Neubad Lucerne
Lucerne, Switzerland

Prof. Sibylla Amstutz, C. Lars Schuchert, Bettina Minder, Prof. Alex Willener, Ilya Fanghänel

Partners: Neubad Consortium

Timeframe: start in January 2013 and ended in June 2014

Funding institution: The research project NEUBAD was supported by the interdisciplinary research program Creative Living Lab (IS CreaLab) of the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts (LUASA).

Short Description

The City of Lucerne has a high interest in the realisation of the 'Creative City' (Cultural Agenda 2020) approach. To give an example: The old indoor swimming pool of Lucerne was put up for temporary use in 2012. The project NEUBAD, which was developed by a self-organized network, was awarded the contract. The initial concept of a laboratory for knowledge work, production, discourse, inspiration and incubation created a space for a sharing economy. The place offers art studios and co-working areas, accessible laboratories and workshops, a venue for events in the former swimming pool and a restaurant. All facilities are open to a variety of internal and external users. The research project focused in particular on interdisciplinarity and the creation of networks within a given space and with the creativity and aim to encourage innovation. This approach was very new and unique for Lucerne and Central Switzerland.

During the development and pioneering phase of the ‘Neubad’, an interdisciplinary research team of LUASA scientifically monitored and supported the project. The aim of this accompanying research project was to observe and document the emergence of a creative movement in the city as well as the innovative capacity, challenges, barriers and drivers of the Neubad. Moreover, an empirical case study approach supported insights into the creativity and innovation emerging from this urban context. Further analysis included the exploration of specific spatial, social and functional elements of the project ‘Neubad’ and its environment. Furthermore, gaining knowledge with the help of an interdisciplinary, participatory and explorative research was important. The project provided space and time for a reflection and learning process for all participants. These opportunities provided by the ‘Neubad’ project and its users are matter of ongoing optimization.

The ‘Neubad’ has found itself flourishing in a dynamic environment since the research project finished. The results of the here presented research project reflect an initial and development phase, which were still marked by many uncertainties.

www.neubad.org
www.neubad.org, www.vivaconagua.ch

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Interdisciplinary team was used to work together due to earlier collaborative projects.
- Project team composed of architects, designers and social scientists – competences to study different aspects of Neubad & generate new insights from collaboration.

Weaknesses

- At least two researchers were also involved into the team which set up Neubad – role conflicts and biases
- Potential funders not interested in accompanying research
  - Public funding went into Neubad (the product), accompanying research was not financed
  - Difficulty to justify the use of university funds to some of the board members

Opportunities

- Project team members gained expertise in accompanying research – personally and as a team.
- Project results acted as stimuli for reflection for Neubad team – and for potential similar initiatives (because they are well documented)

Threats

- Potential lack of credibility of research because of biases of some of the researchers (those with the dual roles)