



UNIVERCITY
ACTION LAB

Spain

Good Practice Case Study

La Marina Living Lab

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PROJECT PARTNERS



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GENERAL INFORMATION

Title of the case	La Marina Living Lab		
Sales pitch	La Marina Living Lab carries many definitions: an experimental ecosystem, an urban laboratory, and an open process for urban innovation, but the organizing principle is the same: collaboration, which implies co-design, co-creation, co-assessment and joint innovation. It seeks to engage citizens in the transformation of La Marina de Valencia (Valencia's historic waterfront) and is committed to be an intergenerational approach – ensuring that La Marina of today and tomorrow is for all people, of all ages and all walks of life.		
Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consorcio València 2007 (Government of Spain, the Regional Government of Valencia and Valencia City Council)• Western Sydney University (WSU)		
Country	Spain		
Authors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Catarina Reis• Dima Yankova		
Nature of interaction	City Lab		
Level of mechanism	<input type="checkbox"/> Government policy (e.g. law, funding framework) <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational strategy (e.g. university/business/agency) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structural element (e.g. centre, lab, office) <input type="checkbox"/> Operational level (e.g. activity or programme)		
Length of programme	Short (2 days to a full semester)	Formality	Informal

Curricula-bound,
co or extra-
curricular?

Co-curricula	Level of initiative	Inter-institutional
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Summary

La Marina Living Lab is an urban laboratory, which seeks to engage citizens in the transformation of La Marina de Valencia: the historic harbour of the city of Valencia. It uses systematic practices of participatory co-creation to design and reimagine inclusive and innovative public spaces. The Lab is based on a user-oriented process, in which public space is adjusted to the preferences of those who work, study and play in La Marina. Furthermore, it follows a multi-stakeholder approach, counting on the support of research organisations, public administrations, and civic associations, as well as the private sector.

La Marina Living Lab activities are defined by five key principles: design understood as a process; citizen engagement; co-creation; on-site experimentation; continuous observation, evaluation and analysis. La Marina is managed by Consorcio València 2007 (CV07) - a public institution, formed as an alliance between the Government of Spain, the Regional Government of Valencia and Valencia City Council.



CASE STUDY PROFILE

BACKGROUND

La Marina Living Lab does not have its own physical building or laboratory. It is rather an initiative of co-creation and co-design in which CV07 (a public institution in charge of the lab) commits to letting the entire urban space of Valencia's harbour be used as a testbed for trying out new innovative projects, often with the collaboration of universities from the city and beyond.

Like most living labs, La Marina de Valencia is based upon the quadruple helix (Q4) model, which brings together government, industry, academia and civil society as key stakeholders in the collaborative process. This model breaks down the traditional silos between the four sectors and stimulates the effective flow of knowledge and ideas between the respective parties. La Marina Living Lab is a vast and ambitious project fuelled by the conviction that bringing all relevant stakeholders on board is the only way public spaces can be designed in a way that truly work for everybody.

Since 2016, La Marina de Valencia has placed a strong emphasis on open, innovative and participatory processes as a powerful tool for leveraging the hidden potential of underutilized public spaces. However, the living lab was only officially formalized in 2018.

It was born in collaboration with Western Sydney University (WSU), which had an important role in the formulation of the theoretical backbone of La Marina Living Lab by providing case studies, best-practices examples, and explaining how a living lab functions, as well as the key elements needed for it to be a success (key performance indicators, advisory board, etc.).

The Polytechnic University of Valencia also helped in the development of the sustainability strategy.

Several other educational institutions have also collaborated with La Marina. Rice School of Architecture, located in Houston, developed a workshop in which nine students designed solutions to activate old buildings from the south area of La Marina. Escuela de Empresarios launched “Marina Challenge” to develop a strategy for La Marina focused on 3 areas: nautical; leisure, culture and tourism; innovation, technology and entrepreneurship. The faculty of biological sciences of Valencia University also established a project in which students were, in a first stage, taught about the main axes of La Marina’s strategy. In a second stage, students developed ideas to improve the accessibility and use of the space. Polytechnic of Valencia hosted a workshop in which La Marina has been involved, discussing with 3 foreign students the possible and sustainable use for the Base Alinghi de la America’s Cup. This University has also contributed to the ideas’ exchange between La Marina and universities from Vietnam.

A collaboration with a culture and marketing consultant – CulturaLink - was also established to analyse the profile of the visitors and assess their degree of satisfaction with the venue, its activities and services.

La Marina Living Lab has launched a new online application for citizen engagement. The app, called InvisibleCity, was created and piloted by Western Sydney University and it runs upon the idea that memories, experiences, emotions and aspirations (in other words the invisible aspects of a city) are just as important as the visible ones when it comes to understanding and imagining the urban environment in new ways.

Besides, La Marina has recently realized collaborations with the Scientific Park of the University of Valencia, the Faculty of Geography and History of Valencia University, and will soon welcome a visit by Academy of the City (from the Netherlands). Furthermore, La Marina is also collaborating with the Knowledge Sharing Network.

CONTEXT

La Marina de València is the historic harbour of Valencia, converted into 1 million square meters of public space open to innovation and nautical activity.

Situated between the industrial port of Valencia and the beach Las Arenas, La Marina inherited the legacy of several grand-scale projects like the 32nd edition of America’s Cup and the Formula 1 Grand Prix Race. Today, Consorcio València 2007 has embarked on a mission to

rethink and reuse the existing infrastructure in order to maximize the civic, commercial, ecological and cultural potential of La Marina.

La Marina de València at a Glance:

- 1 million m²
- 820 berths
- 4 buildings dedicated to education and innovation
- 1st fintech incubator and accelerator in Spain
- 14 restaurants
- 40 sports clubs, federations and companies
- 19 multi-purpose buildings/spaces

La Marina de València is a cutting-edge area with wide spaces for walking, cycling, enjoying the local cuisine and taking part in sports and nautical activities. The initial investment for the development of La Marina was done for the purpose of hosting the 32nd America's Cup. This space combines culture, training and enterprise with sports, tourism and gastronomy.

The most emblematic building is Veles e Vents. It is a cultural building that hosts a culinary school/training centre, several bars and restaurants as well as exhibitions, live music and occasionally conferences.

Sheltered in a climate that makes it possible to sail every day of the year, La Marina embraces sailing as a top activity, with over 800 berths available for private vessels at a competitive price. There are 39 nautical activity companies, six sports clubs and three sports federations, offering sailing, diving, kayaking, rowing and many other options, including pilates. There are also options for boat rides where you can enjoy the sunset, food and even party on board.

La Marina is also an ecosystem for innovation in business and training. It is home to Bankia Fintech by Innsomnia, the first fintech incubator in Spain, as well as Alinghi (now known as La Base), Edem and Lanzadera.

OBJECTIVES AND MOTIVATIONS

La Marina has a new vision for the future whereby both tradition and inventiveness drive the transformation of the economy, and the urban and cultural environment. Hence, the main goals of the Living Lab can be described as:

- converting La Marina into the city's engine for economic development through innovation
- promoting economic activation of the space, creating a sustainable, inclusive and dynamic public space
- fostering citizen appropriation

The accomplishment of these goals is approached through the strategy of placemaking, defining (a) the concept of public space, innovation and the relationship between the two, (b) the core values and principles that should guide the creation of public spaces, (c) a set of characteristics to guide the design and assessment of interventions and, (d) the key stakeholders that must be involved in the process.

STAKEHOLDERS

- Public space management authority: Consorcio València 2007
- Public space users (residents and tourists)
- Stakeholders with commercial interest
- Governmental institutions (local, regional, national and supra-national authorities): Government of Spain, Regional Government of Valencia, Valencia City Council
- Knowledge practitioners and institutions, including Western Sydney University (WSU), Polytechnic University of Valencia, Rice School of Architecture, Escuela de Empresarios, Faculty of Biological Sciences of Valencia University, Faculty of Geography and History of Valencia University, Scientific Park of the University of Valencia, Knowledge Sharing Network
- Non-governmental and community organisations: Fundación Deportiva Municipal, and Asociación de vecinos Grau-Port, among others

PROCESS

INPUT

Project-specific inputs:

- Knowledge, skills and experiences of university professors, researchers and industry representatives and student mentorship: the project involved 4 academic mentors (UL), 2 external mentors (IRI UL), and 1 industry mentor (Aereform)
- Students' work (research and development of solutions): the project involved 8 participating students
- Access to infrastructure and relevant data (e.g. spatial acts, development strategies etc.)
- Physical (e.g. excavation)
- Funding - National scheme "Creative paths to knowledge" (PKP): 22.080,00 EUR

PKP – general programme inputs:

Until the end of 2018, PKP scheme funding was 6.942.950,50 EUR, which funded 397 projects that involved 2800 students, approximately 1000 pedagogical mentors/coordinators, and over 560 representatives of industry or other external partners.

ACTIVITIES

- Workshops
 - Participation in the Interdisciplinary Sustainable Architecture (ISA)-Lab workshop, organized by Polytechnic University of Valencia; La Marina has discussed with 3 students from different international universities (Carnegie Mellon University, University of British Columbia and Polytechnic University of Valencia), the possible and sustainable use for the Base Alinghi de la America's Cup.
 - Rice School of Architecture, located in Houston, developed a workshop in which nine students designed solutions to activate old buildings from the south area of La Marina. This workshop kicked off with a presentation from the strategic director of Consorcio

Valencia 2007 in order to understand the La Marina status-quo from different perspectives.

- Brainstorming sessions
 - The faculty of biological sciences of Valencia University established a project in which 50 students were, in a first stage, taught about the main axes of La Marina's strategy. In a second stage, students developed ideas to improve the accessibility and use of the space.
 - Scientific Park of Valencia University (PCUV): exchange of knowledge and ideas about La Marina Living Lab and Evomobile Living Lab; the goal was the promotion and use of transportation solutions in different modalities as ways of sustainable displacement in the university community; this is a long-term collaboration between La Marina and those responsible for the Infrastructure and Operations Area of the Foundation of the Scientific Park.
 - A group of 70 students from the faculty of geography and history of Valencia University visited La Marina de València, where they were explained and showed the space of La Marina, as well as its historic origin as a historic dock. In the second part of the session, the students were led through the space on a tour of the most relevant places, using the Invisible Cities APP developed specifically to capture the emotions of visitors in the La Marina space.
- Projects
 - Escuela de Empresarios (EDEM) launched "Marina Challenge", a business projects proposal for the future strategy of La Marina de València. The students worked in groups to develop a strategy for La Marina focused on 3 areas: nautical; leisure, culture and tourism; innovation, technology and entrepreneurship. The "Marina Challenge" ended up being a crucial input in the Strategic Plan of La Marina.
 - [In process] KSNET (Knowledge Sharing Network): The proposal of KSNET, a company dedicated to the transfer of knowledge with the collaboration of researchers from the London School of Economics (LSE), the University of Gothenburg (Sweden) and the Institute of Economics of Barcelona (IEB), is the evaluation of the economic impact of La Marina and the development of an innovative district evaluation framework. This study would allow measuring the contribution of La Marina to the Valencian economy in terms of employment generation, gross added value and production, among other relevant economic variables. In addition, it would allow analyzing the framework of economic relations in which it is located, highlighting its sectoral links.
 - CulturaLink: a partnership with the consultancy in culture and communication was established to analyse the profile of the visitors and assess their degree of satisfaction with the venue, its activities and services.
 - Western Sydney University (WSU): The collaboration with this Australian university arose from the need to consolidate La Marina Living Lab, an experimental ecosystem in which systematic practices of participatory design are carried out to reimagine inclusive and innovative public spaces. WSU continues to play an important role in the development of the Living Lab, contributing with its academic experience and serving as a permanent guide in the development of the entire process.
- Leisure activities
 - Academy of the City (Academie van de Stad): In April 2019, the Academy of the City (Academie van de Stad) of the Netherlands visited the city of Valencia and La Marina helped them organize their two-day stay in the city, making the most out of it with activities and local work groups focused on the exploration and discovery of the city's public space.
- Events

- The Polytechnic University of Valencia (UPV): A one-day exchange was held, in collaboration with the UPV and SAUNAC (Sustainability Alliance of Urban Networks in Asian Cities), in which La Marina presented its sustainability strategy and learned from other similar initiatives from universities in Vietnam.
- London School of Economics (LSE): The students of the London School of Economics visited La Marina de València for a day to know its geography and strategy. A debate was held from which interesting contributions emerged. Also, one of the students has joined the Ideias & Strategy Department of La Marina.
- Training
- Water sports



OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

OUTPUTS

La Marina's main output is to bring together different publics to cooperate in the improvement of the port. In fact, La Marina will attract and connect both citizens and local stakeholders – neighbourhood associations, schools and other entities in the district – in some specific way that can empower them to co-create the future of the waterfront. Besides, it also hopes to engage enterprises at different scales with similar perspectives and values to rebuild the local ecosystem for business and innovation.

Secondly, La Marina aspires to create a "new story" and re-brand a "new and modern Valencia" as a differentiation to the previous vision defined by short-sighted construction projects, economic overspend and international events. So, this new vision will be oriented towards people, innovation and creativity.

IMPACTS

The project attempts to respond to various challenges. Firstly, at the urban level, La Marina aspires to reactivate economically an abandoned public space with a big potential for social use. It is recognized that such impact will not be limited to La Marina itself but will be expanded to the seaside area and its adjacent neighbourhoods, which were largely overlooked in past decades.

Secondly, La Marina seeks non-speculative development. Instead of the model dominated by the large-scale investment of capital and infrastructure, the new model proposed is based on values – inclusivity, open public space, and activities or initiatives for all citizens. Hence, the project aims to strengthen the connection with neighbourhood associations, with the cultural and artistic vibe and with other social entities, in a participative and open way.

SUPPORTING ENVIRONMENT & SYSTEM

SUPPORTING MECHANISMS

Commitment of several institutions from Valencia (Government of Spain, the Regional Government of Valencia, Valencia City Council, Western Sydney University (WSU), Polytechnic University of Valencia, Rice School of Architecture, Escuela de Empresarios, Faculty of Biological Sciences of Valencia University, CulturaLink, Scientific Park of the University of Valencia, Faculty of Geography and History of Valencia University, and Knowledge Sharing Network)

BARRIERS AND DRIVERS

Drivers:

- The improvement of La Marina itself (the physical space where the Living Lab is located)
- Availability of infrastructures
- A local culture of innovation and entrepreneurship
- Diversity of services nearby: gastronomy and leisure, culture, nautical, training and innovation
-

Barriers:

- Struggling to promote citizen participation, particularly among locals due to the previously exclusive nature of the space
- Financial limitations



LESSONS LEARNED

CHALLENGES

The major challenge is the high dependency on third parties

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

The key success factors are:

- Support from the municipality
- New form of participation and co-design with the citizens regarding the urban space, without the sacrifice of public interests

The multi-stakeholder nature of the living lab was meant to ensure the long-term social sustainability of the project. Furthermore, in the last two years Consorcio Valencia 2007 registered operational profit, which is important for an institution that, since its establishment,

has been burdened by a substantial debt. This revenue shows that the management of La Marina can be economically sustainable and can support the living lab initiative in the long run.



FURTHER INFORMATION

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- The project “La Marina de València. Un proceso de activación productiva y apropiación ciudadana”, won second place in XI Premi Catalunya d’Urbanisme Manuel de Solà Morales (Premis Sant Jordi 2018). April 2018
- The safety installation in Tinglado 2 (a project of Rellam Arquitectura) was awarded the Premis FAD d’Arquitectura i Interiorisme. May 2018
- Red Cross Award for the work of La Marina de València in the Operation Esperanza Mediterránea. July 2018
- The smart bank developed by AIDIMME and tested in La Marina Living Lab received the 2017 Tourism Research and Innovation Award. September 2018
- Sociocultural Initiative Award 2019 (Annual Awards Economy 3)

TRANSFERABILITY

This Living Lab is context-based, but some aspects could be adapted on a larger scale (e.g. The InvisibleCity app)

PUBLICATIONS

<http://www.lamarinadevalencia.com/mreal/uploaded/transparencia/librillo-cast-web-B.pdf>

LINKS

http://www.lamarinadevalencia.com/mreal/web_php/index.php;

<https://lamarinalivinglab.com/>

https://designscapes.eu/citysnapshot_cs/valencia-lamarina/

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