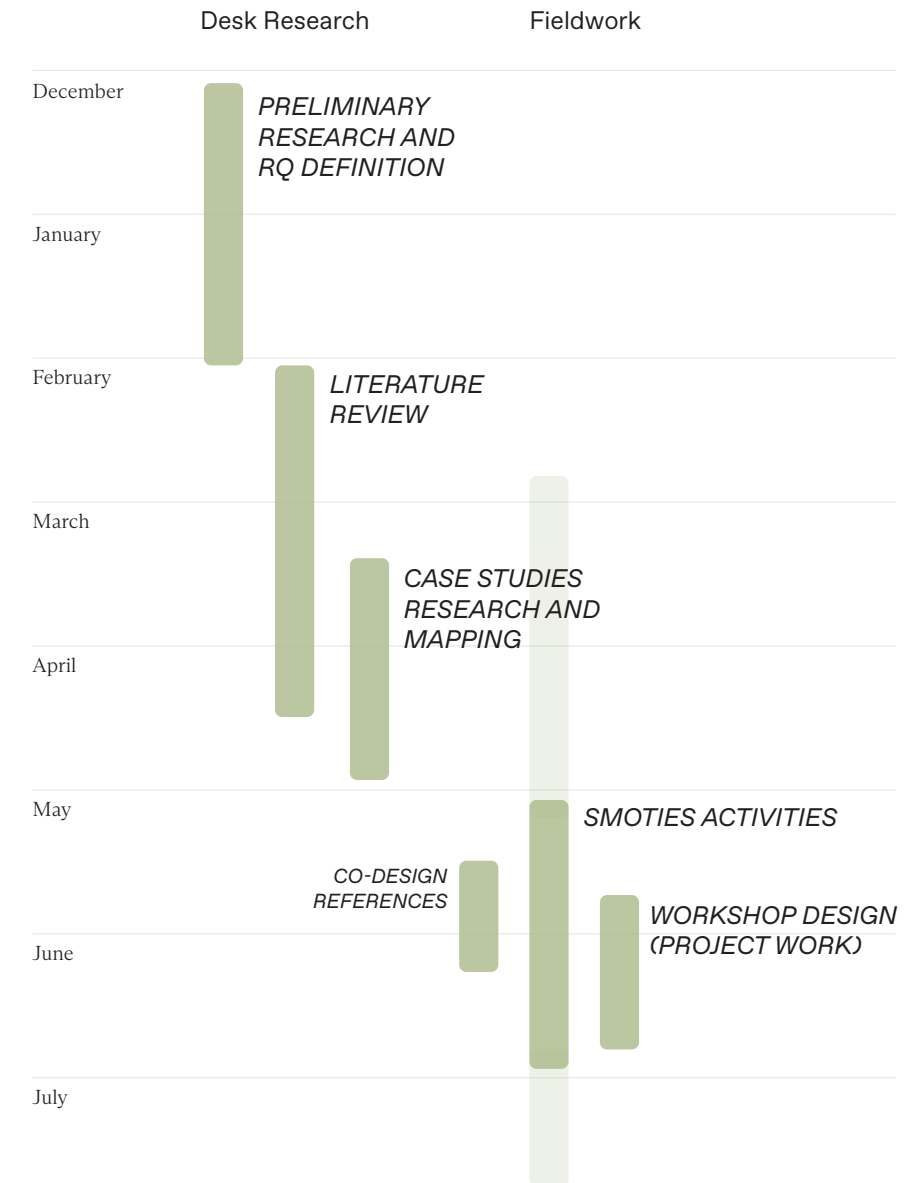
↑ FIG. 05.
Thesis timeline.

Literature review →

An analysis on public spaces →

People make places, more than places make people.

Worpole & Knox, 2007, p.2

Since it was challenging to find extensive and relevant literature on public spaces in rural settings only, the following chapter develops as an holistic literature review to support the exploration of modern public spaces and their impact on individuals and communities. The objective is to explore recent reflections that revolve around public spaces' identity, relational and participatory dimensions. First, the value of public spaces was investigated, looking for the intrinsic qualities that make up a "good public space". Secondly, a reflection around the experiential and relational connotation of public places, which becomes then the starting point for this thesis to explore more in detail the rising tendency of active involvement of citizens and communities as co-creators in the space design process (Manzini, 2015; Munthe-Kaas, 2015). A brief description about placemaking poses the foundation to challenge traditional design approaches when dealing with engaging non-designers in co-creative acts: designers must acknowledge the need in the design approach to move from a mono-disciplinary and siloed perspective to a possible shift to a more holistic approach when approaching the topic.

The value of public spaces

Over the past decades, here has been a rising interest in public spaces. While modern societies no longer rely on the town square or the piazza for fundamental requirements, effective public space is necessary for modern communities' social and psychological health. New public spaces are sprouting all over the world, while traditional public typologies are being updated to meet modern demands (Carmona, 2019; Mehta, 2014).

Public space is all around us, a vital part of everyday urban life: the streets we pass through on the way to school or work, the places where children play, or where we encounter nature and wildlife; the local parks in which we enjoy sports, walk the dog and sit at lunchtime; or simply somewhere quiet to get away for a moment from the bustle of a busy daily life. In other words, public space is our open-air living room.

CABE Space (2004)

Exploring the multitude of views and thoughts when approaching the topic of public spaces from different perspectives, the academic and professional realm ultimately and unanimously agrees to identify them as the vital ingredient for thriving societies. For instance, Ali Madanipour (2010) states that public spaces have always been considered essential and significant for all urban environments regardless of urban size, economic context or socio-political configurations.

Note 01. gehlinstitute.org.
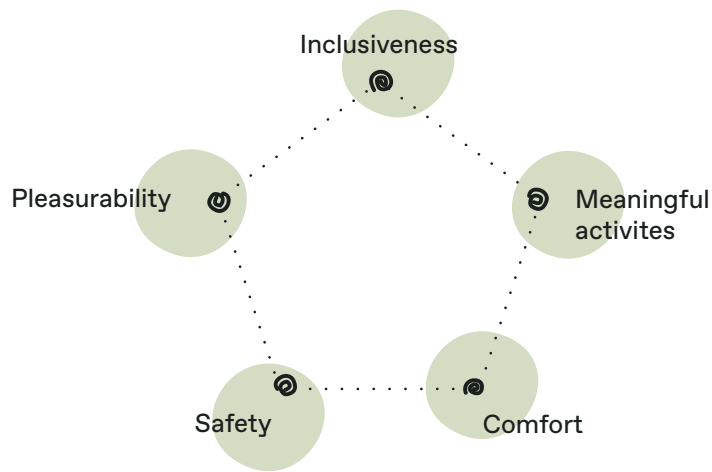
Research entities such as the Gehl Institute[01] has spent decades in trying to define what makes a good public space and defining values that could characterise a strategic evaluation. Mehta (2014) attempts to do that by prompting 5 different dimensions to qualify them (leveraged also by the SMOTIES team).

Inclusiveness

Pleasurability   Meaningful
                                  activites

Safety   Comfort
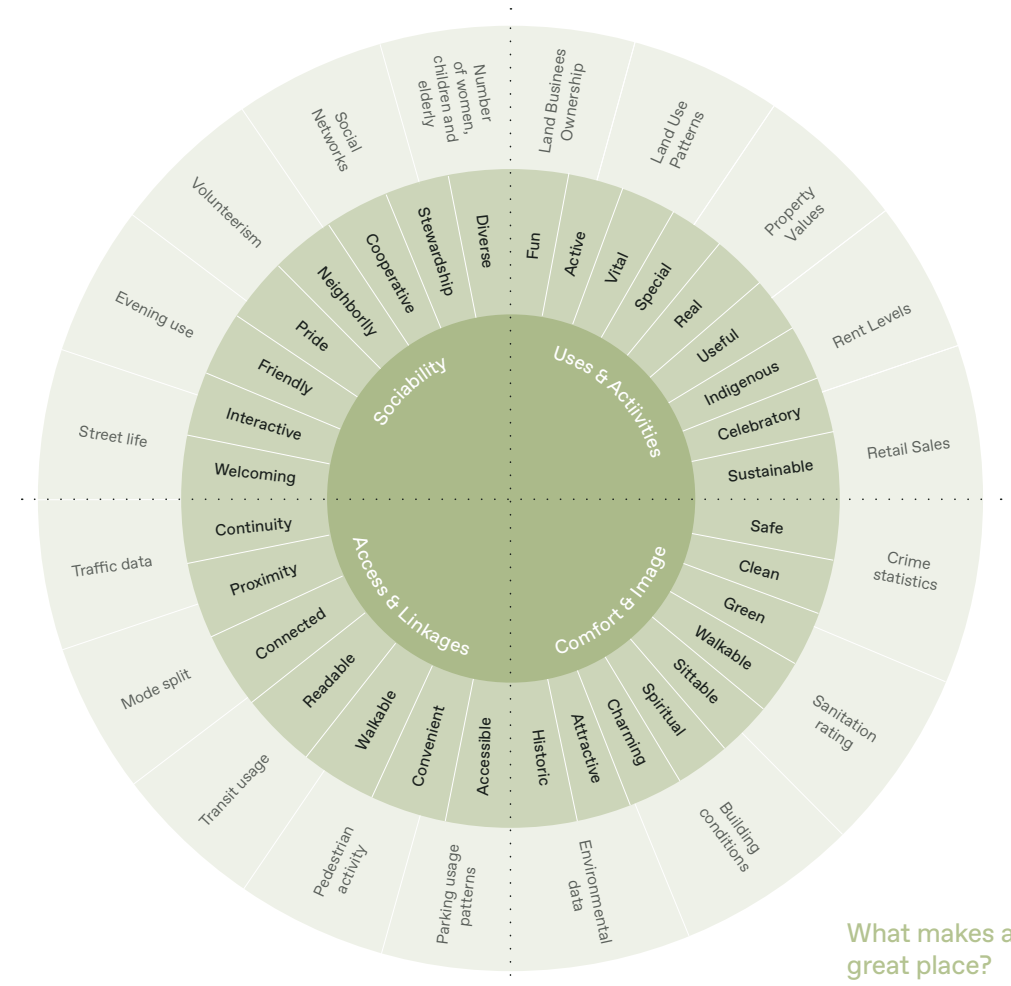
*Good public space is accessible and open, is meaningful
in its design and the activities it supports, provides a sense of
safety, physical and environmental comfort and convenience, a
sense of control, and sensory pleasure.*

Mehta (2014, p. 57)

Professional entities also urge to contribute to understanding better modern public spaces. The cross-disciplinary non-profit Project for Public Spaces (described in detail in the next section of the chapter) offers a comprehensive analysis through their "The Place Diagram", reported on in the right in Figure 07, highlighting four main qualities to help define what makes a great place, plus their subcategories and the consequent mode of use generated. Furthermore, cross-disciplinary research has highlighted public spaces' significance and multifaceted nature. On the economic side, a high-quality public environment can have a substantial impact on the economic life of any city, large or small, and is thus a vital component of any successful rehabilitation strategy. As cities compete for investment, the existence of good parks, squares, gardens, and other public areas becomes increasingly important (CABE Space, 2004). Studies have also explored more thoroughly the value of sociability of public spaces, facilitating social interactions, encouraging a sense of belonging, and promoting community well-being (Carmona et al., 2010; Gehl, 2010). They are one of the most valuable assets of modern society, providing opportunities for social, cultural, and political engagement and fostering community building and

social cohesion. The increase in the variety of public spaces and their requirements observed today demonstrates how shifts in how we live together continue to impact place design and management (Carr et al., 1992, p. 3).

However, there is still a significant need for a modern place-based design approach to better understand the spatial dimension in finding its role as an agent of change in social innovation (Manzini, 2015). Modern approaches in the spatial design field support the definition of public spaces through different lenses: "Third places" as Ray Oldenburg & Brissett (1982) articulate, are anchors of community life that facilitate and foster broader, more creative interactions; or "commons", where the cultural and behavioural dimensions are privileged over the spatial one in order to embrace a more holistic point of view (Meroni & Trapani, 2011; Fassi, 2020).

← FIG. 06.
The five dimension of public spaces. Adapted from Mehta (2014).

↓ FIG. 07.
The diagram "What makes a great place". Adapted from Project for Public Spaces (n.d.).

What makes a great place?

Public spaces for communities

When discussing spaces, it is difficult to move forward without mentioning the tight connection with the local communities that inhabit and use them, especially in small and more rural contexts where the relationship between the two heavily affects public life and the whole territory. UNHabitat[02] outlines, in their Charter of Public Spaces:

Note 02.
www.unhabitat.org

Public spaces are a key element of individual and social well-being, the places of a community's collective life, expressions of the diversity of their common natural and cultural richness and a foundation of their identity [...] The community recognises itself in its public places and pursues the improvement of their spatial quality.

UNHabitat (2016, p.6)

PLACES VERSUS SPACES

It is interesting for this thesis to highlight the concept of *place* over the more general view of space and its opportunities within the design domain. Many scholars have delved into the conceptual distinctions between spaces and places, with notable contributions from Marc Augé, a French anthropologist, ethnographer, and philosopher. Augé's perspective characterizes anthropological places as entities infused with identity, relationality, and historical significance. These places possess unique qualities that set them apart, giving rise to individual and collective identities. Their essence is manifested through the intricate web of relationships that exist among people within these places (Augé, 1992). Places become therefore, phenomenology

of spaces. Bechtel & Churchman (2002) instead link the two terms accordingly: space is the term for abstract geometrical extension indifferent with respect to any human activities; place, in contrast, has in itself a strongly experiential connotation.

Places are constructed in our memories and affections through repeated encounters and complex associations... Place is an origin; it is where one knows others and is known to others; it is one's own.
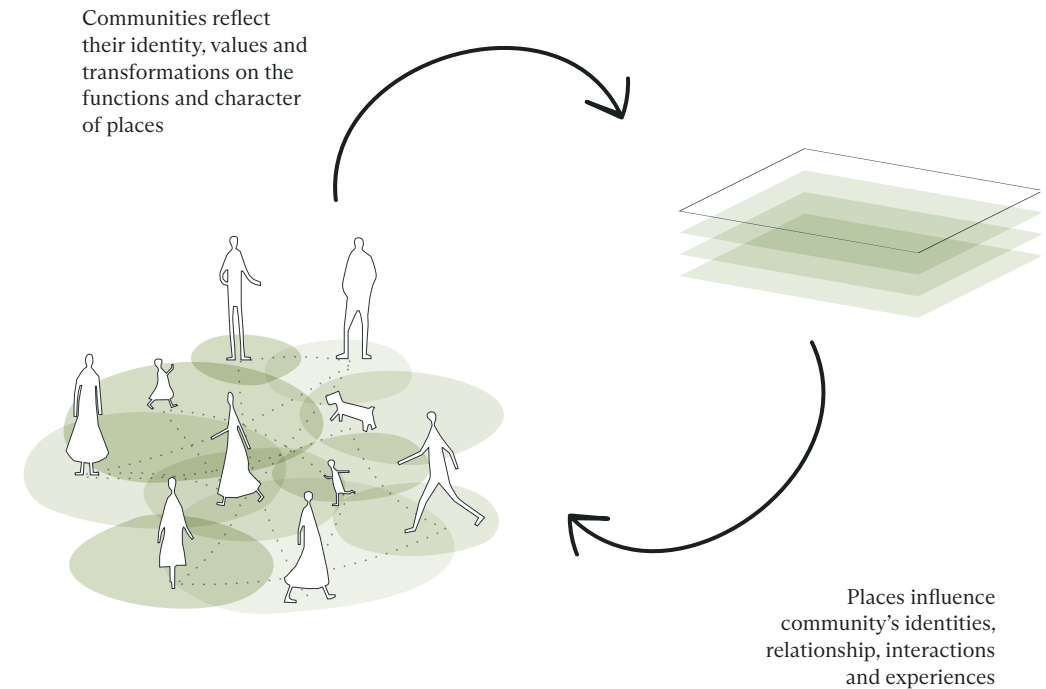
Relph, 1985, as cited in Bechtel & Churchman, 2002.

Essentially, a place transcends its physical coordinates and embodies a multifaceted social and cultural entity intricately woven through its inhabitants' collective identities, values, and activities. As Madanipour (2010, p.237) suggests, places are subject to intense processes of social interaction, which significantly determine their essence, character, and overall quality. Public spaces, such as parks, plazas, or gathering areas, facilitate encounters, dialogue, and shared experiences among community members. They offer a common ground for diverse individuals to converge, forging connections and cultivating a shared understanding. In these spaces, people are not confined to their bubbles but are encouraged to engage with one another, fostering empathy, cooperation, and a sense of belonging (Carmona et al., 2010). Looking at a collective level, public spaces are pivotal in shaping our communities' intricate social fabric and the broader social, economic and political context: beyond providing material resources for self-expression, these spaces also symbolise our identity, making people think more collectively and strengthening their sense of community (Calvo & De Rosa, 2017). In summary, a place is far more than a physical location; it is an intricate social and cultural construct shaped by its inhabitants' identities, values, and activities. The significance of public spaces extends beyond their material function, acting as powerful symbols of collective identity and fostering a sense of community: they serve as platforms for social interaction, a reflection of broader societal dynamics, and spaces where individuals converge to create shared experiences and connections. Therefore, public spaces take the role of reflections of modern relationships, encompassing physical and social dimensions.

[...] indeed, interpersonal relationships are strongly connected to the development of the sense of community, which occurs in places affected by renewed uses and identities. Hence, the physical space assumes the role of a social actor in enabling or preventing social interactions where the social sphere is also spatially constructed and the way society works is influenced by its spatial structure (Marchart, 1998).

Calvo & De Rosa (2017, p. S1707)

By actively participating in shaping, using, and ultimately managing these areas, individuals contribute to building a sense of togetherness and connectedness within their communities, with shared experiences and interactions fostering a sense of belonging and cohesion among community members. The quality itself of public spaces is strictly connected to the quality of the communities they inhabit (Francis, 2012). Simultaneously, it is crucial to acknowledge that spaces themselves are not static entities but continue to be influenced by these societal dynamics, experiencing ongoing social processes and changes: as communities evolve, the ways in which people use and relate to the spaces around them can shift, leading to changes in the character and function of those places (De Rosa, 2022).

This symbiotic and reciprocal relationship between human beings and their physical surroundings, where relationships and interactions become a primary catalyst for change, assumes a pivotal role in discussions concerning the development or re-qualification of public spaces. It highlights that spatial interventions can create or enhance relationships, just as relationships can shape spaces. Thus, the design and modification of public spaces can shape social identities, foster community engagement, and establish interconnections within the physical environment (De Rosa, 2022).

Communities reflect their identity, values and transformations on the functions and character of places

Places influence community's identities, relationship, interactions and experiences

↑ FIG. 08.
The symbiotic relationship between community and place. Diagram by the author.

Public space is therefore both a social, political and physical space where things get done and individuals feel like they belong and have some influence over their life. It undeniably promotes the values and the missions shared by the local community, fostering a sense of identity and belonging. Public places are the accessible fields of opportunity and interaction, where people can meet to share experiences and visions, explore new paths to solve their problems and improve their quality of life.

Meroni in Human Cities, 2010

Co-creating places with communities

As mentioned, when people come together to address societal issues, they also impact the transformation of public spaces and the built environment and vice versa. Correspondingly, the multidisciplinary collaboration of artists, designers, urban architects and planners, sociologists, writers and philosophers in creative intervention to innovate the built environment is an established and always-increasing practice (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010; as cited in Fassi, 2020). Unfortunately, citizens still perceive a strong disconnection with the traditional planning practices, making them feel that the future has already been decided rather than something that is owned and co-created by everyone (Munthe-Kaas, 2015).

Recently, more citizen actively involved in the definition or management public spaces emerged as creative interventions to overcome the limitations or inefficiencies of traditional top-down urban planning and management approaches. They provide an alternative model that promotes grassroots democracy and bottom-up initiatives where the creation or preservation of these commons fosters the building of a community with shared goals and intentions to create enjoyable spaces - i.e. a community-of-place (Fassi & Manzini, 2021).
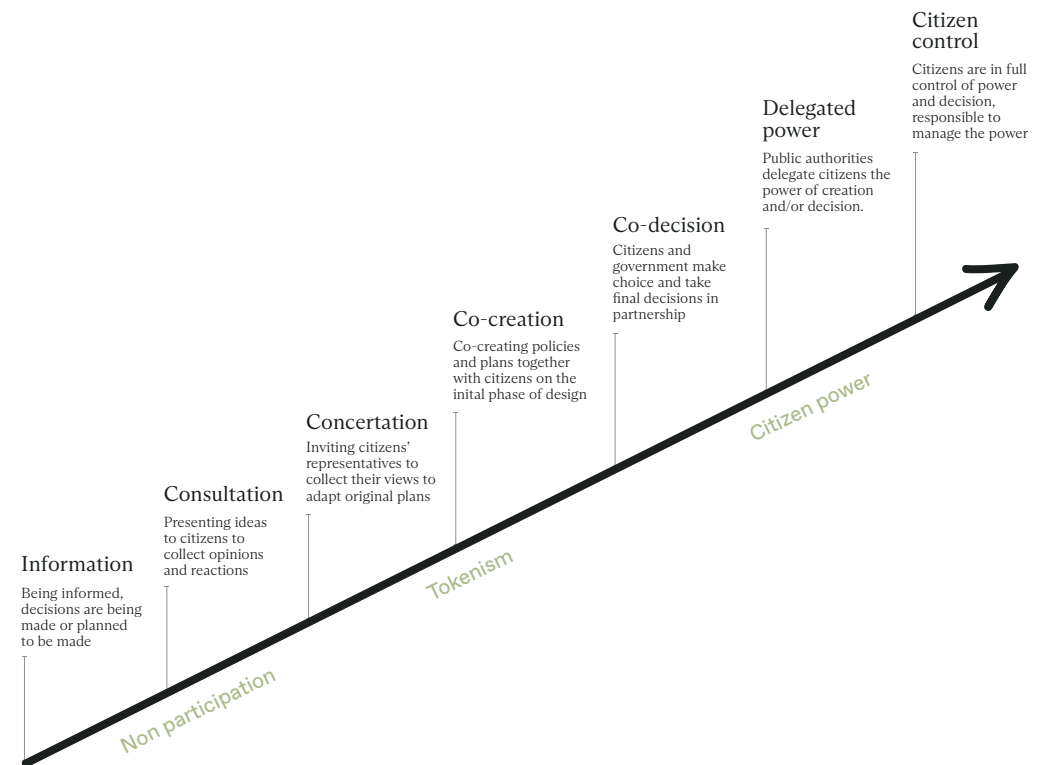
Public spaces are regarded as democratic if they are constituted with forms of participatory democracy, meaning a "variety of processes providing people's involvement in decision-making and the rights to participate in society."

Šuklje Erjavec & Ruchinskaya (2019, p. 209)

Participatory democracy, or citizen participation more simply, has been widely mapped and analysed in order to enlist the different levels of engagement of an individual in the public agenda. The most famous and mainly used in Sherry Arnstein Ladder of Citizen Participation (1969). Christophe Gouache from Strategic Design Scenarios[03] proposes in Figure 09 an updated version of Arnstein's Ladder. It should not surprise indeed that, in the last couple of decades, there has been a collective effort from researchers and practitioners to challenge the traditional spatial planning design process in favour of an active engagement of citizens and local communities to create more liveable, sustainable public spaces. Jane Jacobs (1962) was one of the first scholars that specifically noted through her writings in the 1960s that citizens should actively participate in the process of shaping their urban environments: going beyond the role of passive observers and moving towards active participants to nurture and harness their creative potential collectively, establishing a participatory framework that promotes inclusivity, collaboration, and collective ownership. Developing a sense of community is closely linked to the revitalisation and re-purposing of physical places, hence why

Note 03.
strategicdesign
scenarios.net

↓ FIG. 09.
Ladder of Citizen Participation from Arnstein, 1969. Adapted from Gouache, n.d.

Citizen control
Citizens are in full control of power and decision, responsible to manage the power

Delegated power
Public authorities delegate citizens the power of creation and/or decision.

Co-decision
Citizens and government make choice and take final decisions in partnership

Co-creation
Co-creating policies and plans together with citizens on the inital phase of design

Concertation
Inviting citizens' representatives to collect their views to adapt original plans

Consultation
Presenting ideas to citizens to collect opinions and reactions

Information
Being informed, decisions are being made or planned to be made

Citizen power

Tokenism

Non participation

the involvement of citizens and communities in acts of co-creation or participatory design is regarded as fundamental to shaping more human-centred public spaces. This beneficial impact can be achieved by activating a virtuous engine of human and social relations thanks to a knowledge sharing with the ecosystem of local actors that goes beyond mere information and data but instead towards stories and a sense of care of local identity.

Projects like Human Cities[04], in all its different chapters and spin-offs, have been an enormous contribution in exploring the field, laying the foundations since 2010 to the use of participatory design and co-creation as an approach to supply systems of process and innovation for the liveability of public spaces. These kinds of projects aim to empower local communities, stimulate social interaction, and foster a sense of ownership and belonging in public space.

Note 04.
humancities.eu

CO-CREATION WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES

The authors take co-creation to refer to any act of collective creativity, i.e. creativity that is shared by two or more people. Co-creation is an extensive term with applications ranging from the physical to the metaphysical and from the material to the spiritual.

Sanders & Stappers (2008, p.2.)

Sanders and Stappers give a broad but intelligible definition of co-creation. When individuals engage in co-creative and/or participatory design activities to create new uses and identities for these spaces, they foster a stronger sense of belonging and connection among community members and ultimately define more cohesive and sustainable ways of living (Manzini and Staszowski, 2013, as cited in Calvo & De Rosa, 2017). This furthermore contributes to the process of strengthening long-term relationships between people and places.

From the design practitioner's perspective, by involving community members in decision-making and co-creative activities, designers and planners can gain valuable insights into the local population's specific requirements, preferences, and cultural contexts, leading

to more inclusive and prosperous public spaces (Gehl, 2010). At the same time, when citizens actively engage in co-creation, we can see an increase in social inclusion within public places because it recognises people's decision-making rights, produces a new public value, and promotes community self-organisation and empowerment of the excluded (Šuklje & Ruchinskaya, 2019).

Involving communities in projects and initiatives, honouring their stories and their desires, engaging them through co-creation tools that enable their expression of imagination, and their view of the world are timeless ways of bonding and co-creating that may lead to a true meaning that will only grow stronger through time.

Human Cities (2022a)

What about non-urban areas in these terms? In regional or rural territories, co-creating public places acquires even more relevance and should be tackled as a necessary step in every local development and rural regeneration strategy.
In this sense, participatory practices recognise the importance of local knowledge, lived experiences, and the social dynamics specific to each community. It acknowledges that the expertise of the people who inhabit and interact with the spaces daily is invaluable; integrating this knowledge into the design process makes public spaces more responsive to the community's unique needs and cultural contexts. The creative and participatory work of citizens around public spaces here seems to efficiently translate and extend in this sense to the more extensive conception of "Design for the territory" , where it could support the generation of tangible results in the socio-economic development of non-urban realities, providing a variety of opportunities that humour the different needs and necessary transformation of their community.

Designing for the territory means, above all, designing for communities, in which cooperation and collaboration are fundamental parts precisely for the complex system of interests and realities that make up and identify a territorial system.

Villari (2019)

FIG. 10.

*FOCUS: PLACEMAKING &
PROJECT FOR PUBLIC SPACES*

Placemaking is one of the oldest and most established practices involving citizens in planning their urban fabric, which gained a majority of its traction in the United States of America thanks to the work of Jane Jacobs and William H. Whyte in the 1970s (Project for Public Spaces, 2022).

When discussing the design of potential community spaces, placemaking is a participatory approach that aims to create vibrant and inclusive public spaces that reflect the local culture and community identity. This practice focuses on the human experience of a place; it involves engaging stakeholders to identify their needs, aspirations and values and co-creating design solutions that respond to those inputs. Placemaking has been widely adopted by urban planners, architects and community groups to revitalise neglected or underutilised public spaces and enhance social cohesion and well-being, mainly because of its methodology based on a Light, Quick and Cheap approach to the design of public environments (Project for Public Spaces, 2022).

This temporary methodology to design public spaces is an approach that prioritises community engagement, local identity, and social well-being. By emphasising human-centred design and celebrating cultural diversity, placemaking has the potential

↑ FIG. 10.
The project for Campus Martius in Detroit by PPS. From www.pps.org

to transform public spaces into vibrant and inclusive places that support the health and happiness of citizens.

Project for Public Spaces (PPS) is a non-profit organisation that works with communities, government agencies, and private businesses all over the world to provide planning, design, and educational services aimed at creating accessible, functional, and engaging public spaces for all members of society. PPS believes that public spaces are fundamental to the development of healthy, functional communities, and that the process of creating these spaces is just as important as the end result. They advocate for a community-led approach to public space design, which comprises working with community members, stakeholders, and experts to identify the community's needs and goals and to build a shared vision for the space. The non-profit's most notable accomplishment is the re-qualification of Detroit's Campus Martius. By the time Project for Public Spaces began working at Campus Martius in 1999, it had devolved into little more than an unpleasant traffic island. Project for Public Spaces employed different tools in five different workshops and activities with the community to change this crossroads into what residents now refer to as "Detroit's gathering place." During the summer, the beach is a pleasant and peaceful community meeting spot for employees, tourists, families, and children. At the beach, there are fitness sessions, sandcastle building, live musical performances and plenty of free play in the sun and sand. Today, The park has evolved from empty traffic island to a lively, fun beach with facilities like a seasonal ice rink that keep locals entertained. Campus Martius draws over two million visitors each year, and the surrounding region has attracted 20,000 new employment and more than two billion dollars in real estate investment. Since the city of Detroit entered bankruptcy in 2013, the park has represented its resiliency and regeneration.

Conclusions

improvement of modern public spaces. These spaces have evolved into crucial components of larger, more complex systems that reflect the recent technological, economic, and social transitions of recent decades. Design experts must examine and understand these evolving systems, effectively integrating infrastructure design and re-qualification efforts within the broader context of contemporary society. By addressing these issues, designers can create more sustainable, adaptable, and inclusive public spaces for the benefit of communities.

This short exploration around placemaking defines it as an established and valuable approach for defining temporary solutions within the architecture and urban design field. Although worthy of mentioning in this research, however, finding relevant literature and professional work supporting sustainable and adaptable processes or methodologies was a challenge during the research. Successful cases of placemaking in non-urban contexts were particularly rare and lacked thorough presentation, further emphasizing the methodology's strong connection to the urban environment. This limited availability of comprehensive resources raises questions about the applicability and effectiveness of placemaking beyond densely populated areas. The participatory approach proposed by placemaking, while valuable, may not fully harness the creative potential of people. There is the possibility therefore that it limits their transformative value to a simple consultation process, as illustrated by Sherry Arnstein's *Ladder of Citizen Participation* (Arnstein, 1969) [FIG. 09]. To truly engage communities and empower them as active contributors, a more inclusive and empowering approach to participation is necessary. However, placemaking can be still defined as a powerful starting point to then structure a design process that engage communities from end-to end of a public space project. We should recognise, moreover, that we live in a society that is in a constant state of transformation as a consequence of digital advancement and the sudden changes in the socio-political and economic environment.

Consequently, hence the transformative and future-oriented nature of the design field, continuous development and adaptation is necessary to approach the challenges of designing public spaces with local communities (De Rosa, 2022). In light of these considerations, there is a pressing need in the design field to explore how to structure design processes for the creation and

An S+S approach to co-design spaces →

To do things differently, we need to perceive things differently.

Thackara, 2006

The second chapter of this literature review explore the design theory revolving around potential new approaches to consider when designing public spaces. First and foremost, it is important to contextualise the discussion around the built environment within modern society, and acknowledge the predominance of service and experiences in our life in the XXI century. Spaces are no exempt to the influence of modern networks of relationships, information and services, positioning themselves as a fundamental component in contemporary ecosystem that dictates our daily life. The tangible and intangible dimension collude and combine, requiring designers to shift their perspective as practitioners from the traditional "design of objects" to a more complex but experiential "design of system and processes". Therefore, when including non-designers and generally citizens in the spatial design process, a multidisciplinary design approach must be considered, moving forward from the traditional processes that disciplines such as Spatial Design rely on. For this thesis, the relationship between Spatial Design and Service Design is explored, leveraging the established participatory practices and co-creative methodologies that SD advocates in order to democratize the design process. In the last section of this chapter, co-design is explored as a structured formulation of a co-creative process, and how its application within a Service+Spatial design approach influence the design of spaces.

Beyond public spaces

Places, relationships, services and information

During the research and as reported in the section above on public places' state of the art, it has been established as a given that involving citizens and communities in acts of co-creation when planning and shaping open environments is the key to unlocking new opportunities for the social and economic development of the nearby areas. These practices are becoming increasingly common and setting the standard for approaching social innovation projects. Suppose we ground this reflection through the lenses of our socio-economic and political milieu.
In that case, these places are happening in a moment of time where the "Experience Economy" (Pine & Gilmore, 1998) dictates how we as global citizens experience society. The physical dimension is always connected with the digital and ephemeral one in the process of constant cross-contamination in the act of building new networks between people, places and technology.
Manzini asserts:

These are connected places and communities in which short networks generate and regenerate the local social and economic fabric, while long ones connect those particular places and their resident communities with the rest of the world. Most importantly, they are places and communities that bring variety into the overall ecosystem, helping us to create a resilient planet where we and future generations can live well.
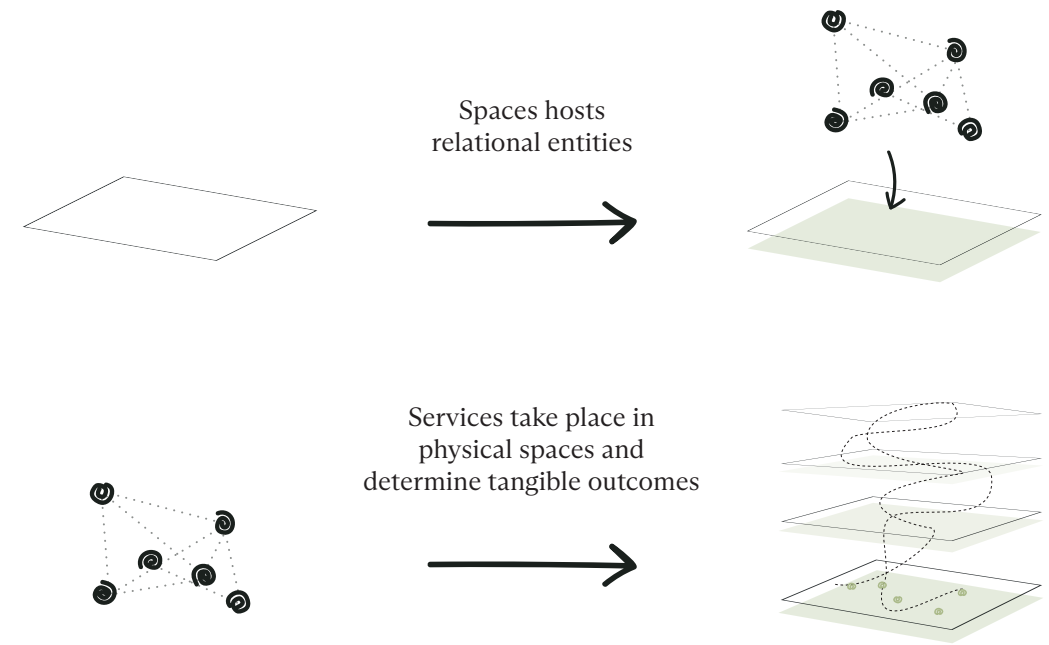
Manzini (2015, p. 45)

The introduction of terms such as network and ecosystem comes back frequently in more recent deliberations around the positioning of public spaces. We are witnessing the transfer of the design of environments in the broader discussion that includes the domain of services, information and interactions, lingering between the digital and physical domains. In her doctoral dissertation, De Rosa uses the term permeable platforms to identify a new perspective on built environments:

spaces that are complex systems and networks where relationships and interactions take place and where services affect the space of places while operating within the space of flows.

De Rosa (2022, p.126)

Referring to the Castells theory, where spaces are the materialisation of social practices organised through a network of information and services, the author denotes a shift today in how we frame physical environments: not a system in themselves, but rather as enablers of service networks. While spaces host relational entities, services happen within said spaces bringing tangible outcomes. This means that when designing public spaces with non-designers, design practitioners need to assess the mentioned design object not as a standalone entity but acknowledge that they exist within a bigger ecosystem, where the physical environment acts as a possible "touchpoint" within a complex and extensive network of people's and community's identities, places, activities, flows and actions (Fassi, 2012). I argue that in this case, spaces can be seen as one of the layers that populate these complex systems, where each entity blends and overlaps each other in a reciprocal act of balancing and influencing that the design practitioner must take into account. Recognising public spaces as complex entities and no longer as "containers of something else" emphasises a crucial turning point. We are not talking about co-creating only spaces anymore, but co-creating opportunities for the conception of relationships and interactions and possible services that benefit the local community. Furthermore, this should take place when speaking about small living contexts such as towns and villages that are not well connected to the bigger national urban fabric, where these ecosystems become the seed for new social and economic opportunities.

Spaces hosts relational entities

Services take place in physical spaces and determine tangible outcomes

Service innovations are reshaping spatial experiences. Spaces are part of the service system to be designed.

De Rosa (2019)

↑ FIG. 11.
Diagram that explains the symbiotic relationship between spaces and services. From De Rosa (2019).

Design practitioners must acknowledge these multifaceted layers and how they affect the active engagement of citizens and communities in the process of place design. To comprehend the intricate relationships and dependencies between multiple entities, such as spaces and services, designers must address the design process with new and alternative tactics. A systemic and holistic understanding should enable them to navigate the complexity of creating environments responsive to the needs, aspirations, and experiences of the people they serve and set the ground for more long-term, sustainable, responsive strategies.

Design for complex systems

Towards transdisciplinarity

In the previous section, we explored how the design of public spaces is undergoing a significant shift in our current societal context. Rather than viewing these spaces as static physical objects, there is a growing recognition of their potential to activate interactions and processes. This perspective introduces a new dimension to the study and communication of design, transforming public spaces into dynamic stages for complex interactions and agonistic scenarios (De Rosa, 2022). A broader understanding of design aligns with a more significant trend in the field. Notable researchers such as Buchanan (2001), Meroni and Sangiorgi (2011), and Muratovski have emphasised that the focus of the design product is shifting away from merely designing objects, visuals, or spaces. Instead, it is increasingly about designing systems, strategies, and experiences. As designers grapple with increasingly complex challenges, the answer seems to lie in transitioning from a "design of objects" to a "design of processes, "it is about designing systems, strategies, and experiences" (Muratovski, 2016, p. 138); this calls for the exploration of new and unconventional approaches to tackle contemporary issues.

This recent positioning in design should serve as a starting point for a transdisciplinary approach that integrates various design disciplines. By mutually supporting and influencing one another, these disciplines can work together to create a more robust and multidisciplinary field, where the approach should be committed to the conceptualisation, configuration, and implementation of meaningful social environments, products, services, systems, and brands (Muratovski, 2010, p. 379). In the context of this thesis, it is essential to highlight the potential for a combined approach between Spatial Design (SpD) and Service Design (SD).
The following section will delve into the contributions of the paper from Davide Fassi, Annalinda De Rosa, and Laura Galluzzo (2018) and De Rosa's doctoral dissertation (2019; 2022), exploring how these disciplines can intersect.

Participatory practices such as co-creation but, most importantly, co-design, which have already gained traction in the creation of services, still need to be fully integrated into the theory and practices of Spatial Design. As a result, Spatial Design could benefit from the well-established discourse in Service Design, leveraging its interdisciplinary foundation (De Rosa, 2022). By embracing this mindset, designers can tap into a wealth of knowledge and expertise from different disciplines. This not only enriches their own practice but also expands the boundaries of design itself: integrating diverse perspectives and approaches opens up new possibilities for creating innovative and meaningful design solutions (De Rosa, 2022).

Note 05.
www.desis.polimi.it

S+S FRAMEWORK: BENEFITS OF A TRANSDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

The combined approach that follows is the result of the work of multiple scholars and researchers within the Design Department of Politecnico di Milano and the DESIS Lab[05] research group, where strategic and systemic approaches are adopted by researchers with a big focus on design for services and spatial design, together with related contributions from strategic design, communication, economics, and so on. Fassi, Galluzzo, and De Rosa (2018) were the first to set the groundwork for an emerging combined opportunity of the two disciplines. They identified and highlighted the common ground and contrasts between the two disciplines, laying the foundations for a hypothetical taxonomy comprising essential aspects of the two subjects. Moreover, they conducted multiple experimentation in the teaching and educational environment to validate their research efforts supported by a gradual shift between multi-, cross-, inter- and transdisciplinary approaches.

During the paper's development, the authors compare the two disciplines through three dimensions to confirm the complementarity of the two's: the environmental, temporal and social dimensions, highlighting how this reflects on their respective design processes. In the next page an adapted representation of the framework presented by Fassi, De Rosa and Galluzzo (2018).

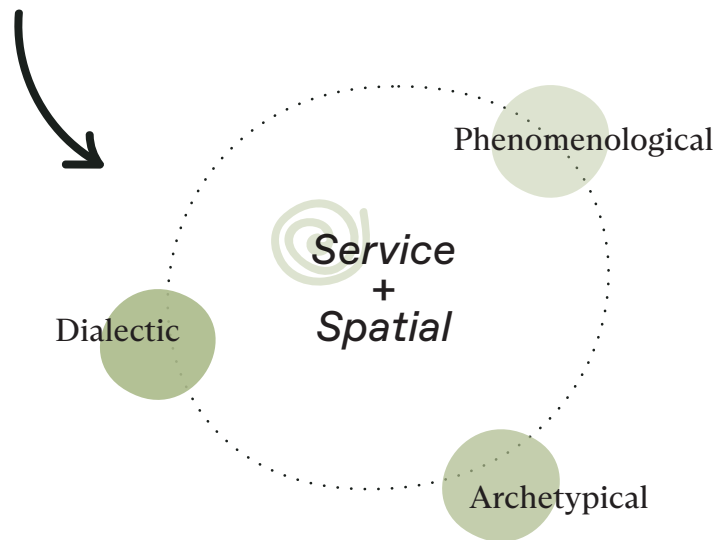|	Spatial Design	Service Design
Environmental → dimension	Dialectical	Unfolded
	Spatial design designs places with the symbolic added component.	Service design designs service evidences with the sequential added component
Temporal → dimension	Abstract	Experiential
	(endless time of the memory) Spatial Design designs places with a timeless component	(limited time of the use) Service Design designs relationships with a defined duration (hic et nunc)
Social → dimension	Symbolic	Relational
	Spatial Design designs social identities through a figurative act	Service Design designs relational entities through an experiential act

Phenomenological

Service
+
Spatial

Dialectic

Archetypical

Spatial Design involves the design of places, emphasising the symbolic and figurative aspects of the environment; it explores the relationships between users and the physical context, fostering a sense of shared ownership and engagement. On the other hand, Service Design deals with the design of service evidence within physical environments, considering the sequential and experiential nature of services and aims to create meaningful interactions between users and services. The reflection concludes by proposing a complimentary dialogue between the two where the dimensions embedded resume in an S+S nature, which, "connecting the dots" throughout the different dimensions, present itself as dialectic – archetypical – phenomenological. Four reported findings the paper exhibits to further frame the connection (Fassi et al. 2018).

→ *Service Design and Spatial Design share the development of the design culture towards a direct and integrated cooperation between disciplines and a balance between socio-cultural and techno-physical environments.*

→ *Adding the Service components to Spatial Design means expanding its systemic view, while Spatial Design contributes to the design of contextualised services.*

→ *With an S+S approach, the service designer receives contributions to the materiality of the relational value of services, and the spatial designer makes contributions to the co-production of the immateriality of spaces considering both the abstract and the sequential timespan.*

→ *The research identifies that an integrated design of all components avoids Spatial Design development being merely a frame for Service Design but being an integrated part of it.*

They believe these disciplines complement each other, offering a systemic approach to design spaces and services. By integrating the design of places and the design of services, Spatial Design can find the much-needed strategic and resilient methods, useful to tackle the complex socio-technical system, expanding the opportunity for value creation in the design of spaces and integrating into it the service soft components (Fassi et al., 2018). The authors state in their conclusion the necessity to explore further the opportunities that this joined practice could

offer. Annalinda De Rosa takes the challenge of expanding the topic in their dissertation by structuring a qualitative comparison between the two disciplines, trying to break the silos between them and focus on going beyond their boundaries. Starting from the framework created with their colleagues, De Rosa (2022) defines in her thesis four indicators in order to connect the dots within her critical work and lay down a first proposal for a transdisciplinary approach between Service and Spatial Design.

→ *The structured methodology of the design process of Service Design can expand the operational capacity of the one of Spatial Design considering the understanding of the common ground they share.*

→ *If spaces are relational phenomena and are permeable platforms offering the material support for social practices that operate through flows, this permeable platform is indissolubly a complex network of relationships and interactions; this exists thanks to an overlapping network of services able to link them and, equally, thanks to spaces that are enablers of the service network.*

→ *Time sequencing and spatial aesthetics should merge in a complementary orientation towards an aesthetics of the relationship, including the spatial dimension and its symbolic values as well as the time of the interaction, engagement and participation. This leads to an integrated design of spaces considering the narration of flows passing through them.*

→ *Co-design practices should enter Spatial Design towards the co-creation of spaces. Since processes of space ownership are constructed by the human action of dwelling and spaces are enactive of interaction, spaces enter with full rights in the reflection of design and democracy through agonism and infrastructuring notions.*

From this synthetic proposals it should rise clearly the benefits of a transdisciplinary approach between the two design fields. The author, through her work, also emphasise the need for a transdisciplinary approach, over others such multi- or inter-disciplinary, pinpointing the necessity to tackle the design matter symbiotically, without siloing and delegating specific design phases or task to a single discipline but working together through a borderless vision. In this way, when designing, the tangible and intangible dimensions are designed together and as a synergy.

The effort of De Rosa in presenting these opportunities of contact between the discipline of Spatial and Service Design in their PhD and relative publications (2019; 2022) has been an enormous inspiration and point of reference for my argumentation. As the author proceeds to recognise in the last indicator, the Spatial design discipline has covered the new outlining of public spaces as components of complex systems in its theories but not in its processes, methodologies and practices, hence not partaking in the structuring of co-design practices as a standard embedded methodology in itself. I argue that more efforts should be put into the implementation of said co-design activities in the overall Spatial Design process, leveraging the consolidated methodological discourse in Service Design built through a human-centred perspective in its theoretical development. Spatial design should aim to involve users – in the case of this thesis, citizens and communities, to be precise – in collaborative actions that go beyond the regular consultation but empower citizens and give them the means to actively shape their future through targeted actions, from the very beginning of the process till the end and beyond. Therefore, new approaches and tools have become necessary in the design process (De Rosa & Sasso, 2022). By thoroughly examining this subject matter, the next sub-chapter aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the foundational principles and concepts associated with co-design, while also emphasising its intrinsic worth as a transformative methodology within the realm of Spatial Design.

From participation to collaboration

As previously stated, co-design practises, which are common in the SD discourse and design process, should enter Spatial Design in order to co-create spaces for active engagement and empowerment of citizens and communities, while also pursuing an integrated approach that takes into account when designing complex societal systems comprised of relationships, spaces, services, and information.

Following the work of Sanders and Stappers in framing the topic (2008), if co-creation is defined as any act of collective creativity — i.e., creativity shared by two or more people, thus an expansive term that spans multiple domains — co-design should be defined as collective creativity that spans throughout the entire design process. A more specific formulation of co-creation within the design industry (Selloni, 2017), in which the authors note to explain that "the collective" refers to the creativity of designers and non-designers working together in design development (Sanders & Stappers, 2008). The authors continue to expose the origins of co-design practise, connecting it to the broader realm of participatory approaches. Co-design is an evolution of user-centred design, which is common in American design tradition and sees the user as a "subject" to be studied, and Scandinavian participatory design, which sees the user as a "partner" or "expert of their experience" (Sanders & Stappers, 2008, p.12).

The new term co-design is a further development of Participatory Design in which the user not only informs the designer, but also collaborates with the designer. Doing co-design therefore means going from observing the user (user-centred design), to engaging the user (participatory design), to collaborating with the user (co-design).

Jørgensen, Lindegaard, and Schultz (2011)

What is central in this is the progression from said participatory practices towards an approach in which the user not only informs the designer but also collaborates with the designer. In co-design contexts, collaboration should not be intended as only exchange of thoughts, but how diverse information, values, goals, and abilities are brought together to impact design outcomes. (Ostrom, 1996; Sanders & Stappers, 2008) What is central to co-design, in the end, is the process itself – not the final results – because it inspires the design team to develop concepts and innovations, including the design of tools to ensure the continuation of such co-design activities once the designer is no longer present (Calvo & De Rosa, 2017). Consequently, the methodology has received particular attention in both private and public sectors due to the increase in complexity that designers face when dealing with modern society's issues. To overcome these challenges, designers must bring multiple voices and contributions within the design process (Meroni et al., 2018): the design professional can benefit from interacting with other stakeholders, making co-designing with multiple actors a requirement and an opportunity. One of the main opportunities stands in inviting stakeholders in acts of collaboration throughout the whole design process, from the first exploration and mapping of needs to the finished prototypes of the object or system designed.

By participating actively from end to end of the process, users can influence the design outcomes, opposite to what happens in a traditional design process (Sanders, 2011). Selloni (2017) provides a perspective on the engagement of users/citizens in the design process in its totality. It starts from the positioning provided by Sanders and Stappers, where the authors remark on the usefulness of co-design predominantly in the "front-end" or "pre-design" phase, meaning the step of exploration of multiple possibilities to find inspiration for the later-designed output/object. Selloni here adds that other than the crucial role in the exploration and ideation phase, co-design is also gaining particular traction in the moment of deliberation.

Furthermore, co-design should also support the decision-making process that is the 'deliberation phase', in which several factors are considered in order to best serve the public interest.
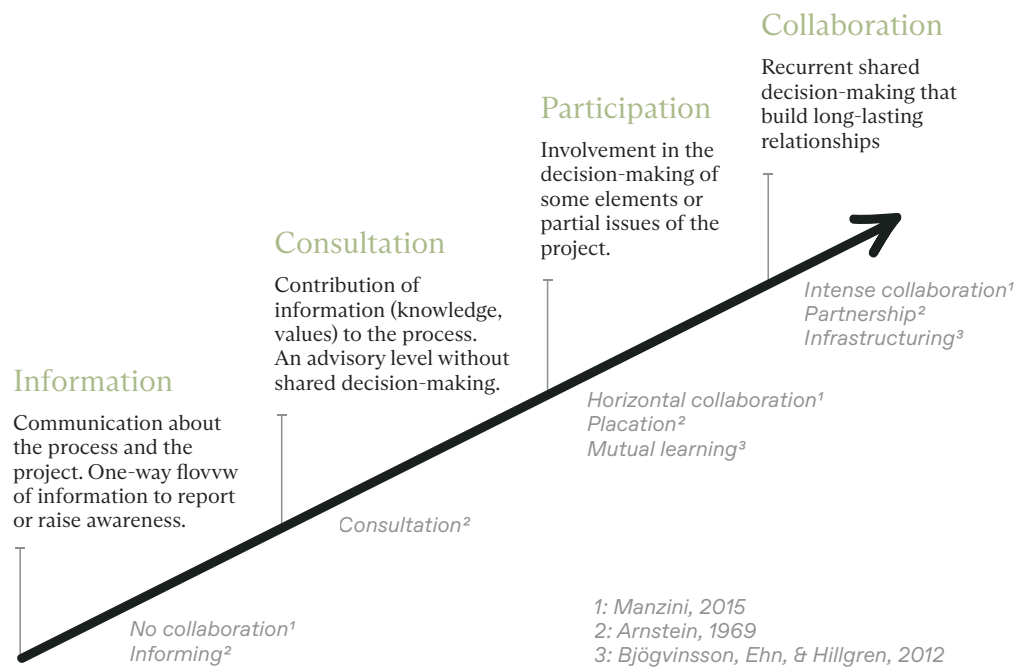
Selloni (2017, p. 51)

The co-design approaches can shift the perception of design from being elitist, alienating, and something that happens to people, to being accessible, emotive and something that people can feel ownership towards. Once important aspects of co-design are to combat wilful ignorance by bringing all the stakeholders of a project into the process from the start.

Egan & Marlow (2013, p.51)

In this way, co-design becomes a embodiment of democratic participation, a precondition to the co-production of these complex systems that populate contemporary society. Speaking of participation, Gaete Cruz offers a revisited version of Arnstein's Ladder that reconsider it in a modern lens and re-frame it to conceptualise also co-design. This revisited version [FIG. 13] defines four levels of collaboration, taking away both extremes of Arnstein's version, "manipulation" and "therapy" on the lower end and "citizen control" and "delegated power on the higher, labelling them as not forms of collaboration and not feasible when designing public spaces.

↓ FIG. 13.
A proposal for a new Ladder of Collaboration. Adapted from Gaete Cruz et al. (2022).

Collaboration

Recurrent shared decision-making that build long-lasting relationships

Participation

Involvement in the decision-making of some elements or partial issues of the project.

Consultation

Contribution of information (knowledge, values) to the process. An advisory level without shared decision-making.

Information

Communication about the process and the project. One-way flovvw of information to report or raise awareness.

Intense collaboration¹
Partnership²
Infrastructuring³

Horizontal collaboration¹
Placation²
Mutual learning³

Consultation²

No collaboration¹
Informing²

1: Manzini, 2015
2: Arnstein, 1969
3: Bjögvinsson, Ehn, & Hillgren, 2012

If we translate this within the space design discourse, it is clear that co-design processes can benefit public space by promoting collaboration and context-specific designs (Gaete Cruz et al., 2021). Looking at the complex nature of contemporary public spaces, it seems almost an impelling necessity in order to stimulate the dialogue between people and develop scenarios that facilitate multiple experiential activities where these spaces become meaningful and effective. An exclusively top-down action in public space would lead to new spaces, while dialectical and reflexive approaches encourage the fulfilment of its existing potentialities (Fassi et al., 2021). The inclusions and active participation of the end-user bring immense contribution and effect on a given environment, producing, through the creativity expressed during the co-design activities, an effective activation of the space that reflects its materiality and implicit characteristics and interacts with its physical features. There is an emotional component and transformational effect that this approach can have, which leads to spaces that have more impact and that help strengthen communities. Through this process, the space develops a purposeful narrative that is shaped and evolved by its users (Egan & Marlow, 2013). Indeed, when talking about spaces, we can no longer start co-designing them only by looking at their aestheticism, but it is necessary to consider the system of relationships and flows between multiple entities: people, spaces, information, services etc., reflecting exhaustively people's and communities' identities. This will allow solutions to be more focused on the user needs and exclude solutions that are not sustainable for the specific spatial context (Sanders & Westerlund, 2011). De Rosa, in one of the latest publications for the SMOTIES projects, reiterates this concept applying it to the context of small and remote areas.

A design-driven process must take into consideration the strong social fabric and the ancestral knowledge embedded in these territories to enter in dialogue with the local communities, to engage them towards a transformative and inclusive regeneration of their tangible and intangible heritage.

Human Cities (2022a, p. 75)

Integrating co-design in Spatial Design processes opens new avenues for engaging with stakeholders and end-users, leveraging collaboration and confrontation simultaneously. By incorporating co-design practices, Spatial Design can enhance the quality and effectiveness of spaces, ensuring they align with the desires and requirements of the people who use them and creating the rightful spaces for dialogue between multiple actors and communities towards a common good It encourages active involvement in the design process, enabling a deeper understanding of their needs, aspirations, and preferences; it also becomes a vehicle to engage citizenship towards the transformation of our environment (Calvo & De Rosa, 2017).

CO-DESIGN AND AGONISM

Co-design spaces also mean allowing a multitude of voices to dialogue together. The conflicts emerging between various actors or the presence of multiple communities at once, the struggle in aligning them towards a common interest for the space or even finding the right partners are unquestionably challenges to consider when starting a co-design process (Selloni, 2017). Nevertheless, at the same time, co-design (and co-creation holistically) should be recognised as, Manzini states:

A complex, contradictory, sometimes antagonistic process, in which different stakeholders (design experts included) bring their specific skills and their culture. It is a social conversation in which everybody is allowed to bring ideas and take action, even though these ideas and actions could sometimes generate problems and tensions.

Manzini (2016, p.58)

Chantal Mouffe proposes the emerging topic of agonism, which emphasises the importance of acknowledging and embracing conflicts and differences within society rather than seeking to eliminate or suppress them. According to Mouffe, agonistic spaces are characterised by a deliberate acknowledgement and acceptance of the antagonisms inherent in society (Mouffe, 2000). Rather than seeking to eliminate or

suppress these conflicts, agonistic spaces provide a platform for open dialogue, debate, and contestation. In such spaces, individuals and groups with divergent perspectives are encouraged to engage in passionate and critical exchanges, allowing new ideas and alternative viewpoints to emerge. By fostering an environment that values disagreement and encourages the expression of conflicting opinions, agonistic spaces challenge the dominant consensus and promote a more vibrant and democratic public sphere. Agonism, in this sense, becomes a fundamental step to legitimise the spatial transformation process. Translating it into the context of this thesis, the aim of spatial design interventions using an agonistic approach would be to create the best possible conditions for agonistic debates about the development of public spaces by including the voices of a variety of actors all design and decision making phases (Munthe-Kaas, 2015).

The democratisation of the design process helps turn "antagonism into agonism" (Björgvinsson et al., 2010, p. 48) and is fundamental in enhancing a sense of shared ownership, engagement and legitimisation of the process of transformation of a given space.

Calvo & De Rosa (2017, p. S1719)

Here stands the agonistic nature of co-design, which can further be expressed in the space and the design process linked to it. The co-design activity becomes the stage for the controversies and the discussion to happen, an arena for debate and proposals where the diversity of participants can be combined and channelled in a strategic spatial approach that benefits the community in its entirety. A designer's role in this process is to mediate among different interests, thus, again, amplifying individual interests into public interests by using their (the designer's) specific competencies (Selloni, 2017).

Conclusions

The understanding and design of public spaces have evolved beyond the traditional notion of static physical objects. They are now recognized as dynamic stages for complex interactions and processes, where the involvement of citizens and communities in co-creation plays a crucial role. These permeable platforms comprise a broader ecosystem that includes services, information, and interactions, bridging the digital and physical domains. Design practitioners must acknowledge the multidimensional nature of these spaces and their impact on citizen engagement. They must consider the design process within a more extensive network of people, places, activities, and actions.

The transition from a "design of objects" to a "design of systems, strategies, and experiences" (Muratovski, 2016) marks a significant trend in the field. This shift calls for a transdisciplinary approach that integrates various design disciplines. In particular, the combination of Spatial Design and Service Design offers a systemic perspective for designing spaces and services. Designers can create innovative and meaningful solutions by embracing a collaborative mindset and integrating diverse perspectives. Co-design practices, rooted in the Service Design discourse, should be incorporated into Spatial Design processes. By adopting co-design methodologies, designers can tap into users' collective creativity and expertise, leading to more inclusive and responsive design outcomes. Embracing this collaborative mindset contradicts the more traditional perspective of the designer as an "expert" that still prevails in the business world (Sanders & Stappers, 2008). When leveraging co-creativity, it is required to consider everyone as creative, even when non-designers do not label themselves as creative and act accordingly. This process requires everyone to be creative, supporting a process where the roles get mixed up. The user takes the challenges of becoming the player of co-creative roles, even though not all people are reaching the status of "co-designer", mainly because of the levels of expertise and the active contribution they can

bring in. In any case, users (or citizens in this case) bring their knowledge and experiences throughout the design process. In contrast, design professionals instead take the challenge of becoming the "facilitator", providing the right tools and strategies and guiding users in expressing their unleashed creativity (Selloni, 2017; Manzini, 2015). The figure of the designer, although, remains essential for the specific skills they can bring in solving challenges, mediating or interpreting the contribution of the non-designers.

In conclusion, a transdisciplinary approach, informed by co-design practices, holds the potential to transform the design of public spaces. It allows for a holistic understanding of the relationships between spaces, services, and people, fostering long-term, sustainable, and responsive strategies. By breaking down disciplinary boundaries and embracing collaborative practices, designers can create environments that genuinely serve the needs, aspirations, and experiences of the communities they are designed for.

Grounding →
the research

Mapping case studies

The collection of case studies reported aims to showcase different success stories of communities actively engaged in creating or re-qualifying public spaces. For the sake of availability, different types of public spaces and urban contexts were considered, analysing their processes, approaches, and methodologies to citizens' participation to find patterns and opportunities for replicability that could be experimented with in the SMOTIES project co-design activities. The case studies show new ways of (re)interpreting public spaces through creative efforts. Mostly, these initiatives explore the intertwining of themes such as participatory design, civic activation, cultural decentralisation, social innovation, and territorial regeneration, focusing on co-design and citizens' co-management of the environments. In some cases, the project also includes active engagement of citizens in acts of co-production after the design phase is over and the planning and setup of future collaborative services managed by the communities in the regenerated spaces.

Sixteen case studies were analysed and compared with each other on multiple parameters [Table 01]: the level of participation of citizens or the community in the spatial design process and decision-making; the design objective focus, whether the project tackled only the design of a space or already included an S+S or systemic approach; the type of process, as if it was design-driven (structured) or not (unstructured); who initiated the project, between public administrations or municipalities, private entities of the third sectors, educational institutions, design entities, or the citizen and local communities. This initial overview emphasised significant differences in how designers or creatives deal with civic participation and engaging individuals and whole communities in design activities. The analysis proceeded with a delve into the case studies on two parameters that influenced this research thesis. The case studies were mapped on a 2×2 matrix [Fig. 14] defined by two axes; the horizontal axis dealt with the design

objective, distributing the initiatives from the ones who favoured a "space-only" approach to the project that infrastructure their design process with an S+S mindset and opted to confront the design of the tangible and intangible synergically. The vertical axis instead mapped the level of participation of citizens within the design process, starting from the initiatives that showed what can be defined, following the participation model defined by Gaete Cruz (2022) based on the Arnstein Ladder of Citizen Participation [Fig. 13], as consultation or limited participation; on the opposite polarity instead are placed cases that lie onto the "Collaboration" extremity, where it is possible to see active participation of citizens throughout the whole co-design process, from initial analysis to final acts of decision-making, and even more some of the times with involvement in co-production and co-management.

Case studies database

#	Name	Year	Location	Participation level	Design objective	Starter entity	Design process?
1	Casa de Quarteirao (SMOTIES)	2016 - on	Ponta Delgada - Azores, Portugal	Participation	Space only	Citizens	-
2	The Village Garden (SMOTIES)	2018 - on	Smlednik, Slovenia	Collaboration	Space only	Citizens	No
3	Beeozonam Community hub	2020 - on	Torino, Italy	Collaboration	Space to services	Third sector + Municipality	No
4	Dorfkernerneuerung Nassereith	2021-2022	Nassereith, Austria	Participation	Space only	Design entity + Municipality	Yes
5	La Foresta - Accademia di comunità	2017 - on	Rovereto (TN), Italy	Collaboration	S+S approach	Third sector + Municipality	Yes
6	Giardini Condivisi	2012 - on	Milano, Italy	Collaboration	Space only	Municipality	No
7	BelMondo	2019	Belmonte Calabro (CO), Italy	Participation	Space to services	Third sector	-
8	Civico Civico	2020	Riesi (CN), Italy	Consultation	Space to services	Design entity + Third sector	No
9	CampUS	2014 - 2016	Milano, Italy	Participation	Space only	Third sector + University	Yes
10	SuperNòva XYZ	2020	Novara, Italy	Collaboration	S+S approach	Third sector	-
11	Le Case di QUArtiere	2019 - 2021	Reggio Emilia, Italy	Participation	S+S approach	Third sector + Citizens	Yes
12	Beyond the Castle	2012	Lancaster, England	Collaboration	Space only	Municipality + University	Yes
13	Le Serre dei Giardini	2013 - on	Bologna, Italy	Participation	S+S approach	Third sector	-
14	Laboratorio di Quartiere Savena	2019	Bologna, Italy	Information	Space to services	Third sector + Municipality	Yes
15	Rigenera Lab - Laboratori Urbani	-	Palo del Colle (BA), Italy	Collaboration	Space to services	Citizens + Municipality	No
16	Luoghi Comuni	2018 - on	Puglia, Italy	Collaboration	Space to services	Citizens	No

Co-design process and/or
co-management

(active and costant engagement in
decison making process)

campUS

La Foresta

The Village
Garden
(SMOTIES)

Laboratorio
Urbano Savena

Beeozonam

Le case di
QUArtiere

Giardini
Condivisi

Rigenera
Lab

Luoghi
Comuni

SuperNòva
XYZ 2020

Beyond the
Castle Lancaster

Design
of spaces ·········· Design objective ····· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
Design of
systems
(S+S)

Civico
Civico

Apulia

Citizen participation

Nasseireith

BelMondo
Experience

Casa de
Quarteirao
(SMOTIES)

Le Serre dei
Giardini Margherita

Consultation or
limited participation

This visual mapping exercise supported the selection of the six case studies presented on the following pages.
The selection took place by prioritising cases in the upper section of the matrix (continuous co-design) and showcasing a thorough explanation of their design processes to gather inspiration and successful examples for the co-design activities in Albugnano. The presence of an S+S approach also became an influencing factor, as most of the selected case studies are placed in the upper right quadrant. However, it was interesting to analyse also how the design approach shifted and evolved from a project with "spaces that enable services" to the ones that prioritise the systemic design of services and spaces. The case studies listed, indeed, follow a left-to-right order based on the horizontal axis.

↑ FIG. 14.
2×2 Matrix that map the case studies. Filled in green the ones selected.

01 / Laboratori di Quartiere

02 / campUS

03 / Patti di collaborazione - Beeozonam

04 / La Foresta - Accademia di comunità

05 / Le case di QUArtiere

06 / XYZ 2020 - SuperNòva

01 / Laboratori di Quartiere

Third co-design session of
FIU with the students about
the space functions.
From fiu.it

fondazioneinnovazioneurbana.it
comune.bologna.it
osservatoriopartecipazione.it

WHEN / 2019

WHERE / Quartiere Savena, Bologna - Italy

WHO / Fondazione Innovazione Urbana

Fondazione Innovazione Urbana (FIU) is a multidisciplinary research, development, co-production, and communication institution for urban transformations aimed at envisioning Bologna's future. FIU designs, manages, facilitates, and communicates urban transformation processes by enhancing knowledge, methodologies, and people, developing shared paths of urban space and service construction, and activating places and moments of public debate, co-design, co-production, and enabling dialogue between citizens, institutions, associations, movements, and representatives of the economic, social and cultural world.

WHAT / Since 2017, the Foundation has been coordinating Laboratori di Quartiere, democratic and accessible spaces for discussion and decision-making that involve citizens and communities in different neighbourhoods in the city of Bologna, promoting networking and experimenting with a new approach to public policy based on proximity. The goal is to activate stable processes of listening, dialogue, and collaboration to bring out priorities, needs, directions and proposals, imagining shared solutions and linking, year by year and neighbourhood by neighbourhood, policies, resources and decisions that result from the direct engagement of citizens and communities in the territory. One of the most recently concluded projects is the "Laboratorio ex Centro Pasti", a series of co-design activities was carried out to envision future opportunities for a newly open place in the Savena neighbourhood. After an initial confrontation between the Municipality and the community, the goal was to make the abandoned meal centre an open place where citizens and the community could experiment with new forms of aggregation, dedicated in particular to children and parents and reference points for other target groups such as teenagers, elders and migrants.

HOW / The Foundation coordinated the participatory process and enabled the involvement of citizens and various stakeholders from neighbouring areas. The path included three meetings with citizens and three meetings with children and young people from elementary and junior high schools in the area.

→ *WC01. First meeting with citizens:* The workshop hosted 87 participants. During the meeting, a brainstorming method was adopted, during which participants were asked to define needs and visions affecting the object of the intervention, to outline possible scenarios on the uses and functions of the building and possible synergies between citizens and organised groups gravitating around the selected area.

→ *WC02. Second meeting with citizens:* 60 participants. The results of the previous meeting were presented to the participants and used as a future manifesto to orient the co-design process. Continuing with a discussion phase that saw citizens divide into four working tables to develop and decline the visions and proposals in terms of activities and equipment, allowing for a more detailed definition of the type of space needed to make them feasible. The ideas were then shared in plenary and prioritised through an open debate.

→ *WS01/WS02/WS03. Three meetings with students:* First, discussion around the definition of "community space," and later developed it in more depth in a brainstorming phase. After introducing the co-design practice, the students were invited to share their perceived needs in the area and the activities they thought could be proposed. Facilitators from FIU were responsible for clustering the ideas, on sticky notes, on a master plan of the area. In the last meeting, the students carried out a collective analysis of the pros and cons of the intervention area and later selected the possible future functions of the building and mapped them on the masterplan.

→ *WC03. Third meeting with citizens (and students):* Presentation of the results of the co-design session with everyone. Starting from a shared vision of the process, the participants were divided into four tables to detail the functional priorities of the building. The selected activities were translated into the space on floor plans. Four possible configurations were defined for the spaces of the new building that emphasised the functional requirements defined in the other sessions.

WHY / Throughout the whole project, common denominators emerged among the new visions, such as, for instance, multi-functionality, modularity and flexibility of environments, the need for workshop spaces, the direct involvement of adolescents and young people in the design of activities, environmental and social sustainability, and attention to issues of intergenerationality. The community's efforts in actively participating and collaborating during the co-design activities resulted in the conception of a multi-purpose space dedicated to childhood, adolescence, culture and sociality. Even though it was not included entirely in the design process, the community started creating proposals for collaborative services to populate the space. The space, therefore, became an activator for future possibilities and practices of co-management and collaboration between citizens and the public administration. In a context where about one-third of the population is over seventy,

defining needs and visions with target groups of different ages highlighted the necessity for intergenerational collaboration in the area. In particular, the participatory process with the schools was able to stimulate the children to share ideas about the needs of the neighbourhood (an area that they live in at different times of the day) and to bring within the co-design process of the former centre also the point of view of the younger actors of the neighbourhood.

→ FIG. 16.
FIU presenting the co-design results in the third meeting with the citizens. From fiu.it
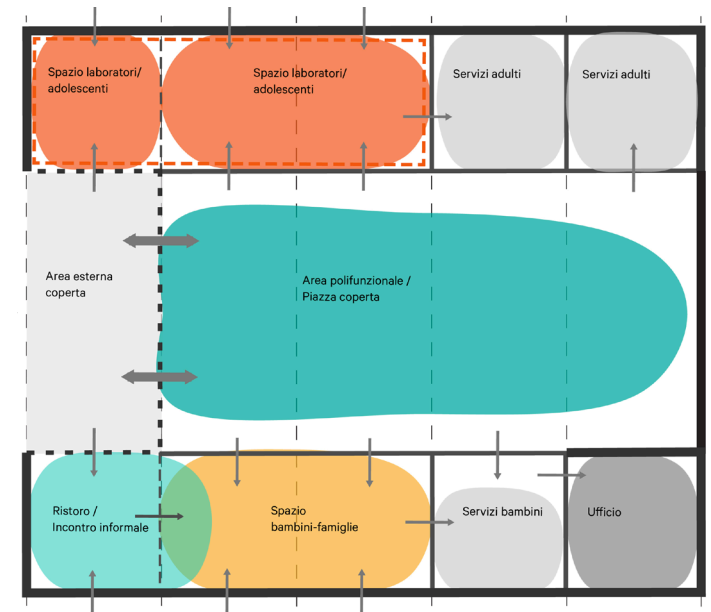
→ FIG. 17.
The final masterplan of the community hub in Quartiere Savena resulted from the six co-design sessions. From fiu.it

02 / campUS

WHEN / October 2014 - October 2016

WHERE / Quartiere Bovisasca, Milan - Italy

WHO / Politecnico di Milano & 9×9 - Idee in rete

campUS—Incubation and Implementation of Social Practices is a research programme held by the Design Department of Politecnico di Milano and funded by the 2014 Polisocial Award as a potential incubator for social, locally scalable practices.
The research-action project specifically targeted NEETs (young people not in education, employment, or training) and the over-65s, allowing them to acquire skills and become involved in actions designed to promote intergenerational dialogue. The general objective was to establish a more structured way of developing design for social innovation projects by combining the skills and competencies of the researchers and students, spaces on the

← FIG. 18.
Co-designing the layout of
the garden in Bovisasca.
From Bellè (2015).

progettocampus.it
desispolimi.it
dipartimentodesignpolimi.it

campus, and a network of local associations and informal groups (Galluzzo, 2020; Fassi, 2016). The project stems from the need to set up some previous initiatives (i.e. Coltivando—the Social Garden of the Politecnico, Bovisa's Saturday, Plug Social TV, Immagina Milano, etc.) which, in the three years before and during the project, have put into practice the theme of the integration of skills and resources that belonged to Politecnico di Milano and initiatives, skills and needs of citizenship.

Note 06.
A previous project from Polimi that inspired campUS.

WHAT / What: Starting from the successful experience of the Coltivando[06] project, one of the campUS work streams regarded the development of shared urban agriculture activities in the neighbourhood surrounding the university campus.
The project involved the co-design and co-creation of shared community gardens with various neighbourhood communities. The first area selected by the project was a former green area in Bovisasca and assigned to a local association (9×9 – Idee in rete) via the Coltivami[07] initiative, but at the time abandoned and used as a landfill. Before starting any co-design processes, some activities took place to define the working group and community of interest. The residents of Bovisasca have been defined as the main participants: they all presented impatience to act immediately, and deep knowledge and experience of places in the neighbourhood. Despite some initial mistrust, the co-design process has made several group members intensely interested and actively involved.

Note 07.
An initiative from Comune di Milano for the activation of shared gardens in the city.

HOW / Between December 2014 and May 2015, a series of 6 co-design workshops were held involving the residents, the association and the campUS team. Each workshop was propaedeutic to tackle two challenges: the "software", meaning designing the intangible spatial value and creating community building, and later the "hardware", i.e., the physical configuration and related spatial infrastructures.

→ *WS1. What is a community garden?:* The first gathering included an initial presentation of the campUS project and an introduction to the topic through case studies and relevant experiences. Afterwards, a brainstorming starting with three central questions: what would you bring to the shared garden, what would you like to find and what don't you want.

→ *WS2. Manifesto and Rules:* Leveraging the brainstorming results of the first meeting, the meeting unrolled through a ballot voting session to define the garden manifesto. Short debates around the individual point defined the session to allow dialogue between the participants and create collectiveness and democracy.

→ *WS3. Co-design Layout:* After presenting the 20 rules outlined after the second workshop, the objective was to achieve a draft layout for the shared garden area, not the individual gardens, using a scale model as a boundary object to showcase and discuss how to place each activity and section. Additional plans were given to each gardener to support debate and clarity when discussing.

→ *WS4. Garden Fence, WS5. Selection of crops, and WS6. Preparation of the soil growing* were instead three sessions focused on the physical preparation and development of the garden together with the community.

WHY / The story of this co-design experience shows that the objective of each is not only in the improvement of urban space, nor even in the production of vegetables from the garden, but rather the construction of social groups that recognise themselves in a space, an activity, a service, which they take care of and identify with (Fassi, 2016). The first six months were spent developing a solid relationship between the research team and the future gardeners' community, supporting the sharing of design skills with the participants and putting the designer in the position of mediator or facilitator rather than focusing on the object itself.
After each workshop, the research team collected feedback on the activities to adjust for the next activities and to define a better set of tools to co-design.

IMPACT / The most notable overall result of the campUS initiative is the establishment of a well-established partnership of interchange and collaboration between the university and its surroundings. In the described case, the initial round of successful co-design workshops for the Bovisasca community resulted in new initiatives involving three communities in the neighbourhood. The places in these projects became real laboratories for experimentation and prototyping of social practices, transforming at the same

→ FIG. 19.
Co-designing the community garden's manifesto. From Bellè (2015).

the neighbourhood and its residents. In this way, a collaborative system has been triggered that can evolve and support itself thanks to the good practices acquired by the community (Galluzzo, 2020). The project itself concluded in 2016, but its legacy is still thriving and relevant for the more extensive Bovisa community.

Ø3 / Beeozonam Community Hub

← FIG. 20.
The re-qualified central courtyard.
From beeozonam.com

labsus.org
beeozonam.com
labsus-beeozonam.org

which can also include informal groups, committees, inhabitants of a neighbourhood, and bottom-up strategy, is the main feature that makes this instrument different and more advantageous than other better-known instruments typically relied on by public administrations. The case presented below is the Beeozanam community hub in Torino.

WHAT / The Patto di Collaborazione for the Beeozanam hub was established as part of the European Co-city project, whose funds have enabled the creation of numerous agreements in the city. At the state of the art, the former factory already hosted different activities and services but still had multiple spaces in a semi-abandoned state. The establishment of the pact allowed the birth of Beeozanam Community Hub in them: "an open place where socio-cultural, educational and productive activities coexist and are supported," as the text of the agreement states. Il Patto di Collaborazione, which recognized this building as a common good, made it possible to regenerate a part of it and put several subjects around a table to think about what such a space could contain in that context.

HOW / The spaces of the community hub are vast, and management should not be taken for granted or perceived as easy: ensuring its sustainability requires a design and management effort that is currently possible only because of the activation of ad hoc professional figures and secondary association within the pact. Beeozanam, as it is conceived as an open place, sees not only the signatory entities present and protagonists but also other realities that have approached and begun to co-design and experience the remaining spaces over time.
Indeed, besides the spatial re-qualification and cultural activities created through the pact, another important entity generated from the hub's need to establish a more robust relationship with its

WHEN / 2020 - ongoing

WHERE / Torino – Italy

WHO / Labsus, Laboratorio per la Sussidiarietà

Labsus is a social enterprise that promotes initiatives and services related to activating civic participation projects that support the potential of active citizens, basing its mission on the "principle of horizontal subsidiarity". The primary resource that Labsus offers is *Patti di Collaborazione*, an agreement through which one or more active citizens and a public entity define the terms of collaboration for the care of tangible and intangible common goods. One of the main peculiarities of the Patti di Collaborazione lies in its ability to involve subjects, including individuals, generally distant from traditional associative networks, primarily interested in the actions of caring for a common good. The high rate of informality,

surroundings is La Portineria di Quartiere.
Within this entity, residents or anyone else passing through can turn to ask for or offer help, to find informal connections or to propose something for the neighbourhood. Thus, thanks to the activity carried out by la Portineria and in addition to offering leisure and recreational activities, Beeozanam is carrying out activities for networking and co-designing services with the neighbourhood, moving out of the meaning of only beneficiary of the benefits of the agreement.

WHY /   In this case, the pact becomes the instrument that regulates the relationship between associations and the public administration, and the object is the care of the space and the use project; La Portineria facilitates the involvement of the inhabitants in the co-design of activities, ensuring the participatory and open nature of the space in the day-to-day life. These tools travel on different levels and work in complementary ways for the time being, but they could formally complement each other by putting the two levels in direct dialogue. With said premises, Beeozonam reaches new levels of civic engagement and becomes a civic presidium. Developing strategies that can establish (and maintain) a strong relationship with the communities that inhabit them and consider those who frequent and traverse the space not only as users of the proposed activities or beneficiaries of the services provided but as potential allies with whom to forge unprecedented collaborations. The hub today defines itself as a space for plurality - a hybrid space - between production and services, open to citizen participation in use and management, designed to build itself, leveraging the short networks of neighbouring neighbourhoods and grow, enhancing the echo of long citizen networks, nationally and internationally.

↑ FIG. 21.
A meeting of La Portineria di Quartiere held on the rooftop of the hub.
From beeozonam.com.

↑ FIG. 22.
One of the hub rooms used for a fashion sustainability workshop.
From beeozonam.com.

04 / La Foresta - Accademia di comunità

WHEN / 2017 - ongoing

WHERE / Rovereto (TN) - Italy

WHO / Architutti, Brave New Alps, Centrifuga, Dolomit

Brave New Alps produces design projects that engage people in discussing and rethinking social, political and environmental issues, combining design research methods with radical pedagogy, feral approaches to community economies and lots of DIY making and organising. By inhabiting the spatial and temporal dimensions relevant to a project and interacting with a range of professionals, the research group is able to analyse the social, political, physical, and economic components that characterise the environment in which their work fits.

← FIG. 23.
La Foresta community in front of the newly renewed spaces in the Rovereto train station. From laforesta.net

laforesta.net
bravenewalps.com
labsus.org

WHAT / La Foresta is a new emerging common good growing in a regenerated space in the North wing of the Rovereto train station. Born in 2017, the Forest is also an open and heterogeneous horizontal network that includes public administration, third-sector entities, informal groups and individuals: a community constituted by a mixed-type association with which all individuals can be associated. The participants gather every two weeks in La Fucina, a socio-critical facilitated horizontal public assembly, which serves as the main decision-making body on the direction the Forest takes to reach a consensus more efficiently, developing ideas together and carrying out a shared project vision.
Some of the projects hosted today in La Foresta are: Comunità Frizzante, a local production of sparkly beverages; Eco Lab, manual, cultural, horticultural and food processing activities based on a convivial and co-created approach; Forno Vagabondo, an itinerant social oven; Fucina Museo, a co-design initiative to rethink some of the exposition rooms in the city museum; and many others. The projects conceived and hosted in the spaces of La Foresta all follow its founding principles: the need to create spaces for community, comparison, other sociality and mutual aid to contribute to the construction of a new type of community welfare;the need to experiment collectively, making good use of the forces and resources available; the desire to create participatory learning situations, the exchange of knowledge and skills, to do in common, involving groups of different origins, generations and social backgrounds; the will to actively involve people in the initiatives, enhancing everyone's vocations.

HOW / To do so, the community, starting from the expertise of Brave New Alps in social design and co-design processes, partnered with the Municipality of Rovereto and the Local railing system to renovate the abandoned north wing of the city train station.
Thus, in October 2018, an open co-design process began with the active participation of both the municipality and all those who have expressed interest in the project, which will lead to a definition

of the space both from a management point of view and of the activities and functionalities that will be hosted within it. The concept around which the participants worked is to achieve an open, inclusive and sustainable common good where it is possible to experiment, both on a practical and theoretical level, with a new way of doing community. The space in the train station, renovated by the Municipality of Rovereto and set up in self-construction by the whole community, was officially inaugurated in November 2021 and is now hosting multiple inner services and activities, but also lots of external entities that leverage La Foresta spaces and existing network. During the co-design processes, a system of fifteen shared values was also defined to drive its action plan, still keeping a state of dynamism in the making. The network operates, therefore, in a logic of continuous co-design and co-management, desiring to remain in a state of "perpetual beta" or to carry forward an idea of endless experimentation, reflection and collective evaluation to create an always evolving place.

WHY /   La Foresta can be defined, at the same time, as a co-designed and co-design space, in which the individual learns to form a community and promotes active citizenship through doing things together, mutual support and awareness of current issues, and disseminating environmental, social, cultural and economic sustainability. The project is an intellectual asset of collective and inclusive use: no one can appropriate it, not even pro-tempore. It is defined as a participatory and community place where those who live and cross it actively collaborate for its development and maintenance. The hub encourages participation at every level between people, organizations and informal groups who adhere to it and the territory. The community that animates La Foresta favours the conditions for access to common goods, deciding how to use them, and sharing skills and experiences.

IMPACT /   Since the space in the north wing of the station is open and usable, the association La Foresta promotes different activities and initiatives around the surrounding territory of Rovereto, intending to explore how to build community resources to respond to the relational, social, and environmental crises of today. Some of the activities consider, for instance:

→   Activating co-design paths that take care of a network of regenerating spaces in the valley surrounding Rovereto;

→   Creating widespread spaces of conviviality for exchange among peers in an intergenerational and inter-cultural environment;

→   Building models of community and horizontal organization;

→   Relying on participatory action-research approaches;

→   Activating methods of critical and feminist pedagogy;

→ FIG. 24.
A risograph workshop held in the north-wing spaces of La Foresta. From laforesta.net

→ FIG. 25.
La Foresta collective co-designing around new community economies. From laforesta.net

Ø5 / Le Case di QUArtiere

← FIG. 26.
The social hub "Il Gattaglio", part
of the co-design pilot project by
Social Seed. From comune.re.it

socialseed.eu
comune.re.it
quaderno.comune.re.it

WHEN /   2020-2021

WHERE /   Reggio Emilia - Italy

WHO /   Social Seed & Comune di Reggio Emilia

Case di Quartiere is a series of co-design projects part of the Municipality of Reggio Emilia's vision of establishing new protocols for civic collaboration between the Municipality and the community to implement projects to improve people's lives and territory governance. The program recognized the "piazze di quartiere" as the pulsating places in the life of territorial communities, being able to transform themselves into open places, capable of fostering inter-cultural and intergenerational dialogue, and becoming centres for the development of new services and collaborative economies.

WHAT /   With the technical and design support of Social Seed, an innovation lab and social enterprise, in the period 2019-2020, the Municipality started a first "pilot project" to test multiple co-design processes for the transformation of four social centres in co-managed community hubs. The main goal was to transform said squares into Case di Quartiere: a social, intergenerational and inter-cultural place to foster the social cohesion of different segments of the population in their respective territories; a centre for the design and delivery of services to the person, to experiment with new proximity services, able to generate alternative and more effective opportunities than the traditional public-private offer; a space of care for the neighbourhood understood as a common (care of the territory), to enhance the sense of citizenship and participation; a place of multilevel governance, to foster collaboration in order to an organic response to citizens' needs. Social Seed committed moreover to define some replicable models and experiment with the tools of the service and strategic design approach: innovative ideas, new ways of collaboration, and new forms of business and entrepreneurship that could be later provided to future house managers as methods and capabilities to use for a more sustainable strategy. The project underwent its first pilot focused on four different social centres co-designed in a four-step project. The successful resulting hubs became the starting point for a second round of co-design processes in 2021 around eleven possible future "Case".

Based on the first-round outputs and impacts, the project dedicated time also in laying out the design processes to provide co-design and service design methods & capabilities to the future house managers to achieve long-term strategies for socio-economical sustainability; the project also aimed to foster the emergence of more collaborative services proposals, to support a more vigorous effort in citizen governance.
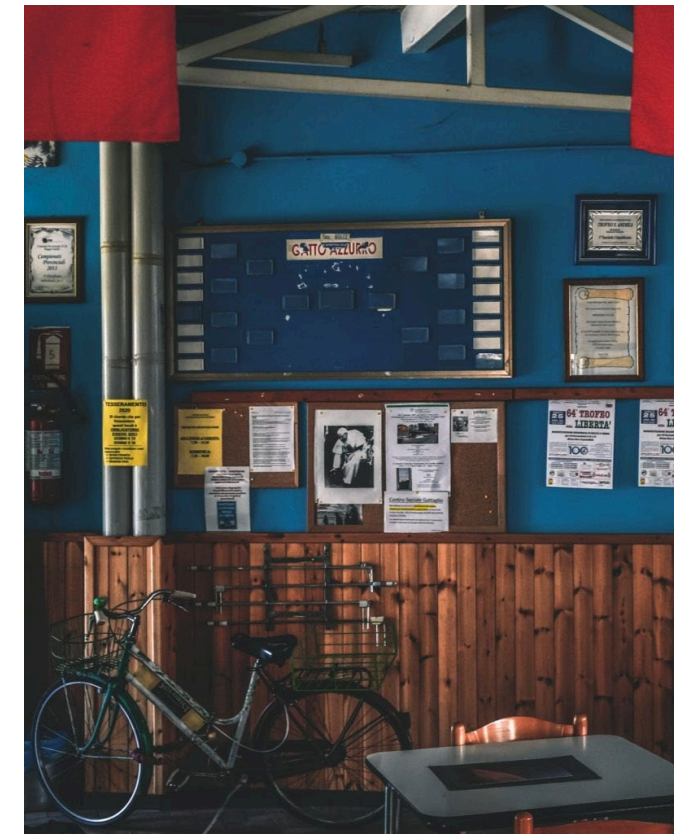
HOW / The design process for the eleven hubs was carried out in the form of short co-design workshop cycles, in which, starting from the exploration and analysis of state of the art, the model of the Case di Quartiere and the related offer of social services and activities were elaborated and redefined. The design approach is also used to pass it on to individual centres to enter their "toolbox," consisting of co-design tools and techniques that draw on Design Thinking, Service Design, and Strategic and Organizational Design.

→ *P.1 - Discovery and Analysis:* collective workshop for all centres to map the internal resources and needs, neighbourhood and citizens characteristics, potential co-productive networks

→ *P.2 – Ideation and design:* an individual workshop for each hub; ideation of possible solutions and innovative design based on the previously mapped needs and opportunities through guided brainstorming; also, evaluation of feasibility, partnerships and impact of the solutions.

→ *P.3 – Social Impact:* Two workshops in parallel with all stakeholders, structuring and setup of the different ideas and identification of social impact indicators for a future prototyping and piloting phase.

→ *P.4 – Draft revision:* Help desk meetings to check the last concept improvements and alignment with the "case di Quartiere" systemic vision model before the submission.

WHY / Activating the collective intelligence of the groups involved with open and collaborative ways of working made it possible to reconsider the centres' performance according to the emerging needs of members and citizens of the target neighbourhood. This triggered a process of redefining the identity of the centres through the active engagement of all those willing to get involved to make a space dedicated to participation and active citizenship their own, focusing on their and the target users' needs. Through tools of design thinking and participatory design, an approach to changing the context and capacities of the participating subjects was fielded, interpreted as the capacity to analyse present context and systems and visualize and formulate future scenarios. In these terms, the project lays the ground for a co-production vision, leveraging the ability of beneficiaries and citizens to become active participants in the design of public and social policies, incorporating an inclusive and democratic culture and mode of service production.

IMPACT / The ideas that emerged on the path with the centres present a robust territorial proposal, considering the real needs of the closest communities and making greater use of existing, substantial, existing social capital. The renewed recognition of the role of the social centres confirms the importance of collaborate in synergy with the public administration and services on one hand and among the centres themselves on an urban scale, even more significant than the dimension of territorial proximity, on the other hand, for a joint and coordinated welfare provision for the community. Active citizen participation in the workshop activities triggered a cultural change from the usual approach of the volunteers from the social centres involved. The change did not only affect the design methods, engagement strategies, or the definition of evaluation indicators but also concerned, more generally, the relationship with the public administration.

→ FIG. 27.
The interiors of one of the social hubs that Social Seed co-designed with the community.
From comune.re.it

Ø6 / XYZ 2020 - SuperNòva

WHEN /   21-27 September 2020

WHERE /   nòva cultural hub, Novara (NO) - Italy

WHO /   La Scuola Open Source

La Scuola Open Source (SOS) is a "network academy", an open and connected community and research ecosystem dedicated to revolutionising education through open-source principles and collaborative learning. At its core, SOS believes in the power of open-source philosophy and hacking practices to promote the free sharing and collaboration of knowledge and resources. By embracing this ethos, the company encourages learners to participate actively in their education, fostering a sense of ownership and creativity. Moreover, the entity organises workshops, training programs, and events to engage educators

← FIG. 28.
The participants of XYZ working on the spatial identity for nòva. From lascuolaopensource.xyz

lascuolaopensource.xyz
casermapassalacqua.it
labsus.org

and learners in hands-on activities that explore the potential of open source, hacking and co-creative initiatives.
One of the main projects that SOS carries out every year is the XYZ workshop, a 7-day experimental lab between designers, creatives, interested citizens from the whole of Italy and third-sector associations that gather together intending to find innovative and out-of-the-ordinary solutions for the regeneration of cultural spaces around Italy.

WHAT /   In 2020, the XYZ co-design workshop of La Scuola Open Source took place in Novara at the Ex Caserma Passalacqua, which was earlier chosen as the official location for nòva, the first centre for youth gathering in the city. The idea matured from the collaboration between public and private entities, which together staked on the rebirth of an abandoned space and its transformation into a place of expression, cultural production, and civic participation. The hub already went through a process of re-qualification that generated conference rooms, studio areas, a recording studio, and a maker space. The XYZ workshop took the duty of focusing on the design of its future: seventy participants from all over Italy, aided by twelve teachers, three coordinators and three tutors, set up a work of symbolic, ritual, and architectural reconstruction of the new centre of cultural production with a pedagogical vocation. The team, starting from a generative design methodology that prioritised procedures and transformations over static outputs, co-designed the spatial configuration of the remaining spaces, a systemic (digital and spatial) identity for the whole centre, the creation of a governance system and guidelines and future scenarios of use for a more sustainable and long-term strategy for the hub.

HOW /   The whole workshop is characterised by three different work streams or axes, hence why the name XYZ, which worked simultaneously on three different topics: X is about identity, Y is

tools, and Z focus on processes. It is worth noting that the three laboratories always worked dialoguing and collaborating with each other to promote the exchange of knowledge and the deployment of a systemic co-design mindset, allowing the creation of an integrated and holistic solution for the centre.

→ *X, or of the SYMBOL,* worked on the communication strategy and the visual identity of the spaces, developing physical and digital artefacts starting from an existing identity developed by the design studio FF3300; they also created installations, gadgets and totems that populated the newly designed spaces, a psycho-geographic guide to the discovery of nòva and a performance action for the output presentation at the end of the week in partnership with the Y group.

→ *Y, or of the CONSTRUCTION*, dealt with creating and designing ergonomic architecture and new usages of empty spaces. In the various subgroups of Y, prototypes of modular architecture have been created (sound-absorbing panels, work tables, handles, furnishing elements), but also maps, access systems and site-specific installations.

→ *Z, or of the RITE,* took care instead of the systemic aspect of the project, leaving nòva the basis for conceiving a new agreement between associations, users and the municipality and imagining new welcome and participation rituals. The group also studied a sustainability model capable of balancing the relationship between costs, services, social impact and continuous expansion of nòva's functionalities.

WHY / Time was the fourth element that distinguished the XYZ workshop and pooled the three work streams together. Mindful of achieving a "non-static nature" for nòva, XYZ recognised the role of time as a non-predictable force, able to enhance or disrupt the efforts made in this case for cultural production. Hence the temporary nature of this project, all the outputs developed through the workshop are conceived so that they can be evolved, modified, and improved over time, follow the current spatial dynamics and multiple vocations, and finally, in such a way as to aggregate, manage and enhance the offerings (activities, services, events and/or products) of Nòva's partners.

By making co-design and participatory practices the core of its design process, SOS enhanced the structuring of a civic participation process that gathered citizens, externals and design experts in a joined effort for the increase of cultural production opportunities of the city of Novara.
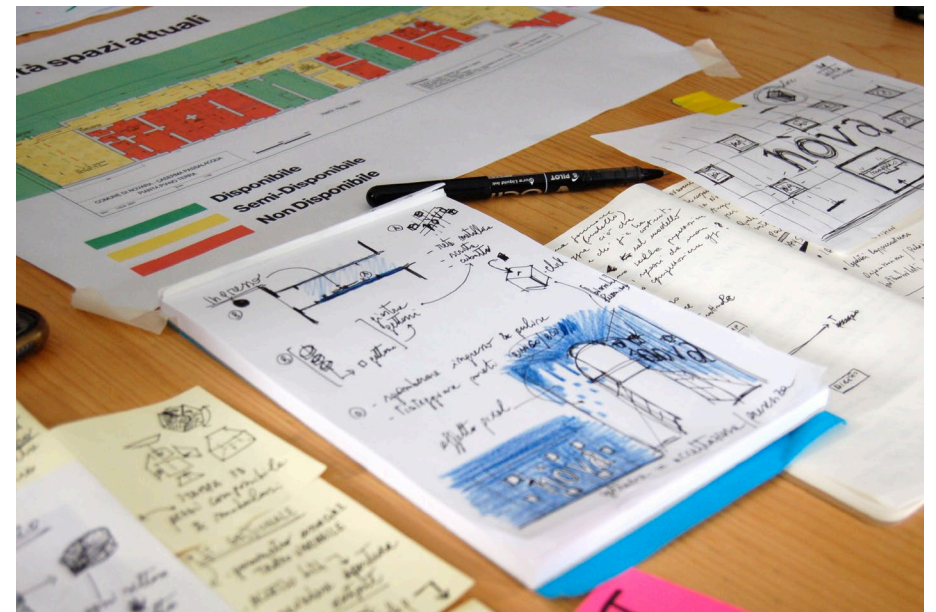
↑ FIG. 29.
Notes from the Y workgroup working on nòva spaces. From lascuolaopensource.

↑ FIG. 30.
Moment of narratives and governance co-design for the Z workgroup. From lascuolaopensource.xyz

Conclusions

Although not exhaustive, the case studies provided in this chapter attest to several projects experimenting with co-design and participatory practices for the regeneration and development of contemporary public spaces. Some of these practices are revolutionary in their setting or relation to prevailing cultural, artistic, social, and technical paradigms.
The case studies furthermore show the need for all types of urban fabric/living settings, whether a city or a small town, benefits from the inclusion of their community in the development and future management of their public spaces.

Nonetheless, numerous common threads in the cases listed here can be identified. First, it is undeniable the importance of including multiple target groups in the co-design activities to support transdisciplinary collaboration when defining needs, wishes and visions of the future community spaces, as shown, for instance, in the case of Laboratori di Quartiere. Regeneration and social innovation projects are inevitably a collective effort of various local and non-local actors and share the goal of achieving results through cooperation. The stories presented furthermore express that the objective of each is not only in improving public space but rather the construction of communities that recognise themselves in a space, an activity, or a service, which they take care of and can identify with. Second, as Selloni (2017) also reiterated, involving all the stakeholders throughout the whole design process, sharing information and practices, and building trust between people are crucial elements identified for a successful co-design process. Citizens who have followed and recognised the life cycle of a given space and its developments are the most knowledgeable and, as a result, significant players in the design and maximal enhancement of the place itself. It is developing strategies that can forge strong relationships with the communities and consider those who frequent and traverse the space not only as users of the proposed activities or beneficiaries of the services provided but as potential allies with whom to produce unprecedented collaborations. Furthermore, the projects characterised by a systemic S+S approach to co-design of spaces, where the spaces were co-designed together with the potential activities and services for the communities, exhibit a more substantial effort from the design team in including in the design process moments of collaboration to discuss and develop long term strategies and future scenarios for the public spaces, leveraging the service mindset that is now lacking in a traditional Spatial design approach. It was worth noting that most of these cases, for instance, SuperNòva 2020, also involved activities to collaboratively design the co-management of spaces or collaborative services within them run by the community or neighbourhood associations.

Lastly, all the projects driven by a design team confirmed the more recent positioning, explored in Chapter 03, of the design field shifting toward the design of systems and processes. In order to gather together and implement the recommendations and insights sketched by the community, the figure of the designer who plans to adopt a community-centred design method must steer these co-design processes. While the participants take the task of "designing the object", the designer expert moves its focus to design the processes and systems, becoming a facilitator during the co-design activities, leveraging their expertise and design skills in creating the right tools for collaborations and back-stage sense-making processes of citizens' creative efforts (Egan & Marlow, 2013; Manzini, 2015). These case studies and reflections upon them were precious in supporting the hypothesis outlined during the literature review phase, creating a solid foundation for the development of my design contribution to the SMOTIES project.

CASE STUDIES

CONCLUSIONS

Project work →

Contextual research →

We believe in transforming remote places into more liveable spaces by involving local residents in the development of cultural and creative activities.

Human Cities (2022)

The literature review presented in the previous chapters outlined a solid theoretical framework for innovative community engagement approaches in space design. It highlighted the benefits of combining the methodological strengths of Service Design with the relational and figurative strengths of Spatial Design. The case studies showcased various co-design processes for spatial design at different levels, from simple configurations to systemic approaches to the space.

The project work of this thesis revolves around a series of co-design activities within SMOTIES, a European project focused on creative works in small and remote areas, which occur in the little town of Albugnano (Piedmont, Italy – 494 inhabitants). The chapter briefly describes the project, its goals for Albugnano and the geographical area of Basso Monferrato, setting the stage for the co-design workshops. To ensure the workshop's effectiveness, extensive information was gathered about the geographic and social context of the town and the Basso Monferrato area; in addition, the final section of this chapter includes a collection of references that I used to support the team in design the activities and my own personal design process for some of them.

SMOTIES

Creative works with small and remote places

Note 08.
culture.europa.eu

Note 09.
humancities.eu

SMOTIES - Creative works with small and remote places is a four-year project co-funded by the European Union's Creative Europe Programme[08]. The project, spanning between 2020 and 2024, is developed and managed by Politecnico di Milano as part of the Human Cities Network[09]: an interdisciplinary platform founded in 2006 that examines "the liveability of public spaces by using participatory design as an approach to supply systems of process and innovation" (De Rosa & Fassi, 2022). The network, with its previous projects such as "Reclaiming Public Spaces" and "Challenging the City Scale" (Citè du Design, 2018), aimed at consolidating its approach and creating opportunities in several European contexts to implement innovative experimentations, nurturing networks, building capacity with local stakeholders and diffusing cultural values. With SMOTIES, Human Cities steps aside from its usual focus on urban realities, favouring small and remote European villages, districts, and sub-regions which are depopulated and geographically distant, as well as repositories of tangible and immaterial culture that risk being underestimated, not consolidated, and lost (OECD, 2018).

SMOTIES places are territorial units composed of a network of places outside significant cities but loosely connected with the surrounding territory (based on the assessment framework presented in Chapter One). The project selected ten networks, portrayed in Figure 29, that will benefit from the design of cultural, creative, and innovative solutions thanks to the collaboration with ten respective project partners, namely Nodes of Creativity. NoC includes public institutions, design organisations, creative agencies, national associations, and research centres in ten European cities close to remote places. SMOTIES has defined moreover a list of expected outcomes; De Rosa & Fassi (2022) outline them as follows.

REYKJAVIK
(ICELAND)

TALLINN
(ESTONIA)

LONDON (UK)

CIESZYN (POLAND)

GRAZ (AUSTRIA)

SAINT-ÉTIENNE
(FRANCE)

MILAN
(ITALY)

LJUBLJANA
(SLOVENIA)

ERMOPOULI
(GREECE)

FUNCHAL
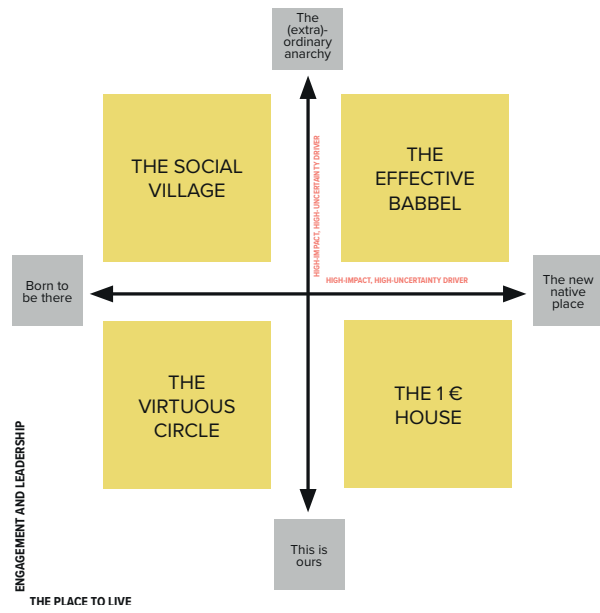(PORTUGAL)

→ Create a network of design-led Nodes of Creativity that operate in remote public spaces through innovative approaches to enrich the existing Human Cities network;

→ Create a network of small and remote places to avoid cultural and social isolation and create long-term economic strategies;

→ Impact assessment of a project using a participatory approach, design thinking and future design approaches;

→ Engage different local communities, administrations and policymakers in developing creative works in public spaces to improve local opportunities;

→ Create replicable models based on the experience developed in remote public spaces to influence social behaviours.

SMOTIES DESIGN METHODOLOGY

The project involves designers, artists, and cultural operators in general in actions of co-design, participatory engagement, training, and education to define creative works in public spaces. The objective is to build continuous dialogue, to facilitate for the Nodes of Creativity the addressing of practical difficulties and potentialities of the creative milieu in small and remote places. The Nodes are currently working via a shared methodology based on future studies, including of a design toolbox and five envisioning scenarios called "Windows of the Future" - presented in the next page - to support the network of partners with a common framework and provide materials that the local creative communities can use to create new initiatives in the territory (Human Cities, 2022). Each Node of Creativity was tasked to evaluate and select the scenarios more relevant to their remote contexts and apply them during the participatory and creative experimentation with local communities. Leveraging the SMOTIES toolkit, the Milano team selected three of the five windows to focus on for the creative interventions in Albugnano: 1 - Project Communities, 3 - Beyond Tourism, and 5 - Distributed education, which are presented next pages.

Milano - Italy
Politecnico di Milano / Basso Monferrato

Cieszn - Poland
Zamek Cieszyn / Bobrek

Graz - Austria
FH Joanneum University A.A. / Oberzeiring

Ljubljana - Slovenia
Urban Planning Institute R.S. / Pohlograsjki Dolomiti

London - UK
Clear Village Trustee Limited / Penmachno

Sant Etienne - France
Citè du Design / La Valle du Dorlay

Tallinn - Estonia
Estonian Association of Designers / Joaveski

Ermoupoli - Greece
University of the Aegean / Apanomeria

Funchal - Portugal
Universidade da Madeira / Estreito da Calheta

Reykjavik - Iceland
Alternance slf / Borgarnes

The (extra)-ordinary anarchy

THE SOCIAL VILLAGE

THE EFFECTIVE BABBEL

HIGH-IMPACT, HIGH-UNCERTAINTY DRIVER

Born to be there

HIGH-IMPACT, HIGH-UNCERTAINTY DRIVER

The new native place

THE VIRTUOUS CIRCLE

THE 1 € HOUSE

ENGAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

This is ours

THE PLACE TO LIVE

↑ FIG. 32.
Window 1: Project Communities. From Human Cities (2022)

The (extra)-ordinary anarchy

DEEP DIVE

SUPER TOURIST

HIGH-IMPACT, HIGH-UNCERTAINTY DRIVER

Sometime somewhere

HIGH-IMPACT, HIGH-UNCERTAINTY DRIVER

Anytime anywhere

INSTAGRAMMABLE HIDDEN TREASURES

ENGAGED GLOBETROTTER

ENGAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

This is ours

THE WORLD IS MY HOME

↑ FIG. 33.
Window 3: Beyond Tourism. From Human Cities (2022).

The (extra)-ordinary anarchy

STORYTELLING OUR CULTURE

THIS IS THE PLACE TO BE

HIGH-IMPACT, HIGH-UNCERTAINTY DRIVER

Cultural Dominance

HIGH-IMPACT, HIGH-UNCERTAINTY DRIVER

Cultural Integration

BRIDGING CREATIVE MINDS

THE VILLAGE EXPERIENCE

ENGAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

This is ours

EXTINCTION OR SURVIVAL

→ FIG. 34.
Window 5: Distributed education. From Human Cities (2022).

1   Project communities - Active citizen participation and new kinds of governance [Fig. 30];

2   Co-created ecologies - Creative solutions for sustainable living;

3   Beyond tourism - Living an authentic life [Fig. 31];

4   Proud to be silver - Well-being of the wise (sage);

5   Distributed education - The future of local cultural and creative knowledge [Fig. 32];

Since 2021, The SMOTIES team from Politecnico di Milano has been actively working in collaboration with a consortium of 5 villages within the Basso Monferrato territory, an area in the Piedmont countryside between Torino, Alessandria, and Asti. The area has solid potential and abundant tangible and intangible culture that needs to be brought to light and shared. However, the need for better connections and communication networks is preventing this from happening. The Milano project focuses predominantly on the town of Albugnano, which will be analysed in detail in this chapter's next section. After a series of interviews with locals, the SMOTIES team discovered that Albugnano used to flourish with public spaces for community aggregation that are now abandoned or unavailable. The inner and outer community, driven to discover the Basso Monferrato because of its high cultural value, are looking for an innovative vision for new gathering places in Albugnano. The SMOTIES team, therefore, selected an unused green area in the historical town centre called "Il giardino segreto", which would become the protagonist of a series of co-creative workshops and community-building activities achieved through a co-design approach. The objective of said activities is to boost local pride, develop a sense of belonging to the place, and, in the long run, benefit the local tourism economy by supporting local initiatives in applying for regional funding and cultural projects. Il "Giardino di via Roma" is only the first of the project sites within a broader strategy for the enhancement of the territory and the aggregation of the local community, which will expand in the upcoming months until the end of the project, scheduled in October 2024.

The following sections of this chapter will instead offer a contextual and spatial analysis of the town of Albugnano and the area where the new space will be developed. Secondly, a collection of inspiring tools, activities and guidelines that leverage a Service+Spatial approach to co-design that influenced the SMOTIES team and me in the design choices for the workshops development.

↑ FIG. 35.
A SMOTIES co-design workshop with locals in Albugnano.

↑ FIG. 36.
One of the SMOTIES exhibition showcasing students' projects on the Basso Monferrato.

↓ FIG. 37
The view from the central
square in Albugnano.

Albugnano

The chosen remote place

The design context of Albugnano is part of the wider Basso Monferrato geographical area, situated between the Piedmont region and encapsulated between Torino, Alessandria and Asti in north-west Italy. The entire region of Monferrato has been labelled as a UNESCO World Heritage site (Unesco, 2014), along with the neighbouring regions of Langhe and Roero. The area is characterised by millenary heritage because of historical and cultural events that have occurred over the years, with a high concentration of churches and chapels included in the *TRANSROMANICA*, one of the Culture Routes of the Council of Europe (Human Cities, 2023). Additionally, the typicality of its territory has made Monferrato renowned and popular throughout Italy and beyond; the cultivation of vines, the production of wine (barbera, freisa, grignolino, etc.) and its gastronomic products are the primary motivation for the development of tourism in this area (Destinazione Monferrato, 2021). Overall, the environment is entirely hilly, with great tracts of farmed land creating unique, pristine landscapes absent of big urban agglomerations.

In the specific area of Basso Monferrato, the town of Albugnano is claimed as "il Balcone del Monferrato (or the Balcony of Monferrato) due to its position on the highest hill of the area that reaches 549 meters above sea level, giving the town a panoramic view of the rest of the valley. The town is fifty-five minutes by car from Torino and around two hours from Milan. Unfortunately, it lacks an efficient public transportation system preventing it from quickly reaching it by train or bus. Agriculture and tourism dominate the economy of Albugnano: the orographic qualities of the area and its history contributed to the formation of numerous small and medium-sized terrains, which various farmers cultivate. The Albugnano wine has a D.O.C. (Denominazione Origine Controllata) certification thanks to the local production system, and it is well-known for the quality of the hazelnut orchards. The lack of large-scale farms, the variety of crops, and the limited

Region: Piemonte
Province: Asti
Area: 9,5 km2
Inhabitants: 496
Density: 52 ab. /km2
Altitude: 549 m. asl.

↑ FIG. 38.
One of the central
streets of Albugnano.

road network contribute to the preservation of local biodiversity, which is another essential feature of the region. One of the most valuable resources is a network of trails connecting the municipality of Albugnano with the nearby villages, creating an ideal setting for walks and structured contests such as mountain biking or trail running. The primary tourist attractions are the natural scenery and the cultural heritage (mostly linked to Romanesque heritage, such as churches and sanctuaries). Tourists interested in architectural sites and beauties may benefit from guided tours of the Vezzolano Abbey provided by the local volunteer organisation "In Collina".

Even though the Abbey gets over 30.000 tourists yearly, the local system cannot provide sight-seeing support for extended periods: tourism way-finding is limited, and the town lacks additional areas of interest or for leisure activities. Still, Albugnano contains numerous hidden sites and places worth seeing, although most of them are closed or difficult to discover; as a result, the area's tourism potential is existent but not as exploited as it could be. In particular, the gradual underutilisation and closure of meeting places in recent years have created a demand for

↓ FIG. 39.
Map that shows Albugnano in relation with the two closest big cities. In transparency, the area of Basso Monferrato.
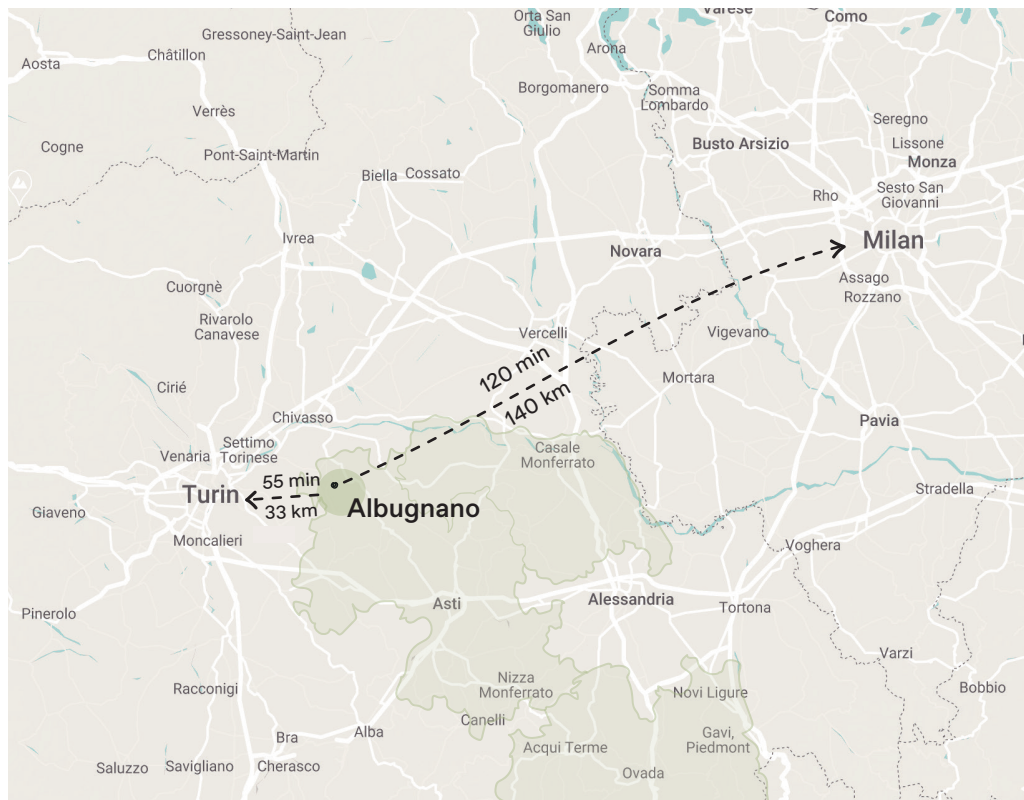
communal spaces strongly connected to their historical and architectural legacy. Local heroes are working to improve the cultural initiatives for locals and visitors, as well as the sense of local pride, to create a symbiotic connection between the two main attraction points, the Vezzolano Abbey and the Motta Belvedere (Human Cities, n.d.).

THE COMMUNITY OF ALBUGNANO

Albugnano currently counts 494 inhabitants (Istat data from February 2023), although it is challenging to estimate the actual number of citizens that spend their daily life in Albugnano. Unfortunately, the town and the whole area of Basso Monferrato experienced a long period of de-population starting from the economic boom (Istat, 2023), where predominantly young people moved to larger urban areas seeking better opportunities. Indeed, the population nowadays is elderly and recreational and communal spaces continue to decrease, as well as public services which are very limited. Fortunately, a mild emerging trend of re-population seems to happen in Albugnano, thanks also to the aftermaths of the Covid19 pandemic that made people rediscover those territories surrounded by greenery and far from any contamination, capable of guaranteeing a certain physical and mental serenity and the creation of closer community relations, has arisen. This is evidenced by the fact that many newly formed families have chosen, in recent years, to settle and reside in these villages, especially of foreign origins, which now count as more than around 10% of the population. Peruvian and Roma communities are now part of the social fabric of Albugnano, seeking job opportunities mainly in elder care. In terms of communal life, Albugnano hosts a good number of local associations – i.e. the Pro Loco, In Collina, Albugnano 549, the recently-opened Winery, Lo Stagno di Goethe theatre group - through which the community find ways to be active and promote the territory, specifically around wine production and gastronomic products, with more recent artistic and cultural initiatives.

Through his thesis research, Marco Finardi worked in close contact with the Albugnano community and summarized in five main insights the status of it nowadays (Finardi, 2023). The five insights were helpful in a preliminary context analysis and valid for the SMOTIES team to plan the co-design activities.

social relationships and one that blends them.

4. A lively community entails a lively debate: The local community in Albugnano is vibrant and engaged in conflicts and political debates, likely influenced by lifestyle differences. The differing needs and the individual prioritizations of these groups make it challenging to reach a consensus on specific issues, and the lack of a holistic understanding of Albugnano as an economical, productive, cultural, and social system contributes to this struggle. However, citizens consider the active debate a long-standing element of the community.

5. Young people are not living in the town anymore: people under 30 years old are no longer residing in Albugnano, backed by the recent closure of the elementary school, the lack of accessible spaces, and their perceived distance from community dynamics. Even young individuals who work in Albugnano express a sense of disconnection from the political and community debates, and the usage of local spaces is primarily remembered from childhood experiences rather than current engagement. However, despite this disconnection, some individuals continue to support local associations and participate in the agricultural life of Albugnano.

1. The community spaces of Albugnano are a memory of the past: Albugnano once had various gathering places, contributing to community cohesion and interpersonal connections. However, these places have since closed down, resulting in a decline in social bonds and difficulty in fostering interactions beyond one's immediate social circle. Although there are newly opened spaces attempting to address this issue, the community remains at risk of social segregation, and the situation requires urgent attention.

2. Living a slow lifestyle based on spontaneity, relationships, and nature: Despite the reported discomforts of living in a remote area, people, even young citizens, would like to stay in Albugnano. They appreciate the slower pace of life that allows spontaneity and meaningful encounters, the role of the natural landscape and biodiversity for their mindfulness, and the beauty of historical landmarks and architecture.

3. Sociality can take many shapes and modalities: Living in a remote area presents challenges when socializing with neighbours and friends in the local community. The absence of gathering spaces in Albugnano leads many residents to seek social connections outside the town, forming closer bonds with neighbouring communities. Within the community, two different approaches to socializing emerged, one that separates work and

↑ FIG. 40.
A glimpse of the town.

IL GIARDINO DI VIA ROMA

The five insights were of great use for a preliminary context analysis, valid for the SMOTIES team to plan the co-design activities and create a strategic plan dedicated to the creation of new public spaces in the town of Albugnano, starting from an abandoned area in the centre of the town. The initial plan comprehended multiple places to be designed simultaneously to work systemically towards a process of design for the territory and create new linking opportunities. However, the Albugnano inner political contrasts triggered the delay in the design phase and the downsizing of this specific project branch to a single space, namely "Il Giardino di via Roma".

The garden is situated in the exact centre of the town and has been selected for its favouring position, easily accessible and reachable from the whole community. The area is in via Roma, one of the main streets starting from the main square, where the town hall is located and most of the community interactions happen. The whole garden is also visible entirely from another road that goes uphill towards the Belvedere Motta (via Regina Margherita).

A site inspection helped the SMOTIES team to get more familiar with the spatial characteristic of the place and start understanding the opportunities the garden exhibits from the beginning. Some brick walls belt the whole lot where the garden is, and part of it is already occupied by a vegetable garden. The usable area measures around 14×8 meters, with a slight slope and almost aligned with the compass east-west axis, allowing good sun exposure throughout the day. At the state of the art, the area presents rough grass and vines on the sides of the garden, in a light state of abandonment. A group of citizens took care of making the plot accessible before the start of the SMOTIES activities. The garden, although the relatively small size and minute challenges to overcome, holds much potential and could become a great gathering place for the community, allowing many activities and services that still need to be added to Albugnano. With the proper design process, this could become the first success of a long series of spatial reactivation stories in the Monferrato territory.

↓ FIG. 41.
The position of the garden contextualised in the town of Albugnano.

↑ FIG. 42.   ↑ FIG. 43.
The garden at the beginning of the project.

CONTEXTUAL RESEARCH

← FIG. 44. ↓ FIG. 45.
The garden at the
beginning of the project.

CONTEXTUAL RESEARCH

ALBUGNANO

Design the co-design

References with an S+S vision

The previously mentioned garden is the protagonist of a series of co-creative workshops organized by the SMOTIES design team, aiming to co-design and regenerate the central space and provide the town with a new gathering place and opportunities for innovative and needed services. A Service + Spatial approach must be applied to encourage the simultaneous design of spaces and services as an interconnected system to benefit the community. The definition of multiple co-design workshops supports opportunities for people to become co-designers and play an active role throughout the design process, strengthening their connection and sense of ownership towards the space.

Reflecting the shift in design that is happening today, explained in Chapter 03, the focus of the design practitioner moves from the object to the process. The landscape of design is constantly changing, and so must the design role. One activity contemporary designers often have to pursue is the creation of specific "probes" (Sander and Stappers, 2008) or tools that help non-designers during the co-design process. During these co-creative activities, the designer facilitates collaboration, giving the essential tools for co-designers to express themselves and create freely. Nevertheless, the designer's role is still important because of the specific technical skills they may bring to the problem-solving process and their role as a mediator and interpreter. In particular, design experts must consider the possibility of working with multiple levels of citizen participation simultaneously to deliver an inclusive and impartial interaction experience, providing the proper methods and tools that facilitate collaboration between people and let creativity emerge. The approaches, tools, artefacts, and prototypes that promote participation are critical in this process, and their design has become a growing application area of interest. Certainly, paraphrasing Sander& Stappers for today's design world, designers *are playing* "an important role in the development and exploration of new tools and methods for generative design

thinking" (Sanders & Stappers, 2008, p.15).

To support the SMOTIES workshop design process, and therefore the topic of this thesis around S+S approaches, it was necessary to explore some co-design references that showcased a combined approach between Service and Spatial design in their activities. This contextual research aimed not to find specific tools that could be applied dutifully but to find inspirations and ways of working from success stories and be adapted for our specific case. Three inspirations are illustrated here: one tool developed by Annalinda De Rosa in her doctoral thesis, one toolkit from the campUS project and a book written by Oliver Marlow and Dermot Egan from the design and architecture practice TILT Studio.

SPATIAL JOURNEY MAP

The Spatial Journey Map is a hybrid tool developed by Annalinda De Rosa for her doctoral thesis and tested during one of her field experimentations: a Master's degree course for Interior Design students. The tool is the result of iterating the previous experimentations' activities and probes, which all were based on an S+S approach and tried to merge different representation and processual tools (storyboard and desktop walk-through, for instance). The tool's objective is to shift the focus towards a process-oriented and less representation-oriented, combining plans and spatial components with elements picked from customer journey maps, scenario building and timelines, typical of a service design mindset (De Rosa, 2022).

Starting from a previous S+S preliminary research/contextual analysis, the Spatial journey Map defines a user's experience in space, documented by a chronological sequence of activities and associated with spatial touchpoints. Because space impacts human actions and interactions, the "designer" deploys the spatial touchpoint to map how the user interacts with the space and how they perceive it. The focus on specific touchpoints allows the experience to be split down into distinct stages for further exploration, allowing for the identification of both problem areas and innovation potential. The goal of developing and testing such tools is to process actions at the same time they are performed and where they occur, supporting the definition of the space through the typology of service actions and their chronological sequence. In the experimentation, the tool guided the design students in

VISION

chronological sequence

A

SDA   SDA   SDA   SDA

space

A= actions
SDA= spatial distribution approaches

space. Both Toolkits are made up of specific activities tailored per each of the six workshops, offering cards for the step-by-step workshop planning and interaction with the community, a list of tools required to carry out the activities, and lastly, some optional advice that implements and adds value to the process carried out. Specifically, some of the activities are intended to tackle the spatial layout of said shared gardens. These activities propose the use of maquette and scaled models of the space to support the decision-making around the configuration of the different activities and needed structures in the garden, prioritising moments of discussion and debate between the participants to reach a final agreement; the models are backed by a smaller poster that is given to the participants to follow the conversation quickly and track the activity progress individually. This tool allows the combination of configuration spatial and architectural elements with possible other services and activities carried out in the shared areas of the garden (conviviality activities).

breaking down the space into smaller components to design the specific spatial requirements in terms of a human-centric view according to physical components, service requirements and values of perceptions by always having the service understanding, definition, and design as a reference.

COLTIVANDO TOOLKIT (CAMPUS)

The previously mentioned case study "campUS" generated a series of co-design toolkits to be used when designing shared gardens with different communities (i.e., a neighbourhood community, an elementary or middle school body). The toolkits have been the subject of two Master Thesis: Maddalena Bellè (2015) and Maria Maiorino (2015), which explained the development and of the toolkits to the public. The two Toolkits developed follow a co-design process from community formation to garden start-up divided into six separate meetings, providing practical activities, solutions for team-building and decision-making that emphasise the significance of sharing each time.
The Toolkits envision the process's ultimate purpose as enabling a community to make design choices in harmony and respect for all the co-creation and maintenance of a new shared

CODESIGNING SPACE (TILT STUDIO)

Codesigning Space is a book by Dermot Egan and Oliver Marlow, founders of TILT studio in London[10]. The book introduces a new approach to designing spaces, placing TILT's work in the context of the co-design movement and introducing their methodology and projects. Referencing case studies from different industries, the book demonstrates the power of co-design as a method to design spaces, highlighting its potential to engage communities to shape environments and influence their culture purposefully. The activities and tools presented in its pages leverage an intense combination of established practices or methodologies from the fields of Architecture, Spatial & Interior Design and Service Design.

Ecology Map: The Ecology Map is a tool that creates the story of a space and its community, highlighting the complementary and overlapping functions that inform the design of the space. The activity provides three different tiles to define the starting information for the space, the potential who (the user), the what (the action that could happen in the space) and the why (the need the space wants to cover). The three dimensions are then linked together, prioritised and used to find patterns, an essential step in creating a sense of purpose for the space.

Make My Day: This activity invites the workshop participants to map a potential day in the life of the space altogether, challenging the group to reflect on what is feasible and what needs to be compromised. Understanding how a space will be used over time informs the needs of the design; exploring and cataloguing the activities, contexts, and interactions that a space user will experience over a day helps us to be definitive about the needs of that space. By expanding that time to include the rhythms of a week, a month, or even over the lifetime of a space, many insights are further added to the design.

Give and get: Explore with the space community the networks of expertise, resources and abilities that can be employed in the project. The activity focuses on asking "What would you like to get" and "What would you give" regarding the space, laying the bases for future engagements in co-making and co-production.

Note 10.
studiotilt.com

↑ FIG. 48.
Image from the book
Codesigning space.
From studiotilt.com

↑ FIG. 49.
Image from the book
Codesigning space.
From studiotilt.com

CONTEXTUAL RESEARCH

DESIGN THE CO-DESIGN

Co-design in Albugnano →

Designing workshops

The insights gained from the contextual research conducted around SMOTIES and Albugnano, as well as the practical examples of co-design activities, were instrumental in effectively planning and facilitating workshops aimed at developing a new public space within the town. In the following pages, the whole design process is introduced and explained, highlighting the work done by the SMOTIES PoliMi team to define the co-design activities in two parallel work streams: the activities carried out with the community of Albugnano and the internal meetings organised in between them to synthesise and organise the work for the next step.

The chapter then presents the analysis of the co-design activities and their related internal meetings, with emphasis on the S+S approach that the team used to develop all the activities. It is here that my thesis find its field experimentations for a Service+Spatial co-design approach. My personal contribution to the workshop activities is presented within this analysis since the work has always been done in collaboration and with the support of the whole SMOTIES team.

The SMOTIES project's third year began with scheduling the first series of design interventions to activate a new public space in Albugnano. The meetings with locals that happened previously were fundamental to discovering the necessity for new gathering places and spaces as community collectors that support the implementation of new services. The abandoned plot nowadays called "Il Giardino di Via Roma" has been selected as the first subject for creative experimentation in collaboration with the local community. Since the beginning, the citizens have shown particular interest in the initiative and participated actively in the whole design process.

The team from PoliMi had multiple goals for the space, aligned with three selected scenarios from the general toolbox. These included renovating the public space to improve citizens' involvement in cultural activities, fostering pride in the local community, and creating a cultural space that encourages participation and serves as a gathering spot for exchanging knowledge and ideas. The space should become not just a place for culture but also a place for community interaction. To do so, the team worked on structuring a co-design process that involved citizens and the extended community throughout all design phases: starting from the mapping of needs and wishes, continuing with a series of co-creative activities that looked at potential new features, activities and services the space could host, and prototype them in the space to test configurations of the architectural elements and the connection of different activities in space and time. In order to encourage a greater sense of responsibility and improve the overall condition of the space, the proposal suggests creating a shared manifesto and exploring bottom-up governance models. The scheduling of the project took into account some of the events and initiatives already planned in the town, such as local festivities and the Quadila Festival[11], a three weekend event revolving around the connections

| Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep |

EXPLORATION

CO-DESIGN →

PROTOTYPING

IMPLEMENTATION

Students exhibition

SMOTIES PoliMi

Albugnano

Electoral campaign

Local Elections
15.05

Patron Saint's day
11.06

Quadila Festival
09-23.07
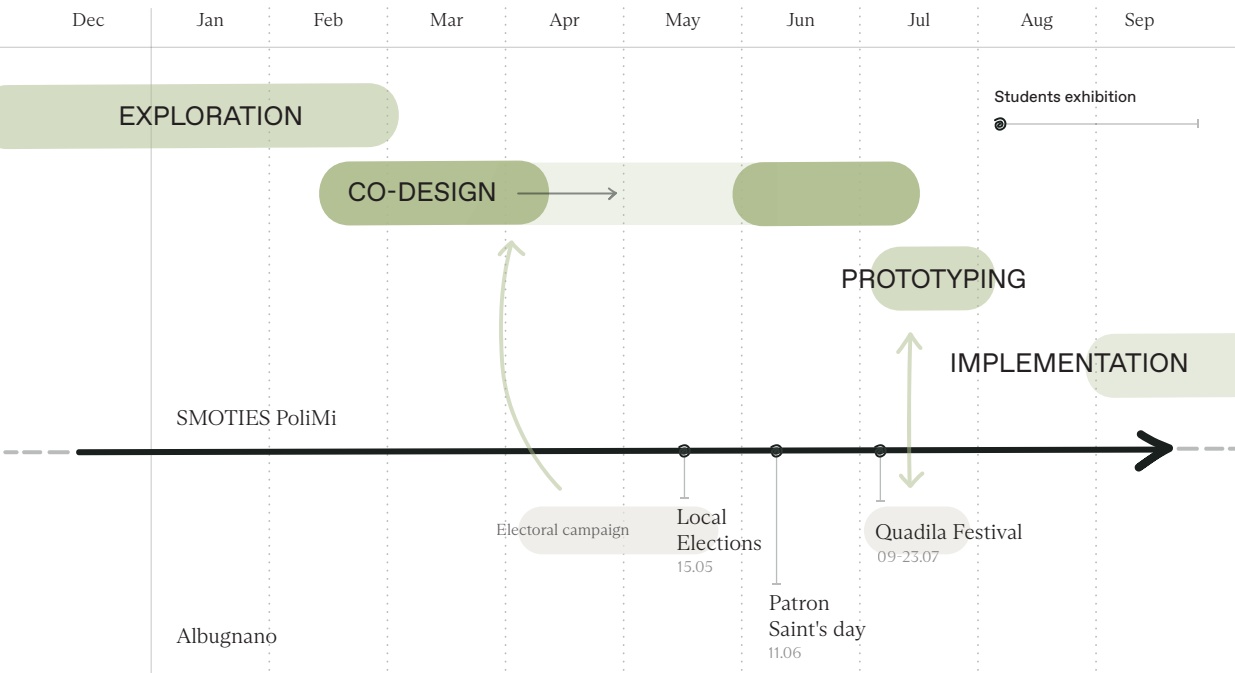
between performative arts and local cultural heritage happening throughout July 2023. With that said, many challenges occurred during the project's initial phases, leading to the rescheduling and rearrangement of the co-design activities and, consequently, the preparation and design processes behind them. As Finardi pointed out in his Master's Thesis (2023), which focused likewise on the SMOTIES project and Albugnano's immaterial culture and heritage, the community and the socio-political background of the town are pretty fragmented and constituted by different nuclei that challenged from the beginning the success of the project. The co-creative activities were supposed to occur every month between February 2023 and June 2023. Unexpectedly, local elections were called in April, placing a hold on the PoliMi activities and the project progression. Some meeting with the local stakeholders helped to assess the state of he project of possible strategies for the SMOTIES activities. Luckily, the re-election of the former mayor allowed us to re-organise the activities and create a new plan to stay on track and host the prototyping sessions for the spaces during the weekends of the Quadila festival.

Therefore, a new calendar of meetings was presented to the community of Albugnano, and the design process restarted (a full version on page 130-131). The team structured four separate workshops with the community planned between June and July, each tackling a step of the space design, from the first proposals of uses and activities to the physical prototyping.

The approach to the new planning was the following: each activity done with the Albugnano community would be followed by a series of internal meetings done by the PoliMi team, where the outcomes of the previous workshops would be used as a starting point. Each workshop's outcomes went through a sense-making process to be translated into valuable insights that would be presented in the next meeting in Albugnano. The insights also became the starting point each time to design the tools and activities of the subsequent workshop. This sense-making process and iteration allowed us to tailor future activities based on what we discovered previously and what level of participation we perceived from the community.

THESIS CONTRIBUTION

These co-creative activities became the perfect field of experimentation to apply a Service+Spatial approach during the design of the workshops. During the internal design team meetings, it emerged pretty relevantly the need to include a systemic approach that considered since the beginning the opportunity of co-designing with the community valuable services and activities that reflected citizens' needs and wishes and were enabled by the configuration of this future public space. In these terms, the context of Albugnano supported my thesis in finding opportunities to analyse, reflect and put into practice possible experimentations of a Service+Spatial approach. Unfortunately, the delays in the project schedule impacted the contribution I could give to the project, first, and the overall research validation for my thesis, preventing the inclusion of the last phase of the co-design process, which focused on the prototyping and partially on the dimension of co-governance of the space. Regardless, I could still test my assumption by supporting the planning and design of the first three co-design workshops (and the rest of the activities after concluding my thesis) and actively designing one of them, namely the WS3 "Spatial Layout and configuration". The design process and methodology of the latter is explained in pages 144-146.

PROJECT TIMELINE

February	...	May	June	July	

Albugnano

WS1 - 24.02.2023
A SPACE FOR ALBUGNANO

Bringing together local people
(policy makers and general public)
to understand what the Public
Space could do/be etc.

WS2 - 09.06.2023
PURPOSE OF THE PLACE

Brainstorming around possible
ideas and activities for the
space. Definition of spatial
resources needed.

✳ **WS3 - 25.06.2023**
SPATIAL LAYOUT

Co-design of the spatial
configuration, definition of
masterpan and fixed/mobile
elements.

WS4 - 08.07.2023
PROTOTYPING EXP. 1

Making of the space with the
community during Quadila Festival.
Proposal of Shared Manifesto

WS5 - 23.07.2023
PROTOTYPING EXP. 2

Spatial prototyping during the
Quadila Festival last weekend.

WX- 05-06.2023
SENSE-MAKING

Sense-making of WS1 and other
activities carried out by PoliMi
students in Albugnano.
Preparation of the workshop activites

✳ **WY - 13-20.06.2023**
FROM ACTIVITIES TO SPACE

Sense making of WS2, definition of
Spatial Design requirements,
equipment and architectural elements.
Preparation of the workshop activites

✳ **WZ - 27.06.2023**
LAYOUT SYNTHESIS

Production of final Spatal Layout
and MVP to be tested.
Draft of Shared Manifesto.

PoliMi Design

WS1 →
A new space
for Albugnano

DATE /	24 February 2023
PARTICIPANTS /	25 participants + 4 designers
LOCATION /	Chorus meeting hall
TIME /	45 minutes
OBJECTIVE /	Brainstorming and definition of possible uses and activities
TOOLS /	"A new space for Albugnano" A5 template
	Presentation deck
	Clustering Poster
	Post-its

Activities

1 Presentation of the SMOTIES project to the participants, future scenarios for Albugnano and general project objectives.

2 **Uno spazio per Albugnano:** participants are given an individual A5 template sheet to define where, in their opinion, a new public space for the Albugnano community could arise, marking it on a map. Next, they had to answer three questions about the space:
- With whom would you spend some free time in this space?
- What would you like to find in this space, for you and for the community?
- What would you like to no find at all instead?

3 The participants presented their considerations to the plenary. In the meantime, the facilitators reported what was said on post-its and placed them on a poster to cluster informations, mapping the different answers to the three questions.

4 The SMOTIES team collected contacts for future collaborations.

Co-design insights

→ The workshop was planned in between a meeting of the local chorus. The informal, protected and friendly environment supported a convivial and proactive approach to the activity; people felt free to speak openly and straightforwardly.

→ The participation was quite high and proactive. The participants were interested in the topic and willing to iterate and deepen their thoughts during the plenary discussions. The activity remarked on the urgency citizens feel about creating new spaces in town.

→ The tools used in the activity were easy to use and helped people to let their imagination run and explore multiple options when thinking about possible public spaces in the town. Because of the timing of this workshop, an exploratory approach was the best choice to start to understand the collective view on the topic.

← The ideas presented by the participants sometimes lacked of feasibility or were not actionable immediately. This prompted the SMOTIES team in considering to structure the next workshop as a second round of idea generation.

Uno spazio per Albugnano

Come lo chiamiamo?

Il circolo dei sogni

COUR - Vicino al Belvedere

Le meraviglie della natura

Troviamoci

Book crossing | Cinema | Scambio cose | Fare musica

Fare mostre | Moto e Sala Giochi | Uso libero | Anfiteatro

Gradoni per skate | Ballo e canto | Feste

Cosa sarà?

Luogo incontro camminate

Sentieri | Camminate tramonto | Botanica (turismo)

Percorso Mulino | Tesori nascosti per turisti | Passeggiata

Cosa non sarà?

No interessi privati | No cancello (aperto) | No unico settore econ. | Solo fini commerciali

No strutture | Rumori molesti | Turismo di massa | Non lastricato (verde)

Sporcizia | Persone non gradite | Traffico | Parcheggio selvaggio

Non omologato | Vanda-lismo | Caotico | Bar

Una piazza | Un luogo simbolo | Agorà per conversare

Proposta di valore del progetto

Tornare a fare ciò che facevamo | Ritrovi di famiglie e bambini | Incontro tra generazioni | Smorzare il conflitto

Rilassarsi | Luogo dove aggregarci | Dopo lavoro | Un posto dove trovarci

Aperto & sostenibile | Andarci con le amiche | Frequenta-bile 24/7 | Empatia e serenità

↑ FIG. 54.
The results of WS1. The first draft of needs and values for the space clustered on the poster.

WX - Sense-making

The results of this workshop were collated and clustered with previous work done by the Master's degree student of Spatial Design from the course "Ephemeral Spaces", which also conducted co-designed activities with the extended community of the Basso Monferrato. The ideas were clustered by similarity and relations, defining some activity clusters. The clusters generated, moreover, the necessity to separate the ideas into three macro areas: Culture and performance, Nature and sports, and Spontaneous use and free time. From the two latter questions of the template, the team generated a series of Needs, Values, and what the space should and should not be, creating a series of rules and requirements valid for the next co-design session to present the results. Between the sense-making and the formulation of the next co-design session, the project stopped because of external reasons. This allowed the team to recollect and think thoroughly about how to approach all the following sessions, defining the objective and outcomes of each co-design activity in more detail.

For the next workshop, the team explored how to define activities and characteristics for the space in via Roma. The first workshop was helpful in giving a first glance at what people from Albugnano would like to have, but more opinions and visions were needed to go more in detail and validate what was already proposed. Therefore, the team agreed to structure the first part of WS2 as a generative and ideation exercise to gain more examples and proposals for the space (following a divergent thinking approach that is at the core of Design Thinking). To support creativity, the team decided to define some parameters and provide visual inspirations that could suggest alternative uses and scenarios, helping the participants to go beyond the ideas that usually come up when designing public spaces and are not connected to the needed resources and structures to make it happen. The second part of the workshop would instead focus on grounding some of the ideas and defining physical and human resources for the ideas (converge). This "infrastructuring" of the ideas would help the participants grounds the ideas by focusing on the operational and feasibility aspects, thinking about what would be necessary to realise specific services in the space. The definition of resources helps to stay connected to the reality of a small territory and its limited possibilities, making the participants think about what is possible to do with what the town can offer.

WS2 →
Purpose of the place

DATE /	09 June 2023
PARTICIPANTS /	5 participants + 4 designers
LOCATION /	Albugnano Library
TIME /	2 hours
OBJECTIVE /	Brainstorming and definition of possible uses and activities
TOOLS /	Presentation deck
	Values and Needs poster
	Cards with needs, themes, and modalities of use
	Inspirational photos
	Crazy 8 template sheets
	3 thematic areas poster
	"Required Resources" A5 sheet

↑ FIG. 55.
The SMOTIES team facilitating the first exercise of WS2.

↑ FIG. 56.
A shot of the first exercise of WS2, the Crazy Eight.

Activities

1   Presentation of SMOTIES and project timeline, the outcomes of WS1 with the values and needs for the space, and design process for the garden of via Roma, proper to contextualise the subsequent activities and the workshop agenda

Division of the participants into two groups with two facilitators each to support discussion

2   **Crazy Eight:** Participants are given a paper sheet folded in sections where to collect 8 proposals for uses and activities. In order to inspire and spark imagination, the table is filled with inspirational but cryptic images and three types of cards that presented different parameters (for instance, indoor/outdoor, for the community/for tourists, ordinary/extraordinary, and so on), to support the creation of a base scenario to then imagine the idea.

3   Clustering of the ideas based on the three thematic areas and based on similarity.

4   The two groups present the clustering poster to each other and explain the different ideas.

The facilitators switch groups and bring with them the poster with other people's ideas

5   **Required Resources:** The participants are asked to select some of the ideas on the other group poster and implement them using the provided template that focuses on the needed resources and further characteristics in the space. A template was created to help generate propositions around each idea: *To make sure that [who is participating in the activity] is able to [one of the ideas from the first activity], it is necessary (for the garden) to have [define the kind of resource: role, object, necessary space] that is/are [adjective to describe the resources].*

6   Final discussion around the implemented ideas.

Co-design insights

→ Participants showed a propositive attitude to the co-design process and active participation during the activities despite some difficulties in understanding how to use the tools.

→ The subdivision into smaller groups with more facilitators helped create an informal and colloquial environment, allowing discussion between and room for everyone

→ The participants displayed attention and care for the feasibility of the activities proposed, raising the importance of thinking about the local context of the town and the necessity to consider the production phase and implementation requirements during the selection of ideas.

← During the first activity, it was challenging to get concrete ideas from some participants; the facilitators had to support them by providing themselves the different cards and possible scenarios for the ideas.

← The recruiting ended up being one of the main challenges of this workshop. The small number of people (and moreover from the same age group) limited the diversification of ideas. Moreover, because of the reduced number of participants, the conversation was sometimes prevailed by a quite opinionated participant.

↑ FIG. 57.
A member of the SMOTIES team presenting the work done by the participants.

WY - From activities to space

Concluding the second co-design workshop, it was time to move forward to the next step of the process, which centres on imagining the garden's spatial layout with the community.

The design team gathered the two brainstorming from WS1 and WS2, clustering them in bigger groups based on common patterns and the three broader themes of spontaneous use, culture and performance, nature and sport. The results of WS2, although reflecting a small sample of people, validated some of the ideas and brought other perspectives to the table that helped the team with the first round of clustering. After that, each cluster was analysed by selecting some drivers (defined through the cards of the first exercise) that could influence the design of the activities and generate different requirements. In this way, and with the help of the cards from the second exercise of WS2, the team was able to list a series of spatial resources and elements that could populate the space and support the collective configuration in the next workshop. A second round of clustering was proper to frame common patterns that identify the activities, such as the level of interaction people have with the space or the flows happening because of specific actions; this generated a series of macro clusters that connected seventeen final ideas to meaningful spatial drivers. This clustering enhanced a division between activities, those that were characterized by being self-managed and spontaneous in nature, and those that had a more service-oriented line and required more spatial, human, and organizational resources. Overall, the multiple rounds of sense-making helped reach a state where the activities were defined and easy to explain to the citizens. Simultaneously, working on the individual ideas unveiled some design requirements, constraints, and directions to be presented to the participants to help them design the space, keeping a tight connection to the territorial possibilities and what the town of Albugnano can currently offer.

The second step was defining the workshop goals and co-design actions. The team focused on achieving a light approach to the design of the space, leveraging a simple interaction with the spaces that could unleash creativity and, at the same time, support creating feasible ideas. In this case, we can talk about a "converging" phase, in which the participants would work collaboratively to reach an output to be presented in the future to the rest of the town. The Spatial Journey Map and Desktop

→ FIG. 58.
A visualisation of the sense-making and clustering of the WS1+WS2 results.

CO-DESIGN IN ALBUGNANO

ATTIVITA' SPONTANEE E UTILIZZO LIBERO

COMMUNITY SPACES
Uso libero | Svago

SCAMBIO
Incontro tra giovani e vecchi | Book crossing | Scambiare oggetti

OSSERVARE
Punto musica per ascoltare | Spazio per godere del panorama
Guardare oltre il giardino | Mindfull-ness, guardare le stelle

GIOCO
Attività ricreative

Incontro tramite i sensi e la parola

FOOD
Passeggiate nei boschi per prodotti locali | Competi-zione culinaria | Ricette da ingredienti dei boschi | *Pasto condiviso* | Grigliata | Grandi bevute
Cucina tipica locale con degustazioni | Servizio di ristorazione

BOTANICA & ESTETICA
Piante officinali | Fontana
Bacheca (turismo e scoperta)

LECTURES
Botanica | Storie sul meleto
Racconti sulla natura

Appunta-mento fisso cibo e storie

PERFORMANCE
Ballo e canto | Canti / danze tipiche
Cinema / cineforum | Teatro
Momento teatrale non strutt.

MOSTRE
Mostra di fotografia

NATURA E SPORT

ESPLORAZIONE
Sport all'aperto | Incontro per camminata
Sentieri | Visite guidate | Tabelloni percorsi

Tesori nascosti per turisti

STORIE
Lettura di ogni genere | Scoprire storie particolari

PASSEGGIATE TEMATICHE
Passeggiate soft | Camminate al tramonto
Cammino chiesette
Sentieri | Percorso acque (mulino)

LECTURES
Racconti su prodotti locali | Lezioni di arte, monu-menti, foto
Racconti su abbazia | Storie e usanze locali x turisti

WORKSHOP
Fare musica | Attività di pittura, foto, ceramica
Artigianato collettivo

PERFORMANCE E CULTURA

Labels within Fig. 59 clustering map:

ACCESSO / SCAMBIO
- Spazio di condivi-sione
- Pannelli informativi
- Deposito attrezzi
- Spazio di informa-zione
- Segnaletica percorsi
- Bacheca x locandine
- Spazio espositivo
- Spazio personaliz zabile

SENSO DI APPARTENENZA

Attività   Risorse

PRODUZIONE + CONSUMO
- Pasti condivisi
- Momento ristoro
- Tavoli da laboratorio
- Workshop e laboratori
- Sedute per lavorare
- Lectures

RELAX
- Spazio di visione
- Spazio per rilassarsi
- Sedute comode

- Danza
- Pista
- Teatro
- Palco
- Cinema

PERFORMANCE

RISORSE UMANE
- Comitato organizzati vo
- Esperti
- Guide escursionis tiche

- Impianto audio-video
- Elettricità
- Acqua

RISORSE TECNICHE

Walkthrough tools became the main point of reference for WS3 to define the user's experience in space, documented by a chronological sequence of activities and associated with spatial touchpoints. Because space impacts human actions and interactions, the "designer" (in this case, the citizens) deploys the spatial touchpoint to map how the user interacts with and perceives the space. Indeed, the SMOTIES team opted to give the participants a series of activities connected to a series of physical, human and technical resources (derived from the previous sense-making processes) and placed both in time and space on a scaled representation of the garden. The team, therefore, worked to produce a set of visual elements that could be easily organised within the garden plan. The activities were translated into cards to be placed on a daily timeline. To add interaction to the exercise, the resources were provided as small tokens (in scale) that could be moved and placed on the plan, giving flexibility to the activity and letting people experiments with multiple configurations one after the other. Different groups would be set up to work on different configurations, exploring the relationship and connections of various sets of activities and how they influence each other spatially. At the end of the workshop, the objective was to reach a level of detail for the spatial configurations that could be easily tested in future initiatives and prototyping.

↑ FIG. 59.
Clustering map from the second sense-making session of WY.
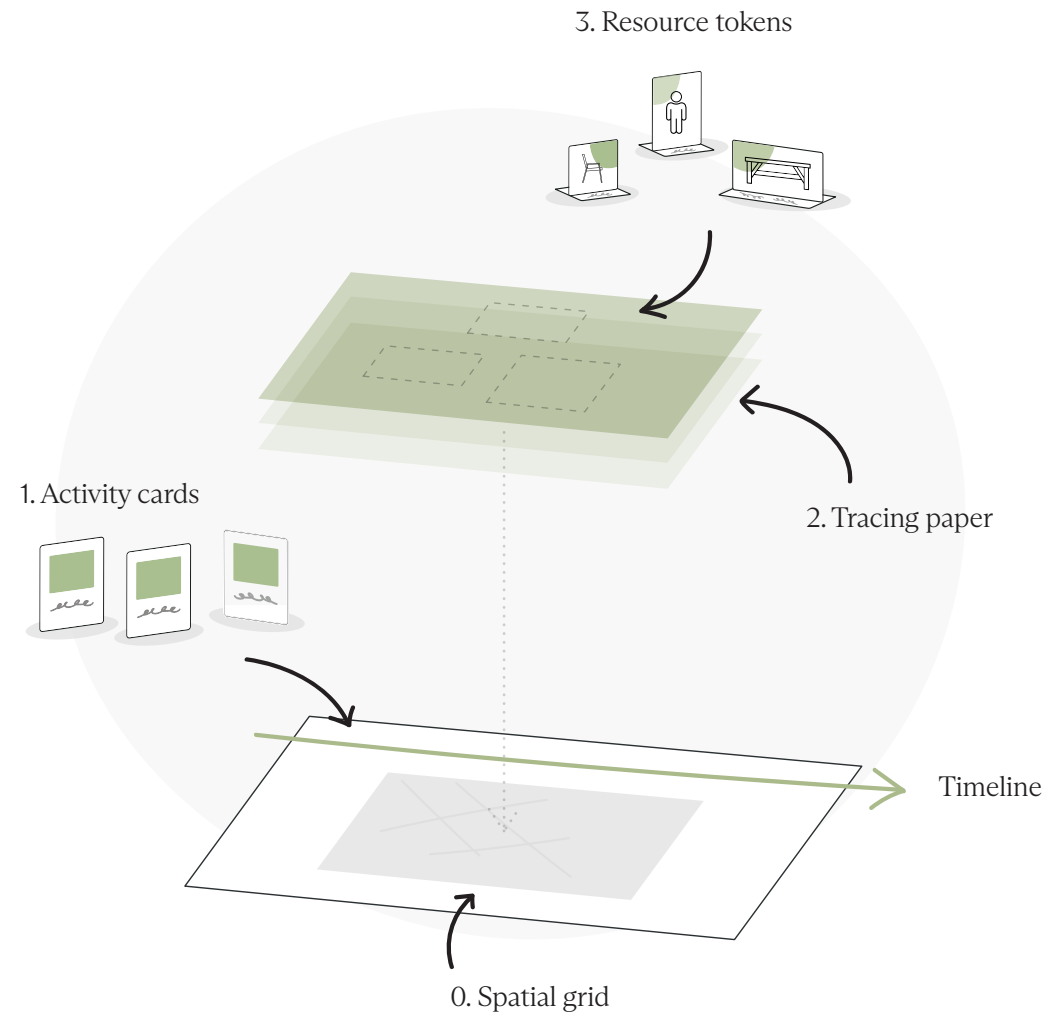
↑ FIG. 60.
Visual representation of the different steps of WS3.

Labels in Fig. 60:
- 3. Resource tokens
- 2. Tracing paper
- 1. Activity cards
- 0. Spatial grid
- Timeline

WS3 →
Spatial Layout

DATE /	25 June 2023
PARTICIPANTS /	9 participants + 4 designers
LOCATION /	Albugnano Library
TIME /	2 hours
OBJECTIVE /	Spatial configuration of activites and resources
TOOLS /	Presentation deck
	Garden Masterplan
	Tracing paper
	Resources tokens
	Activity cards

Activities

1   Presentation of SMOTIES to new participants, the seventeen services and activities that resulted from the WS1+WS2 sense-making, concluding with an explanation of the workshop activities and an overview of the garden's space.

Division of the participants into groups with a facilitator to moderate the session

2   **Activity mapping:** Each group is given a set of six activities (combined previously by the SMOTIES team) that need to be placed on a timeline divided by morning, afternoon and evening. Each group is also assigned a specific scenario to guide the selection and placement (weekday or weekend, ordinary or extraordinary). The activities can have a spot placement at a particular time or continue throughout the day.

3   **First configuration:** Afterwards, each group is assigned a set of spatial, human and technical resources presented as tokens (consultable in the Annex on page XX) and used to configure a proper spatial layout for the morning activities. The tokens can be placed on top of a scaled garden plan, showcasing the place's general dimension and some limitations set by the environment. The plan poster is combined with a sheet of tracing paper on which the group can trace the overall dimensions of the activities based on the positioning of their resources.

4   **Second configuration:** The second round focuses on defining the spatial layout of the remaining activities in the evening or in the second part of the day. The group is invited to consider the first configuration and the resources employed and discuss which can be reused for other activities or if they need to be moved elsewhere to support more activities throughout the day. In this way, a sequential dimension is added to the spatial configuration.

5   Definition, based on the results of the two configurations and their interaction, of which spatial resources must be fixed and which could be left mobile.

6   Presentation of the results to the collective.

Co-design insights

→ The workshop was well received by the participants, who enjoyed the playful activity and working concretely with spatial elements. The group division supported a friendly and straightforward discussion between the participants and the facilitators.

→ Considering the difficulty of the activity, the participation was quite active and propositive. The presence of newcomers who didn't participate in the previous workshops helped not stagnate on specific actions and offered alternative perspectives in approaching the configuration.

→ The different kinds of resources (spatial, human and technical) helped the participants imagine the activities scenario and think about the activities by looking at different dimensions, not just the spatial one.

← Not everyone felt comfortable working and thinking about the space from a plan or top-view perspective. Initially, people seemed limited by their lack of knowledge or expertise in approaching a technical drawing. Thus, most of the participants didn't use the tracing paper to work on defining areas but mostly tried different layouts with the resource tokens.

← Overall, the workshop agenda was too structured and was simplified during the workshop, omitting the collective presentation and merging the two configuration exercises. In local and small contexts such as the SMOTIES case, the participants prefer a simple yet straightforward agenda.

↑ FIG. 63.
The group 3 working on the temporal placement of the activities.

WZ - Layout synthesis

After concluding WS3, the team gathered together again to discuss the results and move forward with the project. During the activities, each facilitator took pictures of the different spatial layouts to map the changes made by the groups between each configuration and connect the movements of resources on the plan. The pictures became fundamental for the team to synthesise the work of the three groups in as many spatial configurations, each presenting certain peculiarities that distinguish it from the others and make it innovative at the design level. The team traced each configuration on a piece of tracing paper, defining what would be the fixed and mobile architectural elements needed. Moreover, the overlapping of the three layouts made it possible to synthesise the work in a hybrid configuration that took the strengths of each one. From here, the team also tried to create alternative proposals as an individual exercise, and from there, another converging moment generated other layouts that were compared with the ones' from the citizens. The role of the designer, in this case, was pretty dominant in terms of technical expertise: the broad design background and some expertise in spatial design were critical to ground the spatial layout and converge to different proposals that showcase a design mindset and go beyond the simple arrangement of activities; it was also fundamental to recognise the feasibility and coherence of some design choices, leveraging the possibilities of the town and vision for the territory.

In order to validate the assumption made on a two-dimensional level by the SMOTIES team and the participants during the workshop, it was time to physically test and prototype the spatial configuration, specifically the interactions and flows happening within said space when dealing with a multi-purpose space in which services could take place. The sequential dimension is still one of the most relevant in this case when using an S+S approach for the design of spaces. The 2/3 final layouts generated by the internal SMOTIES sessions became the starting point for the first round of prototyping at the next workshop. Considering the previous experiences with the community and the participation levels at the workshops, the team opted for a rough and lo-fi direction for the prototyping, focusing the attention on how the space would change based on the flows of people, the interactions and the spatial adjustments of the resources between different

↑ FIG. 64.
The SMOTIES team working on synthesising the WS3 results.

activities. To do so, the next workshop was organised as a body-storming or roleplaying session, in which the participants would be assigned a role and activities and, with the support of a series of low-fidelity models that resemble the physical resources, act out the selected activities within the space. In this case, the aesthtics of the space would be put aside in order to prioritise the functionality and usability of the space. This activity of community engagement in performative and testing activities would be the first one, followed by other trials where the fidelity of the prototyping would become more defined in each.

Conclusions and future developments
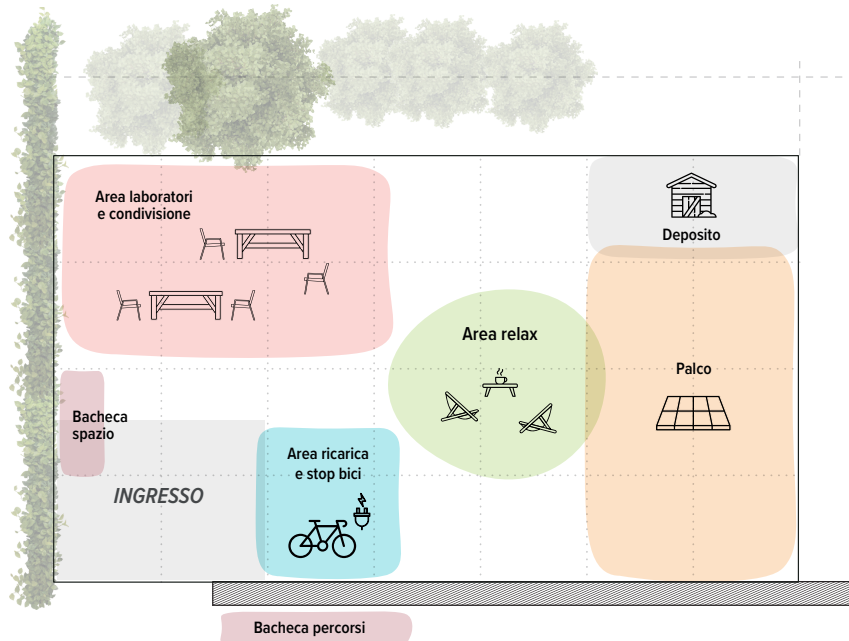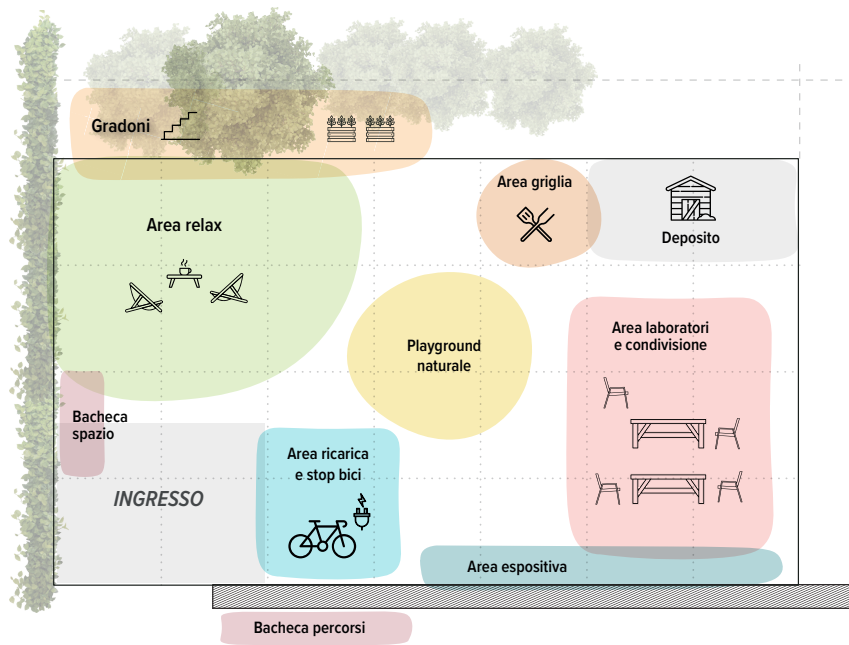
The final 2 spatial layouts resulting from WS3 and WZ, which are going to be presented to the community.

Overall, the first three co-design sessions successfully facilitated collaboration with the community and generated a comprehensive collection of spatial layouts that are now ready to be tested in the project's next phase. These sessions served as a valuable opportunity for me to witness firsthand how this co-design process contributed to developing tangible and feasible solutions that would greatly benefit the community of Albugnano. Regrettably, due to time constraints and limitations specific to this thesis, the analysis of the workshops must conclude at this point. Nonetheless, I am grateful to have had the privilege of overseeing the three co-design activities and observing how they effectively supported the creation of viable solutions for the community of Albugnano. With the completion of this series of co-design activities, the primary objective for the SMOTIES team for the next stpa of the project is shifting their focus towards the "servitisation" of the space. The upcoming executive phase will consider the co-management of the space and emphasise its crucial role in ensuring the successful completion of this spatial regeneration initiative. These aspects form the cornerstone for comprehensive planning, fostering effective synergy among various project spaces and implementing the executive phase of tourism and cultural services. The ultimate goal is to activate, enhance, and sustain the initiatives in the long term. Ideally, the work accomplished in the garden of Via Roma will serve as a precedent for numerous co-creative interventions within the social fabric of Albugnano. The vision extends beyond the immediate project, encompassing the holistic development of the Basso Monferrato region. By adopting a systemic view that acknowledges the interconnections between places, people, and services, along with a service design mindset, we can unlock the potential of an innovation strategy around the territory. This comprehensive perspective recognises the territory as a complex system, paving the way for implementing innovative initiatives and ensuring their long-term success.

Concluding →

Conclusions

Reflections on a S+S co-design approach

Reaching the end of this long yet insightful process, it is imperative to evaluate the work done on the literature review, the analysis of the case studies and, most importantly, the contribution to the SMOTIES co-design process to address the research question defined at the beginning of this thesis: What is the value of a Service+Spatial design approach that emphasises co-designing public spaces with local communities?

The literature review framed the necessity to discuss public spaces as one of the most critical topics of modern society, focusing on the importance of engaging citizens and communities within the design process of built environments.
Within these premises, the S+S approach offers a novel and valid alternative to the traditional spatial methodologies processes, providing the theoretical background and design methods embedded in Service Design to establish co-design systematically within Spatial Design, thus creating a symbiosis of the two disciplines. Engaging communities throughout the entire design process of a space has been shown to improve citizens' sense of belonging, ownership, and care for the area. This approach allows for spatial solutions tailored to the local context that can serve as an activator of services for the community first and the territory on a long-term strategy.

The analysed case studies indeed provided practical examples that proved to be insightful references and success stories on how co-design has been employed as a methodology to design spaces with the community; some also approached the whole process through a systemic vision that went beyond the single space. Even if the case didn't explicitly present an application of Service+Spatial design, the co-design methods presented in them became an insightful reference for the theory to establish how the Service+Spatial design approach can be implemented through co-design activities to structure a long-term vision that considers spaces as potential enablers of service and vice-versa in a systemic vision.

↑ FIG. 66.
The Vezzolano Abbey.

Reflecting on the on-field experimentations, I can affirm that the SMOTIES co-design activities in Albugnano were an excellent testing ground for the S+S approach. Between the internal and external workshops, it was possible to validate the opportunities of this transdisciplinary dialogue between Service Design and Spatial Design, focusing primarily on applying co-design methodologies for the symbiotic design of spaces and services for the local community. The small and remote context offered by the Basso Monferrato territory presented an alternative testing ground for this kind of methodology, furthermore shifting from the more common urban realities. Needless to say, this different reality presents its own benefits and challenges: the societal and political disparities within Albugnano hindered the PoliMi SMOTIES team's potential for action, thus limiting my exploration of the S+S approach to a section of the whole design process that couldn't include the prototyping and executive phase of the project. This thesis aims to become the starting point for the SMOTIES project to continue applying the S+S methodology and leverage its transdisciplinarity in an executive and implementation phase

The three starting co-design workshops were structured and planned based on the local circumstances of the time. Still, it was possible to test specific tools and hybrid methodologies

that connected spaces to a temporal dimension and services to a physical one. During the workshop definition, I was able to see the importance of translating the combined dimensions presented in the theory into specific activities and elements of the workshop that could support dealing specifically with the spatial and temporal dimensions simultaneously. Indeed, the outcomes of the first three workshops already showcase many opportunities to establish the via Roma garden as a space that activates services for the community and the territory.

Looking the overall involvement in the single workshops, citizens of Albugnano showed a good and active engagement in the activities, providing insightful opinions on the topic. Nevertheless, creating an established project community that was present throughout the whole process was challenging and required quite some effort from the PoliMi team in finding strategic solutions to interact with the community, opting above all for a very consistent communication and direct connection with each participant. Thankfully, the diversification of participants between the workshop had its own perks, bringing a variety of voices, opinions and ideas that helped diversify the design choices and let express creativity in different manners. As I mentioned earlier, the designer figure was crucial in translating the results of each workshop and bringing the right expertise when dealing with the design of spaces at a more technical level. I argue that an S+S designer should present in their background technical expertise (from the spatial Design discipline) combined with the soft skills typical of a facilitating figure (from Service Design). Engaging communities and individuals not trained in this practice means deciphering the complexity of the design of spaces and making it accessible, allowing the inclusion of non-expert in the design and decision-making process of public space.

In conclusion, this thesis aims to be an initial experimentation for the Service+Spatial Design approach in a remote context outside the urban fabric, offering practical application and references to establish an actionable S+S framework. Starting from the recent theoretical background, more research and exploration are needed to structure a design methodology encompassing both disciplines and offering design practitioners a valuable framework of action when co-designing public spaces. I believe that by leveraging a Service+Spatial approach, we can design more community- and people-centric public spaces that reflect the needs and wishes of its inhabitants together as a systemic design entity made of designers, people and institutions.

This research is the farthest to be concluded or exhaustive, but I hope to provide a good inspiration for future works regarding the topic and, furthermore, to support Albugnano with a starting project of renovation that could incite many other interventions for the town and the territory.

→ FIG. 67.
The entry of Albugnano's communal library.

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Resources

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List of figures and tables

Annex →

UNO SPAZIO PER ALBUGNANO
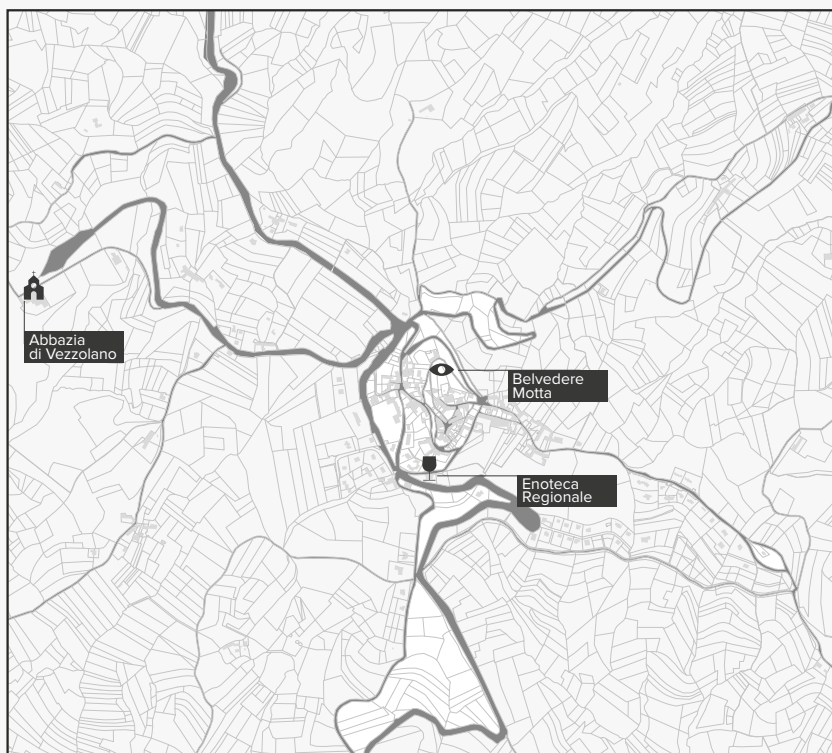
Se ti fa piacere restare aggiornato sui prossimi incontri o desideri essere coinvolto attivamente nel progetto, scrivi qui i tuoi contatti!

NOME:_____ COGNOME:_____

TEL.:_____ MAIL:_____

Dove si trova questo luogo e che nome gli daresti?
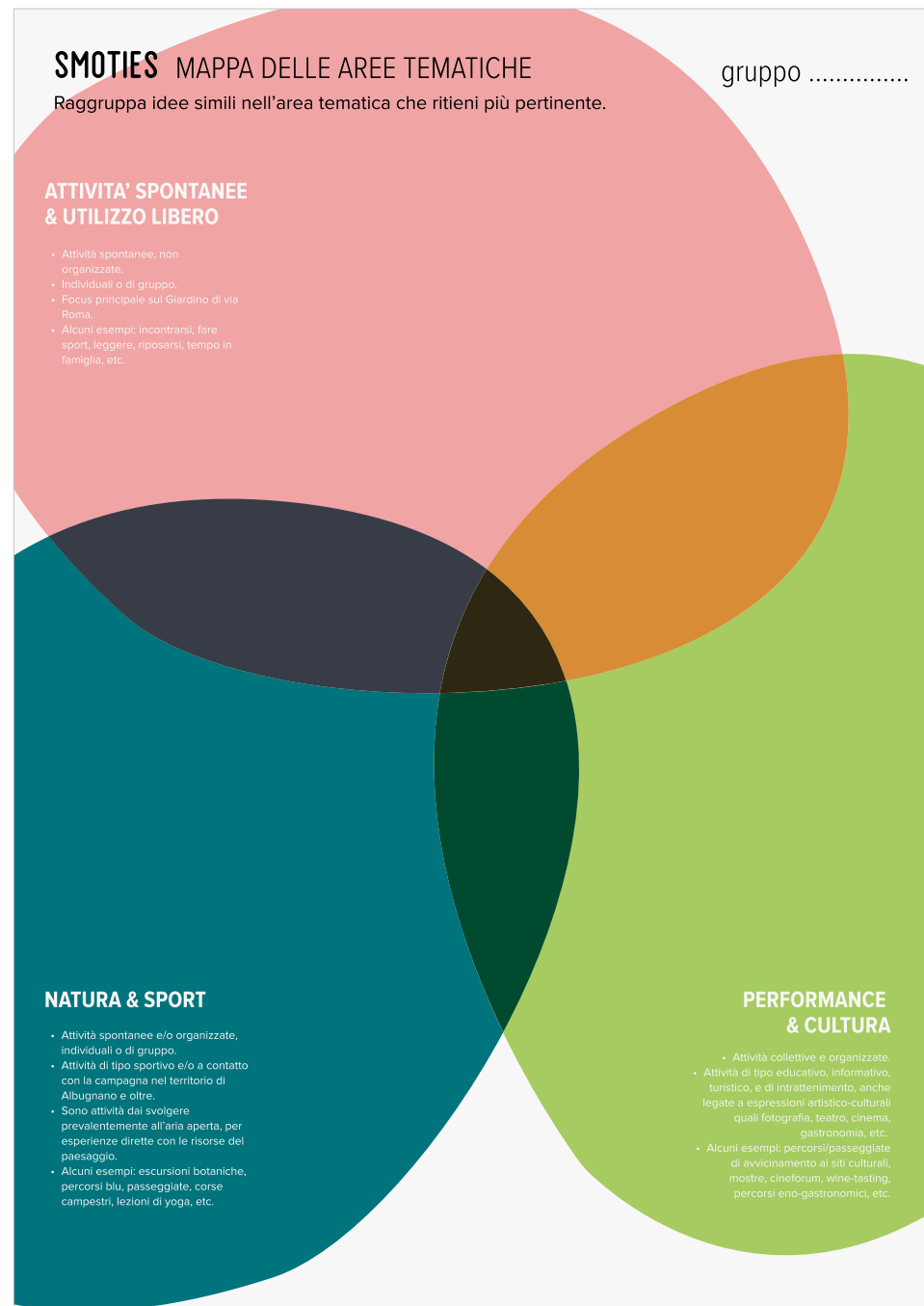**Indicalo sulla mappa!**

UNO SPAZIO PER ALBUGNANO

Hai un po' di tempo libero e hai voglia di uscire. Come e con chi immagini di trascorrere del tempo in questo luogo?

Immagina cosa questo luogo possa diventare per te e per il territorio che lo circonda. Cosa vorresti trovare qui?

(Es: Uno spazio attrezzato per fare attività sportiva all'aperto
Un anfiteatro per spettacoli culturali a cielo aperto
Un'area di ritrovo dove rilassarsi e discutere)

Cosa invece vorresti non trovare affatto?

SMOTIES MAPPA DELLE AREE TEMATICHE

Raggruppa idee simili nell'area tematica che ritieni più pertinente.

gruppo ....

ATTIVITA' SPONTANEE & UTILIZZO LIBERO

- Attività spontanee, non organizzate.
- Individuali o di gruppo.
- Focus principale sul Giardino di via Roma.
- Alcuni esempi: incontrarsi, fare sport, leggere, riposarsi, tempo in famiglia, etc.

NATURA & SPORT

- Attività spontanee e/o organizzate, individuali o di gruppo.
- Attività di tipo sportivo e/o a contatto con la campagna nel territorio di Albugnano e oltre.
- Sono attività dai svolgere prevalentemente all'aria aperta, per esperienze dirette con le risorse del paesaggio.
- Alcuni esempi: escursioni botaniche, percorsi blu, passeggiate, corse campestri, lezioni di yoga, etc.

PERFORMANCE & CULTURA

- Attività collettive e organizzate.
- Attività di tipo educativo, informativo, turistico, e di intrattenimento, anche legate a espressioni artistico-culturali quali fotografia, teatro, cinema, gastronomia, etc.
- Alcuni esempi: percorsi/passeggiate di avvicinamento ai siti culturali, mostre, cineforum, wine-tasting, percorsi eno-gastronomici, etc.

RISORSE NECESSARIE

Usa questa scheda per definire le risorse umane e materiali (attrezzature, spazi e arredi ma anche capacità, conoscenza, disponibilità) necessarie per svolgere le attività identificate nell'esercizio precedente

Per fare in modo che ...
[scrivi chi parteciperà all'attività e userà queste risorse]

sia in grado di ...
[scrivi un'attività tra quelle identificate / disegnate]

è necessario che (nel Giardino) ci sia
[scrivi il tipo di risorsa: un ruolo, un oggetto, spazio necessario]

che sia/siano ...
[scrivi alcune caratteristiche che aiutino a descrivere la risorsa]

disegna qui la risorsa

RIUNIRSI, TROVARSI, SVOLGERE **ATTIVITA' SOCIALI** E DI CONDIVISIONE

CARTA **#DESIDERI**

RACCONTARE, RESTITUIRE

CARTA **#DESIDERI**

GODERE DI **PACE E SERENITA'**, PRATICARE MINDFULNESS E INTROSPEZIONE

CARTA **#DESIDERI**

STUPIRSI, **SCOPRIRE**, IMPARARE

CARTA **#DESIDERI**

ALL'APERTO

CARTA **#CONTESTO**

USO ORDINARIO, DI TUTTI I GIORNI

CARTA **#CONTESTO**

PER LA COMUNITA' ESTERNA: TURISTI, VISITATORI, OSPITI

CARTA **#CONTESTO**

USO SERALE, NOTTURNO

CARTA **#CONTESTO**

TIMELINE ATTIVITA'

Mattina   Pomeriggio   Sera

CONFIGURAZIONE SPAZIALE

In piccoli gruppi, posizionare/disegnare gli ingombri delle attività sulla pianta dello spazio. Le risorse collegate alle attività servono come linee guida per aiutarvi nella configurazione, così come i dettagli del sito presenti sulla pianta.

N

2x2

[!] Zona non calpestabile

Pendenza

[!] **Recinzione metallica**   *Area Orto privato*

QUALI RISORSE SERVONO PER IL GIARDINO?

RISORSE FISSE

RISORSE MOBILI

[!] **Siepe di separazione da abitazione**

Questa area va adibita a ingresso (non mettere attività!)

↑ **Ingresso**

[!] **Muro di mattoni**
superficie verticale interna/esterna

0   1   2   3

← *via Roma* →

Gruppo

....

Relax, ascolto, mindfulness, osservare il panorama

Attività di sosta
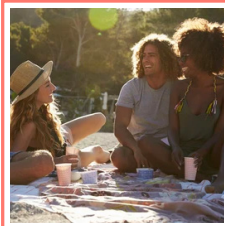
Attività di condivisione

Attività ludiche
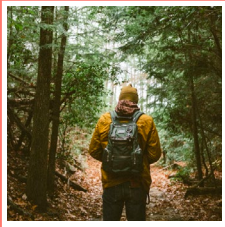
Camminate esplorative (autonome)
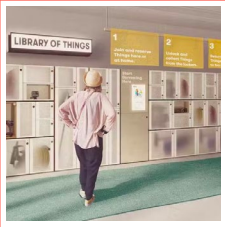
Scambio oggetti (library of things, book crossing)

Attività collettive di creazione e produzione (artigianato, discipline artistiche)
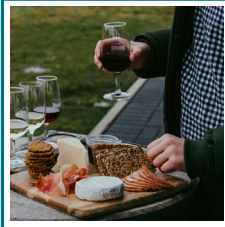
Degustazione di prodotti e cucina locali
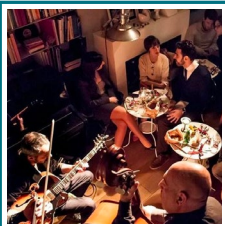
Narrazione enogastronomica e botanica

Workshop organizzati (artigianato, musica, discipline artistiche)

Racconti e condivisioni di sapere (lezioni di storia, cultura, etc.)

Camminate tematiche e guidate
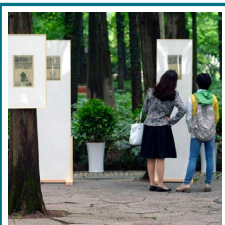
Mostre ed esposizioni
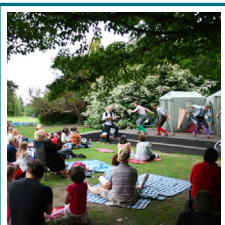
Performance (teatro, musica, danza)
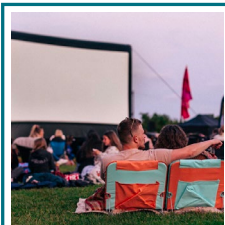
Cinema
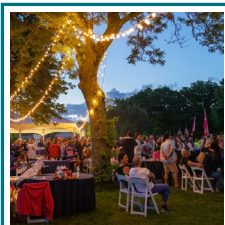
Feste e celebrazioni

Sedia comoda

Sedia
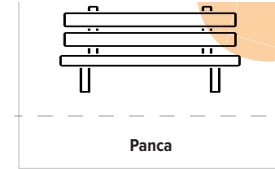
Panca
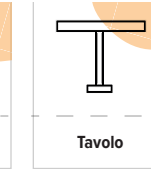
Tavolo
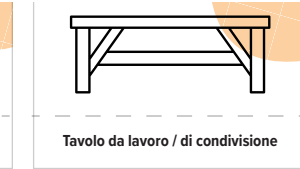
Tavolo da lavoro / di condivisione

Piante officinali

Piante

Tavolino
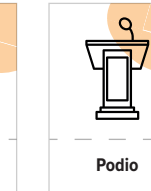
Podio
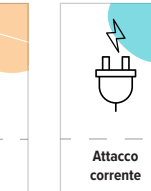
Attacco corrente

Illuminazione
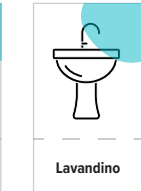
Lavandino
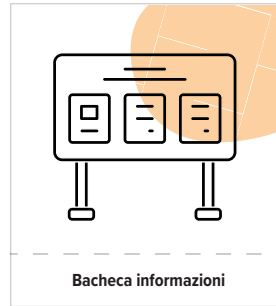
Bacheca informazioni
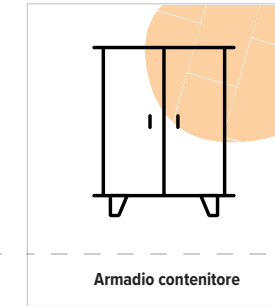
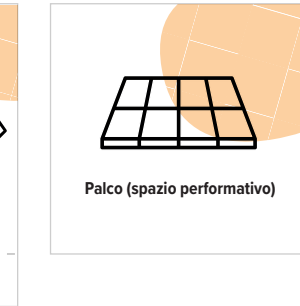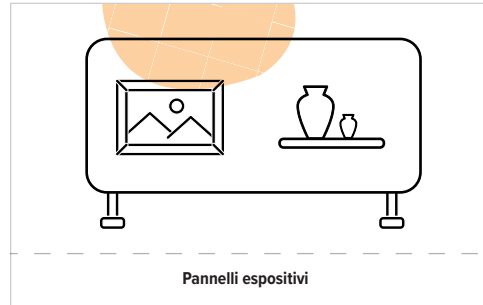**Armadio contenitore**
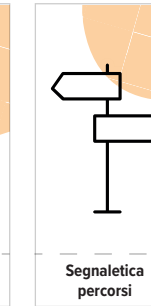
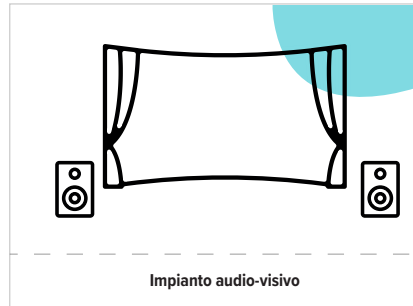**Segnaletica percorsi**

Palco (spazio performativo)

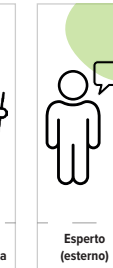**Pannelli espositivi**

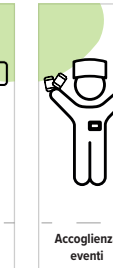**Deposito materiale e attrezzi**

Impianto audio-visivo

Organizzatori

Guida escursionistica

Esperto (esterno)

Accoglienza eventi

MARTINA BON / SMOTIES