

Climate City Olympics: Memorandum of Understanding

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets forth the terms and understanding between the signatories to develop a concrete concept for Climate City Olympics and support steps towards their implementation.

Background

Olympic games are held every few years and attract hundreds of millions of viewers worldwide. We should adopt this idea in other areas, such as countering climate change and fostering sustainability. We believe, this format can largely contribute to reaching the United Nations Sustainability Goals, as laid out in the Agenda 2030, the Paris Climate Accords, and elsewhere. The Climate City Olympics could boost innovation globally. People in cities and regions around the world would compete for their city to find the best environmentally-friendly, energy-efficient, resource-saving, and crisis-proof solutions.

While rapid urbanization comes with many problems, such as the overuse of resources, climate change and inequality, cities become ever more important, also as motors of innovation. Presently, more than half of humanity lives in cities, and the share of the urban population is expected to increase to 68% by 2050. To tackle the social, economic, and ecological challenges, we need new paradigms of innovation and engagement.

In the past, we had primarily two ways of addressing global problems: nation-states and global corporations. Herewith, we propose a third, complementary way of addressing global problems: through networks of cities, mobilizing civil society.

City Olympics would produce novel solutions to global problems, identify the best solutions, encourage their implementation and the learning of cities from each other. We propose to measure and benchmark sustainability progress, celebrate achievements (e.g. by “olympic medals”), and organize the sharing of good practices.

It is essential that urban development is performed collectively. This also increases the identification and support of the people. From the point of view of the inhabitants, this makes a city “their city.” People are keen to be not just consumers, but also co-creators. City Olympics will be able to mobilize the innovation capacity and engagement of a city’s inhabitants at scale and to create collective benefits by combining competition with cooperation and promoting open source and creative commons solutions, thereby unleashing combinatorial innovation and collective intelligence.

Purpose

This MOU will unite civil society, municipalities, city networks, academic institutions, local businesses and NGOs interested in developing the format of Climate City Olympics, in implementing the strategy and in participating in their realization.

This MOU does not imply any funding commitment by the signatories.

However, signatories are invited to help secure the necessary funding to implement the concept of Climate City Olympics.

Signatories in the MOU may participate in following activities:

- Participation in planning workshops designed to develop the profile and strategy
- Engagement in fundraising
- Reach-out activities to cities, city networks and inhabitants of cities
- Setting up of an organizing team
- Support of public relations and communication activities
- Participation in public data collection and sharing
- Participation in the Climate City Olympics

Task Force and Reporting

Immediately after the Vienna Workshop on September 11, 2018, an expandible task force will be set up, which will regularly report about its activities and progress to the signatories.

Modification

This MOU is at will and may be modified by mutual consent of the task force or a board to be appointed in the future. The task force will then inform the signatories about the modifications. Signatories and their designated representatives have the right to ask for amendments or withdraw from the MoU (possible by email).

Duration

This MOU shall become effective upon signature by the authorized officials from its partner organizations and will remain in effect until terminated by mutual consent of the task force or a board to be appointed in the future.

Founding Signatories (additional signatories can be collected in annex documents)

Vienna, September 11, 2018

Complexity Science Hub Vienna
Prof. Dr. Stefan Thurner

ETH Zurich, Computational Social Science
Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Dirk Helbing



FuturICT 2.0, Project Lead ETHZ
Stefan Klauser

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Klauser', with a stylized, sweeping flourish at the end.

ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability e.V. (ICLEI World Secretariat)
Gino Van Begin, Secretary General

Hack4Climate / Cleantech21
Nick Beglinger, President and Founder

IAAI GloCha
Dr. Miroslav Polzer