

INTRODUCTION

Metropolia UAS and Frankfurt UAS are together looking for a consortium for a New European Bauhaus Call:

HORIZONNEB-2026 -01-BUSINESS03:

Approaches to reuse vacant, obsolete or underutilised spaces

The aim of the call is to develop systematic and community-based approaches to reusing vacant, obsolete, or underutilised spaces to support beautiful, inclusive, and sustainable neighbourhoods.

Projects should map and analyse such spaces, engage local stakeholders through co-creation, and test solutions in **at least three** diverse European neighbourhoods (urban, peri-urban, rural).

The call requires expertise in:

- Urban planning and design (Metropolia, Frankfurt)
- Landscape architecture and ecology
- Civil/structural engineering
- Social sciences & humanities (Metropolia)
- Community engagement (**Metropolia**)
- Cultural and creative sectors (Frankfurt)
- Evaluation of impact (Metropolia)
- Environment and climate
- Economics, funding & financing mechanisms
- Governance

Living labs for validating the developed approach

METROPOLIA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Metropolia University of Applied Sciences is Finland's largest UAS, with 18,000 students and over 1,100 experts across Business, Culture, Health Care and Social Services, and Technology.

Metropolia's Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) activities bridge theory into practice by co-creating and piloting solutions with businesses, public authorities, cities, and local communities. The RDI Programme *Design for Regenerative Cities* leverages creative design expertise and transdisciplinary, cross-border collaboration to advance sustainable urban development that revitalises environments and strengthens communities.

Selected cases:

Circular Green Blocks (2021–2023 - NEB Prizes Finalist 2024, *Regaining a Sense of Belonging*) developed sharing-economy solutions for urban blocks through co-design between residents, companies, and public authorities. Four Living Labs in the Helsinki region implemented 10 pilots with 13 companies across 40 residential buildings (500 apartments).

Augmented Urbans (2018–2021) explored the use of extended reality (XR) in participatory planning and sustainable urban development through five case studies in five European cities and 12 tested XR applications.

Key Expertise

- Living lab hosting in the Helsinki Metropolitan region, Finland
- Technology and socio-technical research
- SSH expertise
- Facilitating art-tech collaboration and co-creation
- Social impact evaluation
- Technological solutions (XR, AI)
- Official NEB partner since 2021, the initiator of a academy-led NEB Lab project '*NEB Stewardship Lab*'

FRANKFURT UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences is one of Germany's largest universities of applied sciences, with over 15,000 students and 1,000 staff in central Frankfurt. It maintains partnerships with around 200 universities worldwide and offers 72 Degree Programmes across four departments in technical, economic, legal, and social fields. The university aims to prepare students to responsibly shape the future and focuses on practical relevance, interdisciplinarity, sustainability, digitalization, and social responsibility.

In the university's **Post-War Modernism Research Lab** uses large housing estates from 1945–1975 to explore the architectural heritage of the post-war period. It views these buildings not only as historical artifacts but as cultural, social, economic, and urban resources for city transformation. The laboratory researches and communicates strategies for sustainably developing and adapting these structures, focusing on quality of life, open-space design, multifunctionality, their historical genesis, and their relevance for social change. With rising pressure from densification and conversion, an interdisciplinary understanding of the built environment is increasingly essential.

Selected cases:

The on-going NEB-funded project '**Cultural Campus**' deals with the temporary use of a vacant campus building and the development of the entire campus for the common good.

The project '**Zukunftslabor Juridicum**' investigates, together with the city of Frankfurt, how an interdisciplinary approach to existing buildings can help to make a balanced decision about demolition or new construction.

Key Expertise

- Urban Commons Lab in Frankfurt
- Co-produced urban development
- Urban planning strategies and instruments in an international context
- Climate-Proof Urban Development
- Planning strategies for integrated urban redevelopment and conversion
- Further development of large housing estates and affordable housing

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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