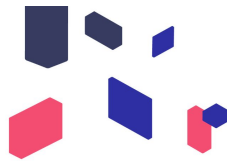


[web version](#)



News from the CityLAB

April 2021

Hello , Dear CityLAB Community!

It's been a whole year since the Corona pandemic forced us into primarily working from home. Since then, we've experienced the ups and downs of remote teamwork together, experimented with a variety of digital tools, and learned an enormous amount about how to organise remote collaboration.

These experiences give us all the more reason to be thrilled that we are now supporting more than 100 other initiatives and associations with using open IT infrastructure and building up their digital sovereignty through our **Digital Vereint** platform!

Another advantage of digital working: how easily it is to overcome geographical boundaries. For our **online symposium** "Re-Defining the Smart City", we were not only able to bring together over 40 speakers from all over the world, but also reach a broad international audience with more than 500 registrations. And although the scale is not quite as large, our German-speaking **LabCamp** community has also been able to continue its networking efforts across (state) borders.

Nevertheless, we are very much looking forward to the day when we can finally open our (analogue) doors in Tempelhof for you once more, though there are surely a few more digital events in our future up until then. In this month's newsletter, you can find out what else we've been busy with in March and what you can expect in April.

Recap

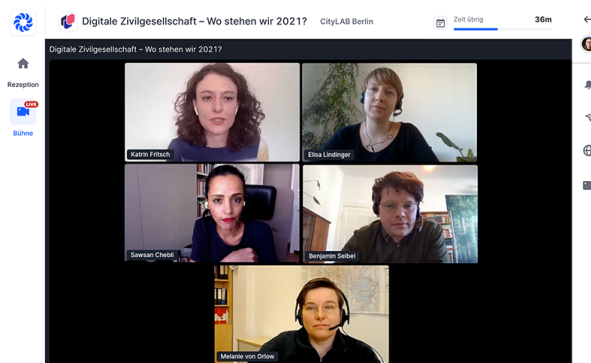
Digital Vereint

At the beginning of March, we launched our platform **Digital Vereint**, which offers support to associations, volunteers and other engaged organisations in their digital work. More than 100 organisations have already registered for access to two open source services we're offering; BigBlueButton (for video conferencing) and Mattermost (for internal collaboration). This impressive response shows how urgently support is needed in this area, as noted by State Secretary Sawsan Chebli at our kick-off event "Digital Civil Society - Where do we stand in 2021?". Together with CityLAB director Benjamin Seibel, Katrin Fritsch (Motif Institute for digital Culture), Elisa Lindinger (Superrr) and Melanie von Orlow (Beekeepers' Association Reinickendorf-Mitte), State Secretary Chebli discussed the status quo of Berlin's civil society and how their work can be better supported through digital tools.

In our Digital Vereint office hours, we had a chance to dive into these challenges a

little deeper. There, we addressed the community's questions, guided them through the platform, and provided technical support.

In order to continue to support the many associations and committed organisations interested in Digital Vereint's services, we're now offering **office hours** every third Tuesday of the month. In addition, we're also offering regular workshops on various topics, such as **social media** and **data protection**.



LabCamp#3

Digitised administrative records, pop-up bike lanes, indoor oxygen sensors – the ongoing pandemic crisis has birthed a variety of spontaneous innovations that will potentially become established practices. Which structural and content-related points do we want to continue to address in public innovation labs in the future? How can the smart city also produce smart citizens? And what insights do we want to provide to political actors?

Our **LabCamp** network meeting took place for the third time and once again brought together public innovation labs from across the German-speaking realm

to learn from each other and think outside the box. After inputs from the **GovLabAustria** and **ProjectTogether**, as well as from the **University of Administrative Sciences Speyer**, participants worked in small groups to continue the conversations and collaborations that first began during the previous LabCamps. For this edition, discussions focused on learnings for municipalities with respect to the current innovation landscape in 2020, the super election year 2021, as well as Covid-19 and the smart city. Once again, it became clear how inspiring and valuable exchange with like-minded people is. We are already looking forward to the next LabCamp with you!

Smart City Strategy Process

The development of Berlin's new smart city strategy continues to keep us busy! In March, we organised various participation formats for administration, business and students in order to capture different perspectives on the city of the future. We were also particularly pleased with the great response to our call for civil society engagement. A total of ten organisations and teams were selected to work with their communities to develop visions of the future in self-organised workshops. Among them were:

- Actors of Urban Change / MitOst e.V.
- Bundesverband Smart City e.V.
- CLB Berlin & Institute for Cultural Governance,
- Correlaid e.V.

- Frauen Computer Zentrum Berlin e.V.
- Laial e.V.
- Schmidt & Schulze
- Spiekermann Ingenieure GmbH
- WECHANGE, Donut4Berlin & Scientists for Future
- Wildnisstadt Berlin / National Park City Berlin

We'd like to thank these organizations for their commitment, and are thrilled with the constructive results thus far!

Online participation

We'd like to draw your attention to an opportunity to participate in an online brainstorming exercise (via an online survey), which runs until tomorrow, 31 March. The survey invites all interested Berliners to contribute their wishes and ideas for a liveable city. If you have a spare 10 minutes, we'd love it if you could take a moment and give us your input! Don't speak German? No problem! The survey is available in German, English, Turkish, Polish, Russian and Arabic.

[to the survey](#)



Graphic: 123 comics, 2021

Smart City Symposium

The highlight of March was undoubtedly our **Smart City Symposium**, which we organised together with the **Centre for Digital Governance** at the Hertie School and which attracted over 500 participants.

Over two days, scientists and experts from all over the world offered insights into their work on smart cities and discussed the opportunities and risks of a "smart" urban future together with the audience. We are proud to have put together a truly all-star line-up; we were able to welcome **Beth Simone Noveck**, **Francesca Bria**, **Bianca Wylie** and **Ben Green** among others, to virtual Berlin.

In the four thematic blocks – "Citizen Centricity", "Inter-Sectoral Collaboration", "Data Governance" and "Administrative Capacities" – we spoke about the latest developments in research and practice, and frankly, we could hardly keep up with all the clever, critical, constructive and encouraging thoughts that were circulating in each discussion.

To all who joined in, we can only say: thank you! Specifically, thank you for the lively discussions, the great interest in the event, the many valuable impulses for our work and of course for the commitment of all those involved in the organisation. You can find a first round-up of highlights on the **website** of the Hertie School. More results will be summarized and made available in the near future.

Events Outlook

April
13

5-6:30 p.m.

Digital Vereint: Social Media Workshop



Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Tiktok, Clubhouse...the number of social networks is constantly increasing. What do associations and volunteers need to bear in mind when dealing with this topic? Our workshop on social media will cover the basics of social media skills. Anyone interested can send an email with the subject "Social Media" to kontakt@digital-vereint.berlin by 12 April, 2021.

[To the event](#)

April
20

5-6 p.m.

Digital Vereint: Office hours

Our office hours for Digital Vereint take place on the third Tuesday of every month and are an opportunity for

potential or current platform users to ask questions about its offers, tools and services.

Anyone interested can send an email with the subject "Sprechstunde" to kontakt@digital-vereint.berlin by 19 April, 2021.

[To the event](#)

**April
23**

2-6 p.m.

Giveaway: Gieß den Kiez Watering Cans

The watering season has begun! With spring kicking into gear and Berlin's plants starting to grow and flourish once more, the need for water among the city's trees is also growing. With our platform Gieß den Kiez (Water the Neighbourhood), we are once again helping Berliners keep local trees healthy and happy. Of course, watering trees is even more fun when you have the right equipment – say, an official Gieß den Kiez-branded watering can.

If you're interested in having your very own Kiez watering can, come by the CityLAB on 23 April between 14:00 and 18.00 to pick one up for free. Pre-registration is not necessary, but we'd love for you to send us pictures of you putting your shiny new watering can to work in your neighborhood!

[More information](#)

**April
29**

5-6:30 p.m.

Digital Vereint: Workshop on Data Protection

Whether shopping, travelling or surfing the internet: we're all constantly producing and leaving behind data as part of our everyday lives. To ensure that personal data (like names or addresses) can't be misused, it's important to protect this data and comply with the relevant rules. This is increasingly important for associations and volunteer initiatives especially, as they often collect, store and process personal data belonging to their members.

In this workshop, expert Katharina Mosene will answer questions like:

- What is GDPR all about, and why is it important for civil society organisations?
- How can I safely collect and manage my members' data?
- What do associations, initiatives and non-profit organisations absolutely need to understand or be aware of when it comes to data protection?

All interested parties can send an email with the subject "Datenschutz" to kontakt@digital-vereint.berlin by 28 April, 2021; questions can also be sent in advance via email.

[**Find more information here**](#)

The exhibition and the other spaces at CityLAB will remain closed for visitors for the time being.

Stay healthy – we miss you all dearly!

Your CityLAB and Technologiestiftung Team

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