

Project Communication Vienna

Vision – Passion – Method: A Holistic Approach
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Smarter Together Project Communication in Vienna:

Vision, Passion, Method: A Holistic Approach

A. Overview

Issue Setting and Subject Leadership with a Holistic Communication Approach in Vienna

Smarter Together is initially an EU-funded smart cities lighthouse project within the H2020 programme. Thanks to the endeavours of so many, it has become THE locally anchored Viennese Smart City initiative for urban renewal and THE smart city lighthouse project in the city of Vienna. The project has become widely accepted when it comes to setting issues and subject leadership as it provides answers and methods to the challenges in times of climate crisis – as was labelled the symposium upon 3 years of project implementation with a strong orientation towards the future.

As for Vienna's project communication, its fundamental orientation derives from the initial political directive of Vienna's patron of the project, the former head of Housing Department and current mayor of the city of Vienna Michael Ludwig, whose will was to "ensure a high level of citizen participation." This led to an in depth research on potential target and stakeholder groups that would be encompassed by the concept of participation. This approach is also supported by the current Executive Councillor for Women and Housing, Ms. Kathrin Gaál.

"I am very pleased to be taking over the patronage of Smarter Together. Smarter Together has become the Smart City Urban Renewal Initiative in Vienna, offering a variety of great solutions and innovations for a liveable, green and socially sustainable city of the future. Smarter Together is therefore forward-looking, because it connects people, involves the economy, underlines the partnership-based cooperation of all and even promotes Vienna's attractiveness as an international business location.

Kathrin Gaál

Executive Councillor for Women and Housing, Patron of Smarter Together
Vienna

City Councillor Kathrin Gaál so aptly formulated another central aspect in her closing words at the Smarter Together Symposium on 21 November 2019 in Vienna City Hall: the "almost visionary underlying atmosphere". Quote:

"Finally, I would like to thank you for the excellent cooperation. There was an almost visionary spirit from the beginning. This has accompanied Smarter Together through all the years and ultimately made this great success possible and therefore once again a big thank you for everything."



Fig. 1: Opening slide of the symposium "Urban Renewal in Times of Climate Crisis", Vienna, 20.11.2019

Co-Creation in Partnership with an added value

As such, Vienna's project communication is a result of a co-creation process of all stakeholders. It reaches far beyond the traditional concept of communicating to citizens – respectively citizen participation, which already is highly demanding in itself. Based on the Austrian tradition of social partnership and the commitment to co-creation, a wide range of communication target groups has been identified.

As a result, Vienna's project communication, anchored in the endeavours of many project actors, has contributed to the project's success story. Smarter Together is therefore, aligned with the common project understanding and vision, as well as a communication platform for its project partners.

In the city administration alone, some 70 staff from nine departments contribute in their daily work to the project's activities, which ensure that it is well anchored and sustainable within the urban structures.

EU Funding and EU Dynamics for the People, for Vienna and for the EU

Although Smarter Together is substantially co-funded by the EU and uses the dynamics of the EU wide cooperation, a guiding idea of the local communication strategy is that the project needs to be co-created and implemented locally by local actors and with a high level of citizen's participation. This is in order to ensure democratic accountability and transparency, which serves again the EU goals. This concept is even more relevant in times of globalization. Whilst fostering the European dialogue, it first much pragmatically develop in its initial pilot phase through project implementation and communication of local replication potential in order to become a European lighthouse city with tested good practice examples.

Communication management in Vienna has three essential catalysts:

- A **VISION** that **shares values** through **global goals** such as environment protection in times of climate crisis and sustainability on one hand and ensuring on the other hand that the project is well anchored locally. This gives the project a broader and deeper meaning and credibility, which is a pre-condition for a broader **societal impact**.

Find out more [here](#).

- The **PASSION**, more commonly called commitment, derives from the broader vision that confers to all project partners means of identification and meaningfulness for instance by conceding to project partners that Smarter Together is "their" promotion platform. However, it is not self-evident per se and has to be addressed. The **emotional dimension** makes a highly innovation- and technology-driven project a project that is also attractive not only to specialists who are crucially involved in its implementation, but also to a broader population as well. This emotionality is a vector of the project dynamics. The former activates **additional resources** through a stronger commitment of all actors and creates the starting point for **additional innovation**.

Find out more [here](#).

- A **METHOD**, that helps identify through a holistic approach numerous additional target groups and actors and integrates their specific interests. The method combines modern project and communication management, methods and approaches and is tangible in many aspects. Through the networking of all partners, new multipliers are activated. The method encompasses institutional structures and networks as well as the mere technical infrastructure (webpage, social media, press relations etc.).

Find out more [here](#).



Fig. 2: Sustainable District Grand prize, Construction21.org, Nov. 2019

1. VISION

„Communication derives from the Latin *communicare* and means to share, inform, let participate; make together, reunite” (Wiki)

The VISION shares values through global goals such as environmental protection in times of climate crisis and sustainability, and ensures that the project is well anchored locally. This gives the project broader and deeper meaning and credibility, which make societal impact possible.

Vienna's Smarter Together communication is the result of a participative elaboration of a "Vision" and a "Mission Statement" in German, which was developed during an

initial participative and co-creative workshop of all Vienna project partners including the political level.

Smarter Together communication is fundamentally integrated in the project name itself:

Smarter Together

It is also “translated” in the commonly adopted mission statement:

Smart and inclusive solutions for a better life in urban districts.

The project name itself (a kind of vision as it has a “message”) and the mission statement of Smarter Together were “translated” in a locally understandable wording with a vernacular touch. This has helped anchor the project locally:

Smarter Together – Gemeinsam g'scheiter.

The fundamental agreement on vision and mission is an expression of common shared values and is certainly an important factor in the broadly recognized success story of Vienna’s communication.

The Smarter Together team developed a common vision, a common understanding of roles and responsibilities, and of the project itself and how it is embedded within broader urban and organizational policies.

As quite a number of the Smarter Together team are governance representatives, the vision is further embedded in broader **societal goals**. By doing so, the technical single project solutions came to have a broader meaning and were the starting point for additional project dynamics.

Private project actors from industry and research do not have a democratic mandate and therefore cannot by mere legal considerations bear the same political accountability. This justifies the claim of the City of Vienna of having a clear leadership in the framework of the project.

1.1. Target Groups

Smarter Together is an urban renewal project with a holistic approach and addresses a variety of urban and private actors groups as well as different segments of a broader population.

From the perspective of project management and project communication, Smarter Together turns communication priorities from global to local. Therefore, different

target groups in communication have to be identified especially in order to ensure sustainability and replication. They are addressed according to their specific needs:

1.1.1. **Project staff and project partners**

Project staff and project partners are a first target group of Vienna's Smarter Together communication. Considering that in the city alone some 70 staff has project tasks, their commitment is key to sustainability as these employees have the institutional role and funding for replication activities. Therefore, process-oriented ongoing communication has been deemed to be the most sustainable as it can be considered as a contribution to a synergetic development of **organizational culture**.

Initially, seven departments were involved, and that number has grown to ten (Technical Urban Renovation [MA 25], Directorate - Organisation and Security [MD-OS], Data Management [MA 019], Urban Development and Urban Planning [MA 18], Energy Planning (MA 20), Vienna Lights [MA 33], Construction and Building Management [MA 34], Traffic Organisation and Traffic Issues [MA 46], Housing Subsidies and Housing Conciliation Board [MA 50], Vienna Schools [MA 56] as well as Vienna Housing).

There are also numerous additional institutions and enterprises involved such as the **consortium partners** BWSG, Wiener Stadtwerke, Upstream/Wiener Linien, Wien Energie, Kelag Wärme, Siemens, Post AG, Sycube, AIT (Austrian Institute of Technology), and UIV (Urban Innovation Vienna).

This "inner" circle encompasses also those partners that are not formally partners of the consortium but that have taken part in the project from the beginning: GB* (Urban Renewal Office), Wohnfonds Wien, Wohnpartner, Wiener Wohnen Kundenservice, wohnbund:consult, Caruso Carsharing, Wohnservice Wien, EUFA (Vienna's EU Funding Agency GmbH), VHS Simmering (the local community college), and WIP – Wiener Infrastruktur Projekt GmbH.

1.1.2. **Other Staff of the city of Vienna**

Other staff of the city of Vienna and its satellite institutions that joined in during the project and that will transport the vision, the values and methods of Smarter Together after the end of the project. Those are for instance the Mobility Agency, Vienna Cemeteries, the environmental counselling DIE UMWELTBERATUNG, the Vienna Business Agency, IBA_Vienna – New Social Housing, Balu & Du with the Fairplay Team 11, the two secondary schools NMS and ONMS Enkplatz 4, the Diakonie as well as the MuseumsQuartier.

It has become evident that the city of Vienna has huge potential and that taking on new collaboration opportunities presents a large value added for the citizens and the city.

1.1.3. **Local and regional media**

Local and regional media are an important target group of project communication. Therefore, they are systematically included in the communication endeavours. This ensures a reception of project information and press releases from the political level.

Thus, the transparency and democratic accountability as well as the sustainable anchoring of the project is guaranteed and project information is provided to the local inhabitants.

1.1.4. **International actors**

International actors are a highly valuable target group for Vienna's communication as they can deploy a multiplier effect whenever Viennese priorities such as a social and inclusive smart city or affordable housing in refurbished neighbourhoods can be considered as having a European dimension. This includes all primary project partners and international contacts at conferences as well as for instance numerous visitor's groups from abroad.

Smarter Together also participates actively in the European Partnership on Smart Cities and Communities launched by the European Commission in order to anchor of the project results across Europe.

In addition, international project partners provide highly valuable contribution to the local level too. **GOPA Com.** is creating a common vision and visibility on European level. **Fraunhofer** was tasked with the elaboration to the project Wiki an the 3D Knowledge carrier. **Energy Cities** is creating additional value and synergies when it comes to communication issues that could not have been provided locally.

1.2. **Participation of the Broader Population or its Segments**

A key target group are the **local residents** that are organised into a variety of specific segments such as youngsters, pupils, gender, elderly, those with cars, with

different educational level, residents of specific housing units, migrants of different generations, and residents of the district or Viennese in general.

However, the **local residents** are primarily approached by numerous participatory activities largely carried out by one of the numerous local project partners that have long-term local experience and network.

These include a variety of activities from mere information, polling up to co-decision, to real co-creation.

As for Vienna, the Local Urban Renewal Office is the primary partner implementing the mobile urban living lab SIMmobile. Wohnbund:consult is targeting the inhabitants of one single refurbishment neighborhood of the BWSG social housing. Tenants of municipal housing are targeted by Wohnpartner.

In addition, other institutions share values and serve as multipliers in real time local communication. The local school included in the refurbishment has some 1.000 pupils and hence with their parents create a multiplier effect of more or less 3.000 people. The Science Pool provides specific Smarter Together workshops, and the Mobility Agency of the city of Vienna has a variety of tools including the leadership in the highly successful mobility game "Beat the Street" with some 6.000 participants. The low threshold environmental consultancy "Umweltberatung" has its target groups, as does the local community college with 100 years of tradition called "VHS Simmering". The latter are primarily targeted within the specific participation strategy.

Worthy of special mention are the schools from the district of Simmering that participated either in the gamification named "Beat the Street," and/or implemented workshops by the Science Pool. The municipal library in the educational center VHS Simmering used a high-end touchscreen computer of Smarter Together, which enabled the participation in the TOMMI children's software award 2019 at the Frankfurt book fair.

One could mention the participation of the "Regional Forum" of socially active actors as well as the Education Quarter Enkplatz as another layer of synergies. Smarter Together is not only responsible for the start of the school renewal on Enkplatz, but also was active through gamification and workshops with children, which is at the core of the Education Quarter.

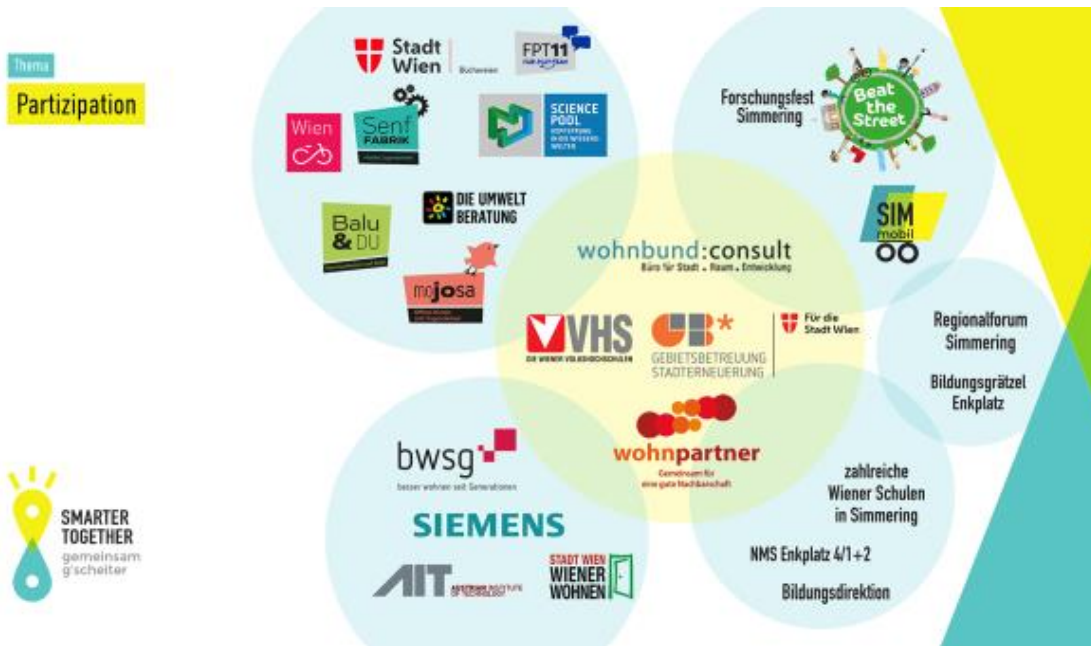


Fig. 3: Participation Actors, Nov. 2019

2. PASSION

„Who works alone adds, who works together multiplies!“



Fig.4: The four layers of communication in the sender-receiver model (after Paul Watzlawick)

The PASSION, more commonly called commitment, derives from the broader vision that confers to all project partners a means of identification and meaningfulness, for instance by conceding to project partners that Smarter Together is “their” promotion platform. The emotional dimension shifts a highly innovation and technology driven project into a project that is attractive to a broader population as well as to “technicians” that are involved in its implementation. This emotionality is a vector of the project dynamics. It is activating additional resources through a stronger commitment of all actors and supports additional innovations.

2.1. Organisational Culture

From the project and communication management point of view, commitment and passion are key tasks. Therefore, as within the elaboration process of the EU-funded project itself, special attention was given to the development of a **common project understanding**, a **common project culture** and a culture of dialogue based on **shared values** by all relevant project actors. The goal was to establish a solution oriented and creative communication culture especially as highly complex contents had to be shared and communicated. A Mission statement was formulated and adopted:

„Smart and inclusive solutions for a better life in urban districts.“

2.2. Smarter Together Co-Creation

Based on initial co-creational communication as well as well as an over the years ongoing endeavour, the mere implementation of beforehand agreed tasks turned into a process based on co-creation. This generated potential and additional resources, be it human or even financial, internal and most of all external:

„Who works alone adds, who works together multiplies!“

The project results that are objectively measurable are being monitored. The commitment and passion are measurable only through indicators such as additional, previously not planned activities. However, they are most important for the visibility and credibility of the project.

Passion, commitment and co-creation resulted in a dynamic implementation process.

2.3. Awards and Recognitions

The numerous **awards and recognitions** are a clear indicator for the prestige and standing of the project. Smarter Together (Vienna) was awarded with the **VCÖ Mobility Award 2017** in the category „active mobility and public space“. Smarter Together was also integrated in other awards such as the **EU-Mobility Award 2018** to the Vienna Mobility Agency and to the **World Habitat Award 2016**, where Vienna was awarded as a global green city. Nominations to awards are also an indicator for the ranking of the project. Smarter Together was nominated to the Austrian **eAward 2018**, in three different categories of the **VCÖ Mobility Award 2018** and to the **Golden Relay Wood 2018** (Goldenes Staffelholz 2018) of the city of Vienna awarding networks of excellence. One has to add to this list the two **Green Solutions Awards** by Construction 21 in October/November 2019.

See: <https://www.smartertogether.at/ueber-smarter-together/preise-und-auszeichnungen/>

3. METHOD

„Communication becomes social interaction when there are communication goals and communication purposes.“ (Wiki)

The METHOD helps to identify in a holistic approach numerous additional target groups and actors and integrates their specific interests. The method combines modern project and communication management, methods and approaches. Through the networking of all partners new multipliers are activated. The method encompasses institutional structures and networks as well as the mere technical infrastructure (webpage, social media, press work etc.).



Fig.5: Axioms according to Paul Watzlawick

3.1. Human Resources in Vienna's Project Share

The essential democratic accountability - even with an EU project - lies with the local voters. An envisaged local project communication up to the micro level of local civil society actors as defined by the Smarter Together project can be done only locally.

Central tasks of communication lie with the project management. A coordinating function of a "Task leaders Communication" was set up for the Vienna project, which works on the operational level and radiates on the strategic level. This task leader has the function of taking care of this area. Its mode of action is presented in this document.

Additional institutions such as the Urban Renewal Office (GB*), the mediation institute "wohnbund:consult", the "wohnpartner" in municipal buildings or others contribute to the local project communication in regards to specific target groups.

3.2. The Holistic Approach

A very important aspect is the holistic approach, where all project partners within the framework of their facilities and departments contribute to project communication and render valuable services.

A special importance in Vienna's project execution is given to a holistic approach in regards to communication and PR elaborated and defined within a co-creative workshop of all stakeholders.

- Communication and public relations are carried out by many project participants and serve their understandable interests and needs in order to achieve a **multiplier effect**.
- Communication and PR are a tool for achieving the **project goals** (for instance **information** of potential end-users of innovative mobility projects)
- In the same time, communication is essential for a positive **project dynamics**.
- Communication and PR are also a tool for achieving the **meta goals** of the city of Vienna, as defined in the **Smart City Framework Strategy** or as they are considered essential for democratic **transparency and accountability** that derive from citizen's participation.
- Local communication and PR support especially the dialogue between the governance and project partners and the citizens in a way that contributes to **integration** and **societal future oriented dynamics**.

In the course of the process, the local communication structure demonstrated that it also flows into the brand development of the city of Vienna. Smarter Together and its objectives and approaches can be found in numerous strategy documents of the city of Vienna, for example in the Smart City Vienna Framework Strategy, in the Economic Strategy and e.g. to the concrete guide to mobility measures in residential housing.

In addition, project communication contributes to the international image and positioning of Vienna as a future oriented social smart city with a high quality of life as well as an attractive business centre. And thus, key Viennese political concerns such as affordable housing or sustainability can also be credibly represented on an international level.

3.3. Process Orientation

Smarter Together is a multi-faceted project with many information content and levels. It is clear that only process-accompanying communication can convey this step by step and in small and smallest "doses" to a wide range of target groups during the whole project period.

In addition, the project communication cannot be carried only by one person, but is upheld by many people in their respective areas: by project staff from the city of Vienna as well as by the project partners.

In this way, complex contents become understandable over time and sustainably integrated into individual perception worlds. As a result, the project can be sustainably anchored in the structures of the city of Vienna and other project partners, and subsequently rolled out.

An example of the added value of project co-operation and communication:

Working with Smarter Together was particularly valuable for three project partners because it enabled a process-related knowledge exchange. GB* (Urban Renewal Office), wohnbund:consult and wohnpartner (Housing Partners):

- 1.) Smarter Together / the EU financed numerous activities (material costs as well as personnel costs, e.g. SIMMObil),
- 2.) Smarter Together stood for new topics that were not subject to conflict (e.g. smart renovation, e-car sharing),
- 3.) Through the project-oriented cooperation, the three institutions and their employees were able to learn from each other and from other project partners, expand their network and use the experience gained in their further work (further e-carsharing projects from BWSG and Wohnbund: consult in other residential projects).

3.4. Communication within Smarter Together

The response of the target groups reflects the fundamental project understanding and is a result of a dialogue process amongst partners. In many cases, when creating communication strategies, great plans are forged and communicated, which then however do not have a local impact. In the case of Smarter Together in Vienna, however, the initial process was localised and adjusted the overall implementation plan to the local needs and possibilities.

Therefore, Smarter Together Vienna shifted the communication goals from global to local. The project partners and its institutional actors are one of the primary communication target groups with a high potential of high quality replication. Over 70 staff of the City of Vienna do represent a huge potential for systemic replication and knowledge management.

3.5. Communication outside Smarter Together

It is evident that the project goals have to be communicated to most diverse target groups and segments of the society in order to achieve added value through the different implementation projects.

On the level of the overall project, a specialized institution, **GOPA Com.** has been tasked to do so primarily on the international level and it runs therefore the international project website and social media and implements a variety of additional highly valuable additional activities. The **Fraunhofer Institute** from Stuttgart

(GER) implements i.a. the project WIKI and the 3D-web-app. Additional networking institutions such as **Energy Cities** systematically leads European Networking as well as the "Club of Cities". They all a highly valuable multipliers for the specific Viennese agenda.

However, very often, only **local actors** can have **local knowledge** and capacity to work locally. Therefore, a specific institutional structure in support of Smarter Together has been appointed with the role of a "Task Leader Communication".

In total, Smarter Together has been able to address 38,000 people at events since the project started in 2016. 21,000 at self-organized events, another 17,500 people at events from other organizers. Social media, numerous media reports reached additional audience.

A **thematic trail** with six information boards on the project in the project area and the "Schlauer Grätzelpfad" (created by GB * Ost) also anchor Smarter Together physically on site.

Events in 2019

52 own events, including 32 workshops (from the district walk to the symposium) with a total of approx. 2,700 participants.

36 events of other institutions with approx. 4100 participants, at which Smarter Together was presented to the respective audience.

In 2019 there were a total of approximately 6,800 personal contacts.

21 district walks

21 international delegations visit Vienna

12 In-House Information (7 press releases, 5 „Mein Wien“)

51 third party press releases

3 x front pages in the press

6 annual reports, conference papers

11 clips, films

66 blog entries

8 newsletters

6 flyers, edition 34,000.

3.6. Homepage, Newsletter, Social Media

The Viennese project homepage www.smartertogether.at was established as a central communication platform and supplemented with the **monthly newsletter**. After a start-up phase, it was enriched with English-language content so that it can convey Viennese concerns directly internationally. Social media such as Twitter and Flickr are also actively used, as is the shared Facebook page.

In addition to the "owned" homepage and newsletter, project contents are also supported and communicated by the partner institutions. Smarter Together is integrated into the communication work of the GB * as well as the wohnbund:consult on behalf of the BWSG. The employee company newspaper from Siemens with around 1,200 employees is also a valuable medium, as are the media of Wiener Stadtwerke, Wiener Linien or Wien Energie and other project partners such as Kelag Wärme, Post and AIT. The project Beat the Street (2017 and 2018) was largely communicated through channels of the Mobility Agency. Smarter Together is also integrated in a variety of additional city platforms.

3.7. Prints and films

Smarter Together produced a series of films on the following topics: Smarter Together (animated film), SIMmobile / Participation, WienMobil Station, mobility projects, e-car sharing, energy saving, smart renovation. In addition, a number of statements were filmed by the highest representatives of the project partners. Voices from the district were also shared from the thematic trail and linked on the homepage.

Numerous printed materials were created for the various events organised and participated in. A folder on basic project information has already been edited three times in German and in English. The implementation report for three years of Smarter Together was also published in two languages.

The implementation report "Three Years of Smarter Together in Simmering" has widely been well received.

All print types and films are also available online in the media library:
<https://www.smartertogether.at/mediathek/>

3.8. Interlinking People and Contents: Knowledge Management

Communication extends across numerous project activities and networks. Be it peer-to-peer (P2P), cross-departmental communication and collaboration, interdisciplinary dialogue, communication beyond the city limits or dialogue with the citizens, communication-specific activities of yours can all contribute to the

sustainability of the project's results. The communication work arouses and promotes interest in the project and shows synergies.

The symposium "Three Years of Smarter Together - Urban Renewal in Times of the Climate Crisis" was a highlight of the conceptual innovation work.

Numerous types of prints, which are also available on the homepage for download, offer topic-related information. The "Deliverables" section offers official periodical project reports on different topics, and is available on the international Smarter Together webpage: <http://www.smarter-together.eu/deliverables>.

Particularly noteworthy is the review of three years Smarter Together, an implementation report, which is available in German and English in print and as PDF for download.

In addition, Smarter Together content has been integrated into numerous publications by the project partners and other stakeholders: AIT, Wiener Linien, GB *, Kelag Energie & Wärme, UIV, wohnbund: consult, GBV and many more.

3.8.1. Partnership

The **network of excellence** brings together a wide range of actors from city administration, business, research and civil society. Numerous collaborations were initiated by Smarter Together or go back to the project method of "governance learning".

Diverse cooperation with universities / technical colleges on excursions, theses / doctoral theses etc. was continued in 2019: e.g. Sustainability Challenge, Smart City & Kids, INUAS conference.

High-ranking international delegations visited Smarter Together Vienna: State Secretary Nägele in Berlin, the Munich Building Committee, the Munich Environment Committee and much more.

The "EducationQuarter Enkplatz" was created, with two fancy benches from the highly prestigious MuseumQuarter MQ set up in the courtyard of the NMS Enkplatz and painted by pupils.

As an example, Siemens Simmering is participating in the Sustainability Challenge this year to implement innovative energy solutions for upcoming construction projects – and follows the best practices and experiences Smarter Together had two consecutive years earlier. This contributes to the attractiveness of Vienna as a business and future location.

3.8.2. Successful failures:

Almost all "failed" or critical projects were valuable investments in the sense of Preliminary studies that are necessary in every innovation process and that in our case have led to innovation dynamics. (PV at Siemens, waste heat concepts for data centres (not implemented), 3 feasibility studies for PV in Hauffgasse (the 4th was then implemented)).

3.9. Outlook and Replication

The further the implementation of the project progresses, the more weight will be given to all those efforts that serve to anchor the project's results and to disseminate them. On one hand, "replication", i.e. the rolling out and sustainable anchoring of the project results, is therefore also first process-oriented and only then project-focused.

The communication lasting over the entire project period prepares the field. It animates and motivates many urban actors as well as those from the ranks of the project partners to take concrete steps, to include partial results of the project in their respective area of responsibility, and to implement them in new measures during the project.

This is where the focused efforts build to specifically replicate and roll out individual project results from Smarter Together.

For this reason, Smarter Together held on 21/22 November 2019 a symposium on "Three Years Smarter Together, Urban Renewal in Times of Climate Crisis". The main topics of the conference were not only the thoroughly critical review and networking, but also the outlook for future challenges and activities.