

Annual NEB Gathering 2026

**From local action to a
European Movement**



Welcome note

This year's NEB Gathering brought together project leaders, municipalities, and European stakeholders from across the continent, representing diverse territories and communities, yet united by a shared ambition: to **shape a more sustainable, beautiful, and inclusive** Europe.

The Gathering marks an annual highlight, offering EIT Community NEB partners the **opportunity to meet in person**, strengthen NEB values across diverse fields of work, and explore new avenues for collaboration.

Over 1.5 days in Barcelona, participants exchanged knowledge and expertise across the projects, gained a comprehensive view of the European NEB and EIT ecosystem, and focused collectively on key thematic areas that intersect the work of multiple teams on the ground.

During one workshop, a participant team created a striking image to capture the NEB spirit: 'We are all drops contributing to a sea of change'. The EIT Community NEB exists to connect these drops, to **link local action with European ambition** and ensure the NEB is more than a vision: something lived, built, and experienced on the ground. This is how we aim to continue working, fostering a shared space for collaboration, learning, and **meaningful change** across Europe's local territories.

This booklet captures the key reflections, insights, and momentum that emerged in Barcelona. We hope it serves not only as a record but as a springboard for ongoing collaboration.





About the EIT Community NEB

The EIT Community NEB is a cross-KIC initiative supporting small and medium-scale actors through seven dedicated programmes. Together, **these programmes democratise access to EU support**, strengthen capacity, and build a European network of place-based innovators.

The annual Gathering is a key moment when this network comes to life. Throughout the year, diverse consortia and citizen networks implement tangible improvements on local and regional levels.

Throughout the programme, projects engage in online workshops and cohort meetings to exchange learnings, share challenges, and foster dialogue across Europe's **transforming communities**. Meeting in person is particularly valuable after a year of intensive work. It offers an opportunity to deepen connections, strengthen methodologies, amplify impact, and explore follow-up initiatives that sustain local potential while reinforcing a structured European network.

This mission reflects the core purpose of EIT Community NEB: to **support local potential** and turn it into sustainable, community-driven NEB solutions that positively impact territories, citizens, and the broader European social innovation landscape.



Where local Changemakers come together

This year's Gathering took place at Bloc4BCN, one of Europe's largest cooperative hubs. A renovated public venue hosting over 40 social innovation cooperatives, Bloc4BCN is located in Sants neighbourhood. The warm interior materials within the historic industrial building created an inviting and collaborative atmosphere for over 50 participants.

The true strength of the event lies in its diversity: teams from multiple disciplines and territories **collaborating in person to sustain long-term networks** and enhance the impact of NEB solutions. Projects spanned a wide range of initiatives, from neighbourhood-scale public space activations to cultural transformation, community-led food systems, and circular innovation pilots. While local contexts differ, the ambition is shared: to **translate the NEB values** of sustainability, beauty, and inclusivity into **tangible change**.



The NEB Gathering 2026 brought together:

- 45 representatives from 28 projects
- Spanning 15+ countries
- Addressing circularity, mobility, public space, food systems and more
- Representatives across urban and rural contexts
- Municipal partners
- Stakeholders from the European Commission and Joint Research Centre
- ICLEI team from the NEB Junction initiative
- Storytelling professional
- Local neighbourhood projects, including Bloc4BCN, Albarka migrant-gastronomy and Ciudad Invisible economic solidarity cooperatives

The programme was designed to offer a variety of formats and thematic discussions over 1.5 days, combining presentations, workshops, and open dialogues, informed by feedback from cohort meetings and the NEB ecosystem. Bringing together this mix of expertise and knowledge created a space for exchanging insights, exploring thematic priorities, and generating new opportunities, while rooting discussions in the local neighbourhood context and NEB values.

Each year, the NEB Gathering reunites the local NEB potential and strengthens connections across teams, fostering collective goals for a more sustainable, beautiful, and inclusive Europe.

Day 1: Matchmaking, Synergies & Place

The first day focused on strengthening connections across the EIT Community NEB ecosystem.

Through a **structured poster walk and matchmaking exercise**, project leaders identified shared contexts, methodologies, target groups and challenges. This format enabled participants to move beyond general introductions and engage in targeted, purpose-driven conversations.

The **structured conversation rounds** that followed provided space to deepen these exchanges. Participants self-organised around shared themes the EIT Community NEB have identified as common pain points:

1. Public sector support and decision-making
2. Public space interventions in practice
3. Community engagement and participatory practices
4. Continuity and financial sustainability of projects

The session demonstrated the value of peer-to-peer exchange within a European framework: while projects operate in diverse territorial contexts, many face similar structural challenges and opportunities. By exploring, exchanging and discussing, relationships and collaborations formed that could continue developing outside the four walls.

The day concluded with a **neighbourhood visit** of Sants. This field-based component grounded the discussions in place, reinforcing the New European Bauhaus principle that transformation is rooted in lived environments and community contexts. An informal dinner further strengthened relationships and trust across the network.

Day 1 reaffirmed a key insight: structured in-person exchange accelerates collaboration and builds the foundations for long-term cooperation.



Day 2: European Context, Impact measurement and Storytelling

While Day 1 focused on strengthening connections within the community, Day 2 began by positioning local projects within the broader New European Bauhaus landscape.

For many project leaders, this session clarified how their local initiatives connect to European funding pathways, research and innovation calls, and long-term transformation agendas.

From neighbourhood scale to European strategy

The morning session brought together representatives from the EIT, the European Commission, the Joint Research Centre (JRC) to engage in dialogue with project partners. Presentations placed neighbourhood-scale initiatives in a wider strategic context, **connecting local projects' work to European Commission policies and funding opportunities**. Key themes included:

- NEB within the EIT and European Commission ecosystem
- NEB in current political priorities
- Future opportunities through the NEB Facility
- Upcoming calls, matchmaking opportunities, and policy dialogues



Aware that a short event cannot cover all thematic areas in depth, this year the programme included workshops on **Impact** and **Storytelling**, two topics consistently raised during cohort meetings and feedback sessions. These workshops aimed to create collective spaces for reflection, knowledge exchange, and practical skill-building, supporting both immediate project needs and long-term growth.

The Impact workshop

The Impact Workshop, facilitated by ICLEI within the framework of the NEB Junction initiative, connected project-level outcomes to a broader European effort to structure and strengthen NEB impact visibility.

Prior to the gathering, ICLEI conducted a structured review of all 28 EIT Community NEB projects. This involved extracting and analysing documented impacts to identify:

- Common target groups
- Recurring social, environmental, cultural and economic outcomes
- Alignment with NEB values
- Shared transformation patterns across diverse contexts

This analytical groundwork resulted in a consolidated impact database, mapping how neighbourhood-scale interventions collectively contribute to European transformation.

The in-person workshop therefore built on existing analysis — serving as a moment to validate findings, deepen qualitative insights and reflect on shared challenges.

Building on this foundation, participants reflected on:

- How their projects generate meaningful change on the ground
- Where impacts are most visible — and where they are more intangible
- The challenges of capturing cultural transformation, belonging and aesthetic shifts
- How neighbourhood-scale results can feed into a shared European monitoring vision

A strong message emerged: Any future monitoring system must remain accessible, co-designed and grounded in lived realities — not detached from practice.

The session reaffirmed that impact measurement is not merely about reporting compliance, but about strengthening visibility, informing policymaking, unlocking funding opportunities, enabling cross-project learning, and demonstrating the collective value of neighbourhood-scale interventions.

Storytelling as a strategic tool

Strong storytelling is essential for projects seeking to amplify their impact, attract partners and position themselves within the wider New European Bauhaus ecosystem. The EIT Community NEB brings together diverse actors with significant potential to influence local and regional contexts, and communicating that impact clearly is key to extending its reach.

Led by Adina Levi, the session invited participants to imagine ***“What does a NEB city look like in 2040?”***. Working across projects and programmes, groups developed and presented future visions inspired by NEB values. While light-hearted in format, the exercise offered a celebratory and reflective close to the Gathering — creating space for creativity, collaboration and shared ambition before moving back into practice.

Key insights & takeaways

After an intensive two-day event with more than 40 partners, the NEB Gathering provided a unique opportunity to connect, exchange, and explore new partnerships. Organising and reflecting on the key takeaways is essential to support the next cycle of EIT Community NEB projects and ensure continuous guidance for teams even after project completion. Feedback collected through one-on-one conversations, participant evaluations, and other channels is also crucial for shaping future Calls and EIT Community events.

The importance of coming together in person

While digital collaboration keeps projects moving, in-person gatherings create a stronger sense of connection and foster meaningful encounters. Face-to-face interactions accelerate trust, enable professional synergies, and reveal personal affinities that underpin long-lasting collaborations. Bringing local projects together in one space also reinforces their link to a broader European movement, providing reassurance that no initiative stands alone.

EIT Community NEB role as bridge builders

A central function of the EIT Community NEB is to connect local actors with one another and with the wider European landscape. By linking neighbourhood-scale innovation to systemic change, the network ensures that local initiatives contribute meaningfully to broader transformation.



Engaging diverse partners

This year's Gathering expanded participation to municipal partners and representatives from Grow NEB and Ignite NEB, broadening perspectives and fostering alignment with NEB values across multiple project streams. This approach strengthens collaboration, encourages participation from non-lead partners, and reinforces a shared sense of belonging within the wider NEB network.

Strengthening matchmaking opportunities

Projects operate within diverse local contexts, bringing deep knowledge of the specific needs and capacities of communities. By bringing teams together, the NEB Gathering opens space for new partnerships, joint initiatives, and long-term collaboration. Creating structured matchmaking opportunities, both online and in person, remains a priority to ensure that these synergies continue to grow beyond individual events.

Ongoing challenges

Despite progress, several challenges remain:

- Sustaining project engagement beyond initial funding
- Measuring impact effectively
- Balancing scaling ambitions with local identity
- Communicating impact without oversimplifying complexity
- Strengthening meaningful matchmaking opportunities

The power of small-scale interventions

Projects demonstrate how local, small-scale actions can directly empower citizens, activate underused spaces, and strengthen social cohesion. This scale allows teams to test bold ideas quickly while building trust and collaboration among communities, municipalities, and other stakeholders. True impact often begins not with large infrastructure but with active participation, collective engagement, and transparent communication.

Continuous support for follow-up funding opportunities

By collaborating closely with other NEB entities, the European Commission, regional partners, and local networks, the EIT Community NEB plays a key role in building bridges and expanding access to further NEB opportunities across Europe. Through sharing information on NEB programmes and Calls, facilitating direct contact with relevant entities, connecting teams with potential partners and consortia, and strengthening the capacity of small-scale projects to compete in broader European funding opportunities, EIT Community NEB remains committed to supporting projects beyond the implementation cycle.



Next steps

Gathering Video

A video recording of the NEB Gathering captures the event's highlights and showcases this year's projects. Alongside the booklet, photos, and social media posts, this video broadens the tools available for dissemination.

NEB Facility R&I Calls

Explore upcoming opportunities under the NEB Facility, supporting research, innovation and implementation aligned with NEB values. These calls provide pathways to scale ideas, deepen impact and connect with wider European partnerships.

EIT C NEB calls via website and LinkedIn

Stay informed about new EIT Community NEB funding opportunities via our website and LinkedIn page. Each year, we launch calls supporting citizen-led initiatives, public space transformations, innovation and entrepreneurship across Europe.

Stay engaged with the alumni: LinkedIn group

The NEB alumni LinkedIn group offers a safe space to share new projects, opportunities, and challenges among partners who already share NEB values. It fosters ongoing collaboration, knowledge exchange, and a sense of belonging, supporting future project development.



Thank you for being part of this journey with
the EIT Community NEB!

Connect NEB 2025 Projects

Supports single-entity, citizen-led initiatives and local organisations implementing bottom-up projects aligned with New European Bauhaus values.

Transforming “Center of the Earth” into a Nature-based Climate Shelter

Athens, Greece

Partners: Organization Earth

PLANT

Thessaloniki, Greece

Partners: Mamagea Environmental Organization

Building Social and Environmental Resilience in the Swedish food System (SERISS)

Alnarp, Sweden

Partners: Alnarp's Agroecology Farm

WATERWISE COMMUNITY

Bologna, Italy

Partners: Teatro dei Mignoli APS

Vilnius Green Living Lab

Vilnius, Lithuania

Partners: The Critical

Cultivating Common Ground

Chard, Somerset, UK

Partners: Take Art

Green Connections: Intergenerational Urban Gardens

Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Partner: CENER 21 – Association Center for Energy, Environment and Resources

HUGS (Hulme Urban Green Spaces)

Manchester, England

Partners: Manchester City Council

Verde Bairro 2.0

Montemor-o-Novo, Portugal

Partners: Marca-ADL

Co-Create NEB 2025 Projects

YOUrban

Kocaeli, Türkiye

Partners: Gebze Technical University, Municipality of Çayırova

Ratatouille en Vadrouille

Brussels, Belgium

Partners: Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Cultureghem

Villaverde+Industrial

Madrid, Spain

Partners: Traza Consultoría, Municipality of Madrid

Attyngo

Sant'Arpino, Italy

Partners: Terra Felix Soc. Coop. Soc., Municipality of Sant'Arpino, Rocco - Cav. Cinquegrana Comprehensive Institute, Geofilos ETS

Fosters collaboration between local authorities and organisations to co-design and implement public space transformations rooted in community needs.

ReLink - neighborhood of Dolgo Polje

Celje, Slovenia

Partners: Urbanistic studio Prostoroz, Municipality Celje

Play Accessible Communities (PAC)

İzmir, Türkiye

Partners: Play the City, Izmir Planning Agency, Transform Transport

ReHEALMS

Barcelona, Spain

Partners: Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau, ISGlobal, Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, En Bici Sense Edat

Bucha Forest Classroom

Bucha, Ukraine

Partners: Support Fund for Bucha School, Bucha City Council

Enhance NEB 2025 Projects

Enables the scale-up and replication of the most impactful Connect and Co-create projects, strengthening long-term collaboration with local authorities.

Protect+Play PS

Žerjav, Slovenia

Partners: Prostorož, Črna na Koroškem

FROM KNOW-HOW TO DO-HOW

Liepaja, Latvia

Partners: Liepaja Restoration centre, Liepaja 2027

Foundation

FURKANGD

Gydnia, Poland

Partners: Busola Trends, Gydnia City Hall

Cultural Campus

Frankfurt, Germany

Partners: Open House Of Cultures, City of Frankfurt;

Department for Culture and Science, Frankfurt University of

Applied Sciences, Making Frankfurt

Ignite NEB 2025 Projects

Community-based “un-hackathon” ideation events that empowers local citizens in developing solutions to place-specific challenges in alignment with NEB values.

Living Danube Challenge

Vienna, Austria & Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Partners: PULSQUA, DANUBE4all, The Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI)

Ignite the Neighbourhood

Copenhagen, Denmark

Partners: cirka cph

LX Circular

Lisbon, Portugal

Partners: Impact Hub Lisbon

Grow NEB 2025 Projects

An eight-month incubation programme supporting selected Ignite NEB ideas to prototype, test and refine their concepts in real-world contexts.

Subterra originalis

Rotterdam, the Netherlands

Daphnoscape

Rotterdam, the Netherlands

Pit2Table

Nicosia, Cyprus

MC2

Nicosia, Cyprus

Solumobel

San Sebastian, Spain

AUTORE

San Sebastian, Spain

BeLong

Arquino, Italy

Valtellina 114

Arquino, Italy



EIT Community NEB - D37 D3.9 Gathering Report 2026



New European Bauhaus



Community
New European Bauhaus



Funded by the
European Union