

PRESS RELEASE



Students Invited to Share Their Vision for Transforming Neighbourhood in Breiðholt to Tackle Climate Crisis

C40 Cities launches new global competition to generate ideas that will help deliver a green and just recovery from the COVID-19 crisis

The City of Reykjavík, 10 December 2020 - Today, the City of Reykjavík, joined 18 global cities to launch Students Reinventing Cities, a pioneering competition that will enable students and universities from across the globe to share their vision for a green and just reinvention of our cities.

In a first of its kind, the competition is being led by C40 Cities - the global network of cities committed to bold climate action. The C40 Students Reinventing Cities Competition is dedicated to transforming cities in the face of the climate crisis, by driving an active collaboration between cities and academia on climate action. The competition will ignite creative, imaginative, and tangible ways to decarbonise city neighbourhoods, as well as to support thriving and resilient life for local communities.

Today, The City of Reykjavík is thrilled to be part of Students Reinventing Cities and is inviting academics and students to share their creative vision and fresh ideas in line with the city's climate priorities. The city has identified the area of Austurberg and Gerðuberg in Breiðholt as a specific focus.

The site is of great interest for the city which aims to progress some pilot projects, in the near future. It is a multi-cultural suburban area in Reykjavík that has big opportunities to be developed as a place for people to live a more sustainable life. Improvements could deliver on climate resilience and mitigation goals while delivering a high quality of life and improved health outcomes. A place that makes an environmentally friendly lifestyle seem attractive and easily obtainable. A space where you can live, work and play in peace with the environment.

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Students entering the competition will be invited to submit their entries to redesign Austurberg and Gerðuberg area in Breiðholt for the benefit of all city residents and of the climate.

The winning projects will be celebrated in a global communication campaign and winning students will be invited to present their projects to local business leaders, city officials and leading climate organisations.

C40 Cities is calling on multi-disciplinary teams formed by students in urbanism, architecture, and environment as well as in business, real estate and engineering from local universities including The University of Iceland, Reykjavík University, Iceland University of the Arts and The Agricultural University of Iceland. The students will be asked to share and celebrate innovative solutions to environmental and societal challenges.

Dagur B. Eggertsson, Mayor of The City of Reykjavík said: “Today, I am thrilled to launch the Students Reinventing Cities with 18 other Mayors and with C40 Cities. I truly believe that academics and students have a key role to play in this vital revolution for a greener, fairer and more equal future, locally and globally.

“Now more than ever, we need to work collectively to redevelop our cities and neighbourhoods so that we can not only improve local people’s health and wellbeing, but so we can collectively work toward a unified global response to the climate crisis.

“Here in Reykjavík we are committed to rethinking our neighbourhoods to accelerate the urban green transition. That is a part of the Reykjavík Green Deal which focuses on the three pillars of sustainable development, the economic, the environmental and the social. We know that this decade will be the decade of climate action and with Students Reinventing Cities, we further strengthen our vision for a more green and just future.”

Mark Watts, C40 Executive Director, adds: “Across the globe, COVID-19 has profoundly impacted the way we work, travel and live day-to-day. In the process, it has exacerbated existing inequalities and hit vulnerable communities the hardest, urging us to prioritise a green and just recovery from the pandemic, and accelerate equitable solutions to the climate crisis.

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“This competition is an opportunity for students to have a voice, to share their ideas and passion for making change, and contribute to these solutions. We’re inviting students and academia to reimagine a series of large-scale sites that participating cities want to revitalise, to collectively build greener and fairer cities for all.”

Other cities participating in the competition include; **Athens, Auckland, Barcelona, Bogotá, Buenos Aires, Chicago, Dakar, Delhi, Dubai, Quezon City, Quito, Madrid, Melbourne, Montréal, Paris, Seattle and Washington D.C.**

The competition is being supported by a collective of academic leaders from across the globe, a number of whom have been instrumental in drawing up the **Academic Manifesto for A Green And Just Future**. The Manifesto is calling for academic institutions to step up in the fight against climate change and to cooperate with cities to take part in the campaign for a Global Green New Deal.

Academia and students interested in entering the competition can find out more at www.c40reinventingcities.org. **Deadline for entries is March 2021.** The finalists will then be selected and invited to submit their final proposals by May 2021. A jury from the city and C40 Cities will select a winner for each city site, which will be announced at a ceremony in July 2021.

The C40 Students Reinventing Cities Competition is being supported by funding partners Ikea and the SNF - Stavros Niarchos Foundation.

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About C40 Cities:

C40 is focused on tackling climate change and driving urban action that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and climate risks, while increasing the health, wellbeing and economic opportunities of urban citizens. The organisation connects 97 of the world's greatest cities to take bold climate action and collectively lead the way towards a healthier and more sustainable future. C40 supports cities to collaborate effectively, share knowledge and drive meaningful, measurable and sustainable action to create greener and fairer urban spaces.

Representing 700+ million citizens and one quarter of the global economy, mayors of the C40 cities are committed to delivering on the most ambitious goals of the Paris Agreement at a local level, as well as cleaning the air we breathe.