Workshop on Responsible Smart City Development

From room to reflection to area for action

Universiteit Utrecht

UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.

Nice to meet you!

We are a team of researchers at Utrecht University the University of Twente working in the www.responsiblecities.nl project.

Corelia Baibarac-Duignan

Corelia is a postdoctoral researcher at Utrecht University working on civic engagement and inclusion aspects in datafied smart cities. She has an international academic and professional background in architecture, urban planning, sustainable development and urban resilience.

Julieta Matos Castaño

Julieta is a postdoctoral researcher within the Human Centred Design group at University of Twente. Her research interests lie in the development of approaches to support collaborative futures making. In her current project, Julieta explores ways to develop inclusive smart city visions.

Anouk Geenen

Anouk is a PhD candidate within the Human Centred Design group at the University of Twente. Anouk is interested in combining the hands-on approach of design with the theoretical frameworks from philosophy and science and technology studies.

What is our project about?

Technology is everywhere although we don't see it. Image courtesy of the Design Innovation Group.

Technology is changing our cities: sensors and cameras everywhere, all services we can potentially imagine just a click away, 5G antennas are emerging in multiple corners. Often, smart city initiatives assume that technology is universally beneficial, providing smart city visions and projects that represent ideal solution-oriented futures. In practice, smart technology can empower or disempower, exclude or include stakeholders.

As a result, the implementation of smart technology leads to friction. Tensions occur because the impacts of technology on the city are not univocal: different people frame them differently. For example, a surveillance camera can safeguard safety, but also an invasion of citizens' privacy; when these perspectives conflict, **controversies** arise.

In our project, we believe that acknowledging, debating, and acting upon controversies helps **to shape responsible smart city futures**.

In the 3 years of our research project, we develop and test methods to develop a collaboration platform for responsible smart cities to **foster collaboration** among citizens, governments, the private sector and research institutes.
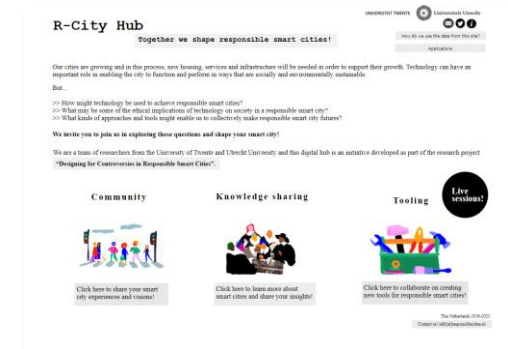
Some examples of our activities

Workshops to explore smart city controversies

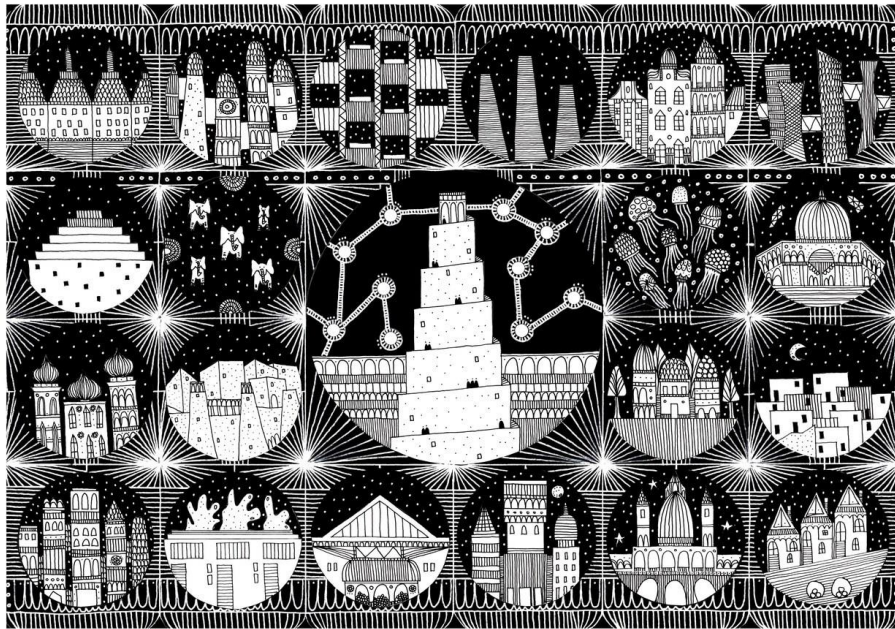Data 'walk-shops' to reflect on the impact of datafication in the city

Participation in the Dutch Design Week 2019 to reflect on smart city futures

Digital tools like the https://r-cityhub.hotglue.me/ to reflect and debate on responsible smart city development

What is the goal of this series of two workshops on 23 and 30 September?

Fedora. Image © Karina Puente Frantzen

Have you ever heard of the city of **Fedora**?

In Italo Calvino's "Invisible Cities", Fedora is two cities at the same time. On the one hand, Fedora is the 'real' city in which we are living - a "grey stone metropolis". On the other hand, it is also a reflection our wishes - the "ideal city", representing a myriad of possible futures enclosed in miniature glass globes. These miniature glass globes represent our wishes and dreams that are determined by what we find important. And these are all different: perhaps you aspire to have the most efficient city in the world, whereas another person dreams to have a culturally vibrant experience in every neighborhood. We all live in Fedora: we experience our city as it is: bikes everywhere in Amsterdam, high skyscrapers in New York, exciting restaurants in Tokyo… but we also have dreams and aspirations about how we would like it to be. And these aspirations are all different!

Since different interest groups have dissimilar motivations and dreams, the challenge (and opportunities) lie in finding ways in which the 'real' and myriad ideal cities co-exist and flourish in the future. The question is: How can we become aware of differences about smart city developments and collectively develop tactics to address these issues?

Timeline of series of workshops

Workshop 1
Issues

When? 23/Sept/2020 (15h30-17h)

Goal: To reflect on how individual aspirations and interests shape the smart city.

How? Role-play exercise in which you will adopt a stakeholder role and reflect on the implications of smart city technologies, identifying controversial issues as a group.

Online link: we will meet here ← click to join us.

WhatsApp diary
(on your own)

Reflect on the most controversial issue discussed in workshop 1.

Use your smartphone to record elements in the city that relate to these issues. What reminds you of the discussion we had during workshop 1? Post a picture and comment on your reflections and **share with us!**

We will use these reflections during workshop 2.

Workshop 2
Tactics to address the issues

When? 30/Sept/2020 (15h30-17h)

Goal: To map potential actions that could lead to a smart city in which different aspirations and interests can coexist.
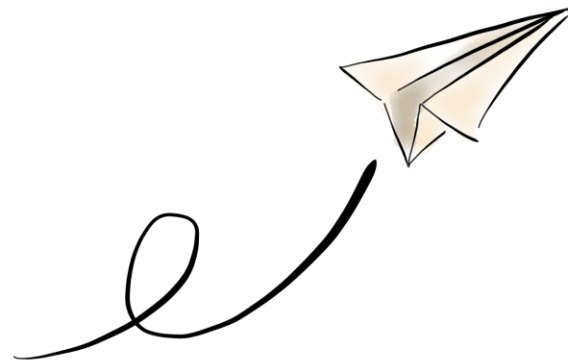
How? Map your diary reflections on the issues and collective define actions to deal with them.

Online link: we will meet here ← click to join us.

What are the main takeaways of the workshop?

- You will experience a design-based method to bridge multiple perspectives and to collectively define tactics to address the issues you identify during the sessions: bringing smart issues to life by means of role play and the development of mini-scenarios.

- You will participate in our ongoing research project www.responsiblecities.nl. Your contribution will be very valuable for us to continue developing methods and approaches for responsible smart city development.

- You will learn from multiple perspectives on smart city developments!

We hope we will have a fruitful and inspiring session.

Looking forward to seeing you there!