



Press release

Lisbon, October 31st, 2019

URBAN FUTURE Global Conference arrives in Lisbon to shape the future of our cities

After Graz, Vienna and Oslo, the Portuguese capital was elected to host the event that wants to help creating more sustainable and happy cities for everyone.

Lisbon was chosen to host the 5th edition of the URBAN FUTURE Global Conference (UFGC), Europe's largest event for sustainable cities, that will bring together around 3,000 decision makers and professionals from over 60 countries from 1st to 3rd April next year. The official kick-off of the event took place today at the Lisbon City Council and was attended by Fernando Medina, Lisbon Mayor and Gerald Babel-Sutter, CEO and founder of the conference – among many others.

The conference, which is considered to be a multidisciplinary urban event, has brought together, over the past four editions, people willing to be drivers of sustainable change in the cities where they live, creating synergies for the development of concrete projects. These "CityChangers", a term used to identify all those working to develop more environmentally friendly cities, include mayors, city planners, architects, and representatives from a variety of sectors such as real estate or mobility.

Fernando Medina, Lisbon Mayor, highlighted the innovative nature of the conference and said: "Cities have a decisive weight. This is where most industry is based and where there is the highest greenhouse gas emissions. For this reason, the future of cities must be sustainable from an economic, environmental and social point of view, or we risk not having a future at all. That is why we want to be able to draw inspiration from other cities and to inspire others through the initiatives we have taken on the road to sustainability."

The presentation took place symbolically on the day of World Cities Day, which this year is based on the motto "Changing the world: innovations and better life for future generations". In Portugal, and according to the latest statistics data, 43% of the Portuguese population currently lives in cities. Gerald Babel-Sutter, CEO and founder of the conference, believes that "it is necessary to rethink cities, as more people will continue to move to large urban centers, but



these processes usually take a long time. And this is precisely where Urban Future can be an asset, as we have created a platform to share experiences and ideas”

According to Gerald Babel-Sutter, “Urban Future’s main goal is to gather people willing to turn cities into better places to live in, for us and for future generations. Following the current global discussion related to the climate crisis, it seems pretty obvious that change is needed. This is why we will keep on searching to find the most passionate CityChangers with the most impressive ideas to share.”

The conference - one of the signature events of the Lisbon Green Capital 2020 program – is centered around four thematic focus areas: mobility, water, districts and leadership. In every edition, the focus areas are adjusted to the specific needs of each hosting city, taking into consideration all the inputs from local and international stakeholders regarding the current high priority urban issues. Each one of these 2019 themes will allow for the debate around creative and feasible ideas to reorganize Lisbon, as well as other global cities.

In 2021, the conference will be hosted in Rotterdam, Netherlands and the hosting city for 2022 will be announced during the event in Lisbon.

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About the URBAN FUTURE Global Conference (UFGC)

The UFGC is the world’s largest meeting place for CityChangers, people who strive to make their cities more sustainable with lots of passion and commitment. They implement concrete projects, thus improving life in the respective city. The UFGC brings our brightest minds together, regarding itself as a neutral platform without any political agenda. The conference was founded in 2014 and is taking place in a different European city every year from 2018 onwards. Since 2014, visitor numbers have tripled.

More information: <http://www.urban-future.org/>