

Edible Cities Network

Integrating Edible City Solutions for social, resilient & sustainably productive cities



Social cohesion, environmental justice, human health & wellbeing

Our Expertise to foster ECS

The city of Rotterdam has recognized that ECS is an important part of its ambitions to improve quality of life, resilience & sustainability, social & health goals, innovation & economical goals. In its goal to attract more people to its city (live, work and play) it has recognized that ECS are an important way in achieving this. This strategy is laid out in the strategical vision 'Food & The City (2012)' and has resonated throughout the various main policies, e.g.: vision on sustainability and resilience and vision on public health 2016-2020.

ECS in Rotterdam is largely a bottom-up development. The City has recognized that these initiatives are vital for the environmental, social and economic fabric of the city. The city has expressed its support to these grassroots initiatives by a) (temporarily) offering space/land b) offering a platform for stakeholders c) initiating research d) funding. The support of the City depends on the nature of the initiative. A commercial initiative will receive a different kind of support compared to a non-commercial one. All of the policy departments of the City are involved with ECS-initiatives in the city.

Our Living Lab in a Nutshell

Rotterdam has more than 200 nature-based Edible City Solution (ECS) initiatives. Most of these comes from grass-roots ideas. These ECS initiatives are fragile, e.g. they lack structural funds, commercial and professional expertise. In order to accommodate and foster these initiatives the city council has to formulate a more flexible, integral approach. The general goals of the Urban Living Lab are:

- Setting up a city-wide green initiatives network
- Facilitating green and edible initiatives (for example professionalization, reducing procedural costs and technological innovations)
- Access to knowledge about local business opportunities and financing models

Main challenges are:

- Streamlining responsibilities at a municipal scale
- Optimizing processes and interactions between the municipality and initiatives

About the City of Rotterdam

The municipality of Rotterdam is a local government with nearly 11.000 employees. The city is responsible for carrying out public tasks to create a positive social and economic climate for people to live, work, recreate and invest. Located in a delta landscape, it has an open economy susceptible for global changes (Port of Rotterdam). Its 630.000 big population with 175 cultural identities can be considered extremely pluralistic.

Rotterdam is renowned in reinventing itself: having its city centre decimated during the war, 75 years later the same centre is awarded the best inner city of The Netherlands

Engaging in the resilient cities, pioneering in its regional network for next economy and the energy transitions shows its strong engagement to ensure a stable living environment for its citizens. Rotterdam is also internationally active member of C40 (www.c40.org) and 100RC of the Rockefeller foundation and has published a clear strategy (www.resilientrotterdam.nl).



Our team
Katelien, Mariët & Mohamed

Our best practice examples

The City is involved in numerous best practice projects, programmes and strategic partnerships. These cover various topics in the fields of resilience, urban/social development, food, greening the city and climate change. In the last four years alone the City has gotten involved in 8 national and 23 international research and demonstration programmes (including 10 Horizon2020 grants). Plus there are about five main city programmes which citizens can use to gain financial support. Examples include:

URBAN ADAPT
URBAN ADAPT integrates Sustainable urban climate adaptation solutions with a participative approach, which involves private and public stakeholders in order to create mutual benefits.

LIFE@Urban Roofs (Horizon2020)
The future challenges the city of Rotterdam faces, are increasingly complex. Urbanisation, internet of things, climate change. The demand on the existing space is expanding. Therefore Rotterdam aims to lift the city to a higher level. By using it's potential of 14,5 square kilometer flat roofs, when it comes to keeping the city liveable and resilient.

Right2Challenge
City programme which communities can use to challenge the City authority on what public spaces should look like, and who should manage them. Funds are given to citizens to design and maintain said public spaces.

CITYLAB010
City programme which allows citizens and other actors to put forward innovative ideas, which are holistic in nature. Various projects in (semi) public spaces have been funded this way, including ECS.

Our Role in the Project

The City of Rotterdam is one of the Front-Runner Cities of EdiCitNet. As such, Rotterdam is responsible for running an innovative ECS solution in Rotterdam as a Living Lab and mentoring Follower Cities. Furthermore, the City of Rotterdam is also leader of the Work package on Living Labs in FRCs: Demonstrating innovative ECS for replication and up-scaling.

