



1st Urban Mediterranean Visions Laboratory

**IDEAS AND STRATEGIES FOR THE SUSTAINABLE
ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC CENTRE**

25-30 aprile 2010_Lentini/Siracusa (SICILY-IT)

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON URBAN PLANNING AND ARCHITECTURE

Introductory note

"*Leontinoi Creative Laboratory. Ideas and Strategies for the Sustainable Enhancement of the Historic Centre*" is the first laboratory exploring *Urban Mediterranean Visions* to be held (with a workshop and a conference cycle) in Lentini (Siracusa province in Sicily). It will take place from 25 to 30 April 2010.

Promoted by the international association "Mediterranean Planners", in synergy with Lentini Municipality, the scientific collaboration of the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria (Cdl of Urban Planning) and the University of Catania (Faculty of Architecture of Siracusa), Leo.Lab is a scientific initiative providing the opportunity for reflection on the unexpressed potential of the historic town centre of Lentini, and for the creation of an open space for experimenting on how to resolve the complex problems of the region by means of a methodological comparison, scientific exchange and the use of innovative language.

The main project result will be the emergence of a new vision for the town of Lentini, based on the principles of urban as well as social and environmental sustainability, and with the potential of producing new eco-sustainable processes.

Description and aims

"Mediterranean Planners" conceived the *Urban Mediterranean Visions* laboratories to reflect on the meaning and the regeneration of smaller historic centres in the Mediterranean region, real resources of high strategic value, and to think out sustainable urban strategies based on new approaches and methods.

The 1st *Urban Mediterranean Visions* laboratory was launched when the Lentini municipal administration agreed to engage with a group of young urban planners and architects to initiate a constructive dialogue on the question about the regeneration of the liveability in the historic centre, without looking for closed and definite answers, but simply asking the right questions.

The general aim of the workshop is to conceive ideas and strategies for sustainable urban enhancement and the socio-economic regeneration of the historic old town, starting with the restoration of the buildings and the reconfiguration of a number of strategic degraded areas.

The workshop has five aims, all with regards to sustainability, which will have to be developed in innovative and multidisciplinary ways:

1. Regeneration, reuse and enhancement of the architectural heritage, also to facilitate the emergence of cultural and touristic activities;
2. Improvement of access and usage of public spaces;
3. Strengthening of functional diversity and social cohesion;
4. Improving the energetic and settlement quality of the urban fabric
5. Strengthening urban identity.

The final objective will be to provide Lentini Municipality with a set of innovative and sustainable visions on urban spaces, and the possibility to critically observe the dynamics of socio-territorial phenomena and understand their characteristics, enabling it to steer the ongoing urban transformations and plan its own 'development project', also for purposes of tourism.

Contents

The town of Lentini, strategically situated between Catania and Siracusa, features a vast historic centre of ancient foundation, that over the centuries has developed on various levels. The urban nucleus over time invaded the slopes of the adjacent hills of *Metapiccola*, *Tirone* and *San Mauro* and now extends north-westwards to the hills of *San Paolo* and *San Francesco*, exploiting the hypogean characteristics of the territory and giving life to a widespread settlement inhabited until recent times.

Currently, the historic town centre features a compact settlement with an irregular urban texture characterised by a stratified and heterogenous architectural fabric, causing some quality 'architectural emergencies', but also providing us with a number of public spaces to be requalified and places which are today void of an identity.

The area suffers a widespread lack of green areas and parking spaces, complex problems of internal mobility and accessibility and difficulties with public services. Also, there is a need to re-design the margins of the settlement, with attention to the conditions at the boundaries between the urban part, the countryside and the surrounding archeological sites.

Therefore, the necessity to 'reconstruct' the identity of these sites and to re-examine the link between urban recovery and cultural and touristic resources, will lead participants to explore approaches, tools and strategies for the enhancement of the 'resource' historic town centre, according to the principles of urban and environmental sustainability.

Modes of participation

The *Urban Mediterranean Visions* laboratory is open to all graduates in relevant disciplines (urban planning, architecture, engineering, landscape design, other design, conservation of heritage, archeology, economics, sociology), who are residents in the countries of the Euro-Mediterranean region until a maximum of **30 participants**.

Other participants are admitted also if they are students/graduates studying specialised university courses with curricula showing a predisposition for the design approach.

All participants will be selected on the basis of a short *curriculum vitae* (with mentions of your academic achievements, max 2 pages, A4 format) and a didactical/professional portfolio (max 4 pages, A4 format) showing skills and experience of urban and architectural design.

The call for participation and the application form can be downloaded at www.med-planners.org/leolab

Interested candidates will need to send in the application, CV, portfolio and copy of ID document (all in Pdf format) by sending an email to an email address info@med-planners.org by **28 March 2010**.

Selection and evaluation

A special commission appointed by the Technical Committee, composed of instructors at the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria and the University of Catania and of the laboratory coordinators, will select the 30 candidates with the highest scores to be placed onto a provisional list of participants. The suitable candidates will remain on that provisional list until confirmation of their payment of the participation fee or notice of withdrawal. In that latter case other candidates will be able to move up the list according to their ranking.

The commission will evaluate the applications based on the following parameters:

1. Academic experience in urban and architectural design (either of the following: graduation certificate, specialised diploma, specialised course or MA/MSc, PdH, or other courses);
2. Professional or didactic (teaching) experience matured in design of urban spaces, territories, public spaces, landscapes;
3. Other technical knowledge.

Inscription

The selected candidates will be notified by 30 March by an email to the email address which they indicated in their applications. Hereafter, and within 7 April 2010 the participation fee will have to be covered by a payment to the following bank account:

"Fineco Bank" IBAN code: IT37I030150320000003361715 – BIC/SWIFT: UNCRITMM addressed to the 'Mediterranean Planners Association', indicating that this is to cover the 'Participation Fee for the Workop Lentini 2010'.

A copy of the payment will need to be sent to info@med-planners.org

In absence of a document/email/fax demonstrating the payment within 6 days of the acceptance notice, the candidate can be excluded.

The **participation fee** is fixed at **EUR 380,00**, which includes: the registration to the Workshop and all its seminars, the certification to the international association Mediterranean Planners, 5 nights, 5 breakfasts, six lunches, the didactic and cartographic support materials, the scientific assistance, the excursions, the certificate of participation and gadgets.

Participants will be required to remain at Lentini for the duration of the whole workshop, at venues made available by the organisation, and to regularly attend the programme activities.

Activities

"Leontinoi Creative Laboratory. Ideas and Strategies for the Sustainable Enhancement of the Historic Centre" is a participative laboratory of ideas in which the designers will be able to express themselves with creativity and professionalism, having the opportunity to engage scientifically with people from the academic and professional world, and to interact with the local community.

There will be six days of lab work, lectures, public conferences and projections on subjects covered by the workshop as well as guided visits to project sites and a programme of collateral activity.

There will also be a laboratory on three-dimensional survey techniques with laser scanning technology.

Every day will open with a first hour of meetings and discussions on the work of each working group, to set out objectives, share solutions and results and to put the focus on a creative design process.

Participants will register individually. Before the lab activities we will form six multi-disciplinary working groups guided by the project facilitators and supported by local assistants. With their architectural and technical knowledge, they will embark on a path of design experimentation and thematic deepening. The guidelines for the project development, coordination, interim verification and the synthesis of the results are assured by the facilitators and the scientific commission of the Workshop.

Site of the Workshop

Activities will take place inside the buildings of the historic Fish Market, put at our disposal by the municipal administration of Lentini as to enable participants to reflect on the old town centre while 'living' in it for six days in a row. At the same time, technicians and various local stakeholders will have the opportunity to engage with innovative ideas and to rethink, on the basis of local specificities, the cultural and urban politics of the town.

Mediterranean Planners, in collaboration with the town's secondary schools and other institutions as well as the municipal technical office, will make available the cartographic, historiographic, analytic and other materials, as well as the other equipment needed (printers, projectors, beamers etc). Participants are invited to bring design and other equipment that they are used to working with (notebook etc).

Organisational structure

Activities will be led by a staff of young people with significant didactic and design experience which belong to the Mediterranean Planners network.

Prize

At the end of the Workshop, the Jury will select three winning groups and reward those with three cash prizes. All participants will receive a final certificate of attendance with mention of the skills and competences acquired.

Post-workshop

The activity will conclude with every group presenting the project results (three panels in vertical A1 format) in a forum open to the public, in the presence of the Jury.

Contextually, Mediterranean Planners will fit out an exhibition of all final pieces of work in the venue of the former historic Fish Market, which will remain open to the public until 30 May 2010.

Project results and all other materials produced inside the workshop – although they will remain the property of Lentini municipality – will constitute the supporting documentation to be used for the realisation of possible competitions of ideas and/or for subsequent follow-up activities or urban-architectural studies, to be embarked on also in cooperation with the three winning participants.

Lentini municipality and Mediterranean Planners reserve the right to publish, in whole or in part, the designs proposed by the workshop participants, without owing them anything except for the citation of their names, as well as all other materials collected during the workshop.

Collateral activities

The Workshop won't only be a mix of teaching and lab activities. The programme also foresees a series of collateral initiatives (food and wine tasting events, music, arts, theatre etc) offered by the local bodies, associations and artists who will participate in the project.

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Further details can be viewed at www.med-planners.org/leolab

Special thanks for organization and translation to Isabella Eisenberg

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