

Hack (y)our Borders

1. What is the exact proposition/hypothesis of your proposal in the involvement of people & communities in shaping and (re)defining public space?

As globalisation breaks down geographic, cultural & economic borders, it impacts our lives, creating new opportunities, but also new insecurities.

Not knowing how to navigate a world constantly redefined, many people become tempted to re-create cultural & psychological borders to protect themselves from what they can't control nor understand.

Despite the opportunities globalisation creates, only some have the [capabilities](#) to re-shape borders and redraw the social & cultural maps on how we should live.

Even we, as citizens, can take our social codes for granted & find it difficult to perceive how they exclude others from public spaces.

These spaces are regulated by invisible codes that convey whom a particular space is for and what behaviour is allowed. But there are other codes we want to learn from that people use to [break down these borders](#) between practices & cultures.

That's why we want to understand:

- What invisible borders people in Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, London, Vilnius, Warsaw neighbourhoods experience and perceive in public spaces?
- How people are breaking down these invisible borders in these cities and disciplines?
- How people can co-design devices & activities using physical and open source methods to break down these borders?

1. Map our collective wisdom

To carry out this work, we will map with our partners our collective experience of engaging communities in public space.

2. Train social designers to uncover & make sense of invisible borders

Using this, we will train up people in Amsterdam, Berlin, London & Warsaw to become to uncover the "invisible borders" people face in their neighbourhoods and the ways people are breaking down borders – "border hacks".

They will carry out field research in their neighbourhood and then analyse the insights together in a transnational workshop.

3. Make visible invisible borders

We and social designers will upload the insights onto a new lab on ECF Labs [visualising the insights](#) and [design principles](#) and create an exhibition using the Street Komoda method in each neighbourhood for other people to engage and enrich them throughout the project.

4. Co-design devices to break down borders

Then, our partners will run a workshop to share with them the methods they've used and help them use those techniques to co-design open source public space devices & urban furniture that break down those borders.

5. Co-design a game using the devices to break down borders

We will then run a workshop with Game Off and the social designers to co-design a game that uses those devices in a playful way.

6. Showcase the game & devices to wider audiences

This game will be played at the Transeuropa Festivals to enable wider audiences to use the devices to break down borders.

7. Define and evaluate the collective impact of the game & devices

We will help social designers use Goteo's "Kit for the Crowd" to define & evaluate the collective impact for the products they've helped design. This will act as a method to review them and work out how to develop them beyond the project.

2. Why is investment and support for this proposal needed? Please describe the context and the concrete output the R&D investment will lead to.

By helping people make their cultural & psychological borders visible, we want to understand what prevents people from using public spaces as they would like to and enable them to feel they're not alone in experiencing these borders and that they can change their situation. The outputs of uncovering "invisible borders" will be an exhibition [visualising the insights](#) and [design principles](#) that shape the co-design of the devices & game.

By supporting people to learn, apply & exchange skills from different methods & cultures, we are providing them with the capabilities they can use beyond the project. By introducing methods that build on each other, we are creating a new form of public space design process that uses methods from Idea Campers. The outputs will be a toolkit developed with our partners on how to uncover local needs to co-design solutions in public spaces, as well as how to use the devices & game, feeding into the toolkits of Laimikis, radarq, Dcalk & Sustrans.

By sharing the products the social designers will have co-designed with those from other cities, we are providing a platform for those products to be used & tested in different contexts and to a wider audience, through the Transeuropa Festival. The outputs will be organisation of the game and activities to showcase the insights & solutions co-designed.

By getting the social designers to define & evaluate the collective impact of what they have co-designed, we are helping them identify the resources to develop collective impact plans for taking forward the solutions in each of their cities.

3. How does your proposal offer an exemplary role and how is it relevant in (other parts of or even the whole of) Europe?

By developing this project in and by enabling people to exchange with each other across different countries, we are creating a transnational conversation about what "invisible borders" people experience in different cultural contexts - Eastern and Western Europe and providing the platform for transnational co-production of products that make these borders visible and help break them down.

4. How does your proposal involve the cultural sector and sectors outside the cultural sector whilst also connecting with public space?

From Idea Camp, we discovered new partners Laimikis, Radarq & Game Off, who have diverse expertise in the co-design of cultural interventions in public spaces.

We are working with partners who have built relationships with people who've experienced borders ([Migrants Rights Network](#)) and who help others break them down ([Make Sense](#)).

5. Who are the (possible) partners and stakeholders in your R&D proposal? If you are going to research and develop an idea together with another Idea Camp participant, please let us know

6. Please describe the sector your partner(s)/stakeholder(s) are involved in, their geographic location and their influence and contribution.

[Laimikis](#) (Idea Camp) is a Vilnius-based interdisciplinary platform for urban research, community art & social design initiatives, non-formal learning and activism. It is registered as NGO. They will be providing the methods to help the participants discover & co-design urban furniture to break down their borders. They will also work with us to map & exchange methods of mapping community needs and in using the Street Komoda method as a way to exhibit the insights gathered by the peer researchers for the wider neighbourhood/s. Jekaterina Lavrinec will contribute pro-bono time to carry out this work.

[radarq](#) (Idea Camp) investigates new practices in the city and in architecture. It is based in Barcelona and networks. radarq will be facilitating methods for co-design and make open source devices for public spaces with communities and also the experience of digital networking. Paco Gonzalez will contribute pro-bono time to carry out this work.

[Dcalk](#) (Idea Camp) are a collective who investigate the experience of creation and micro-editing, making connections between initiatives, and pushing our research to find ways to make board games a media of criticism. They will contribute their time to run a workshop to co-design a free licensed game to help people break down borders in public space, accessible through the GameOFF website and local LudoBoxes.

[Migrant Rights Network](#) is a charity working with organisations to strengthen the voice of migrants in discussions and debates. It is based in London. They will be involving members of their network in the project to act as social designers.

[Make Sense](#) is a transnational network of people which helps find new social entrepreneurs, structures partnerships and creates new tools to accelerate social impact. It has branches in different cities. They will be involving members in the project to act as social designers.

7. Please describe your key target groups and future target groups and describe the effect of your proposal on them. Please describe the direct involvement of citizens/communities in your proposal or the engagement with them.

We will work with people living in Amsterdam, Berlin, London & Warsaw and in particular through our partner networks, to train them to become social designers. Many of the groups we met through [Transeuropa Caravans](#) shared their experience of facing cultural borders.

We have described the qualitative effect on them in section 2. We want at least 50% of the people involved in the project to use public spaces in ways that make them feel included. We will evaluate how participants perceive their sense of inclusion in public space. We want at least 25% of the people involved to have developed their capacity to be able to change their situation themselves and with others. We will evaluate how participants perceive their capacity to achieve this before, during & after the project.

8. Describe your planning for the development of the cultural product over the 12 months, including key milestones and risks

Stage	Outputs	Milestones
1. Map our collective wisdom	Meeting with partners to plan mapping	February
	Toolkit of methods	February
2. Train social designers to uncover & make sense of invisible borders	Select social designers	February
	Training workshops in each city	March
	Field research in each city	April
	Transnational workshop to make sense of insights & create design principles	May
3. Make visible invisible borders	Insights on ECF Labs	Throughout project
	Exhibition making borders visible	May
	Meeting with partners in	May

	Vilnius to exchange insights & peer review progress	
4. Co-design devices to break down borders (in cooperation with Transnational Dialogues)	Co-design workshop	June
	Design of devices & furniture	July
	Documentation of designs & methods	August
5. Co-design a game using the devices to break down borders	Co-design workshop	September
	Design of game	September
	Documentation of game & methods	September
6. Showcase the game & devices to wider audiences	Game at Transeuropa Festival	October
	Activity to showcase & discuss project	October
7. Define and evaluate the collective impact of the solutions & project	Collective impact workshop in each city	November
	Collective impact plans for each solution & project	December
	Toolkit of methods used in project	December