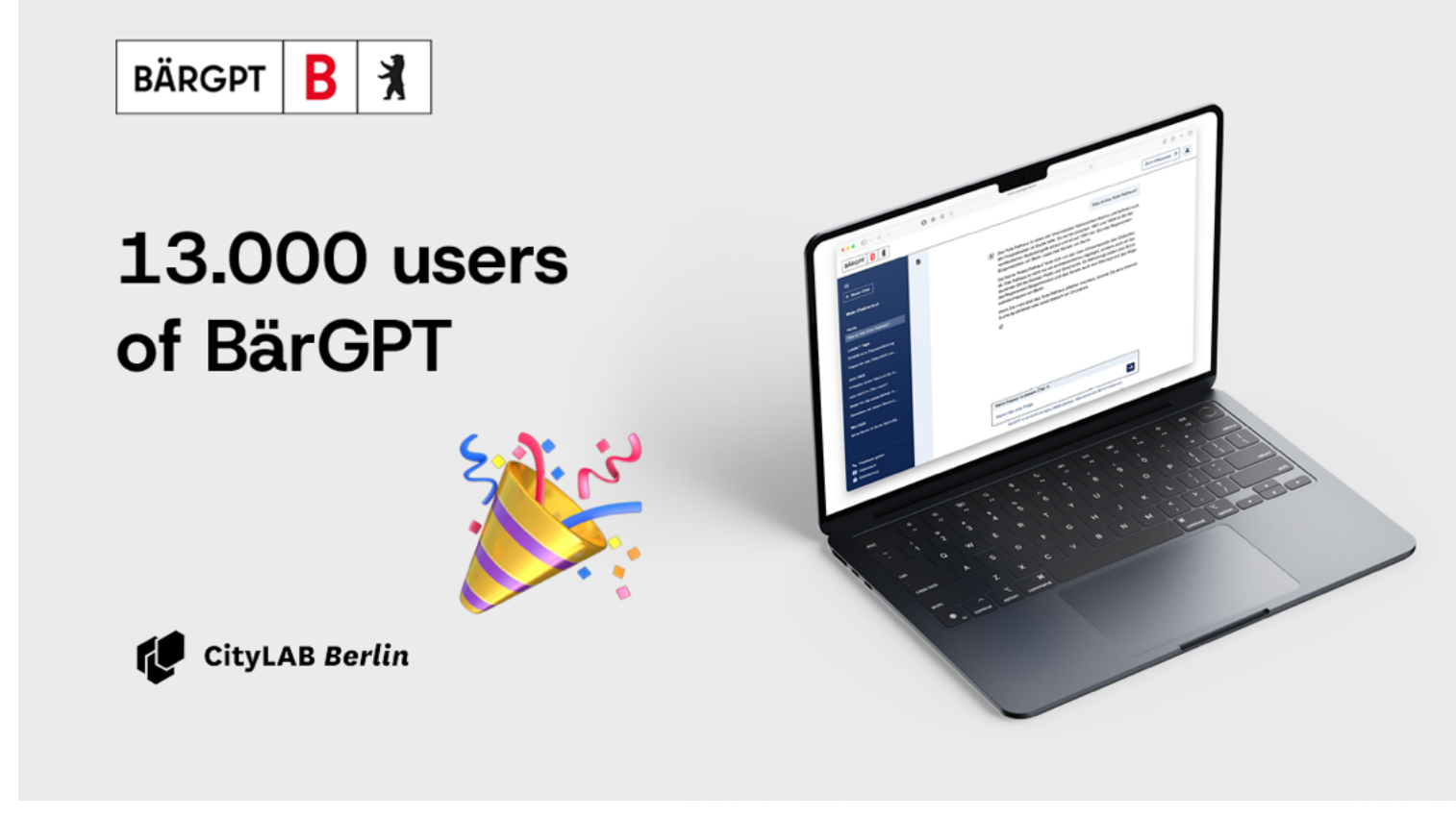


Hello dear CityLAB Community,

Our March newsletter is like a spring meadow: topics as varied as a field in full bloom, and just laying eyes on it fills you with joy — you simply have to stretch out and soak it all in. Here's what's blossoming this month: Forms (the basic income support application) and what AI is doing to our own voice. BärGPT, meanwhile, is celebrating a milestone — 13,000 users. Time to ask the administrative staff how they use the tool in their day-to-day work. Our colleagues also report back from the Urban Future Conference in Ljubljana. Speaking of conferences: we're thrilled to announce three highlight speakers for our CityLAB Summer Conference. We think that's pretty exciting!

Happy reading — and welcome to spring!

Spotlight 1



[BärGPT / Blog](#)

What tasks does BärGPT really help with?

Only a real bear could have caused more of a stir in Berlin's state administration than our AI assistant *BärGPT* – after just two months, we're already counting over 13,000 users. This shows how great the need for support in day-to-day administrative work really is. We continuously work on improvements, carry out regular user tests, and actively seek feedback. For this article too, we asked directly and received an honest insight from two staff members about their new working life with *BärGPT*.

[Read the article](#)

Spotlight 2



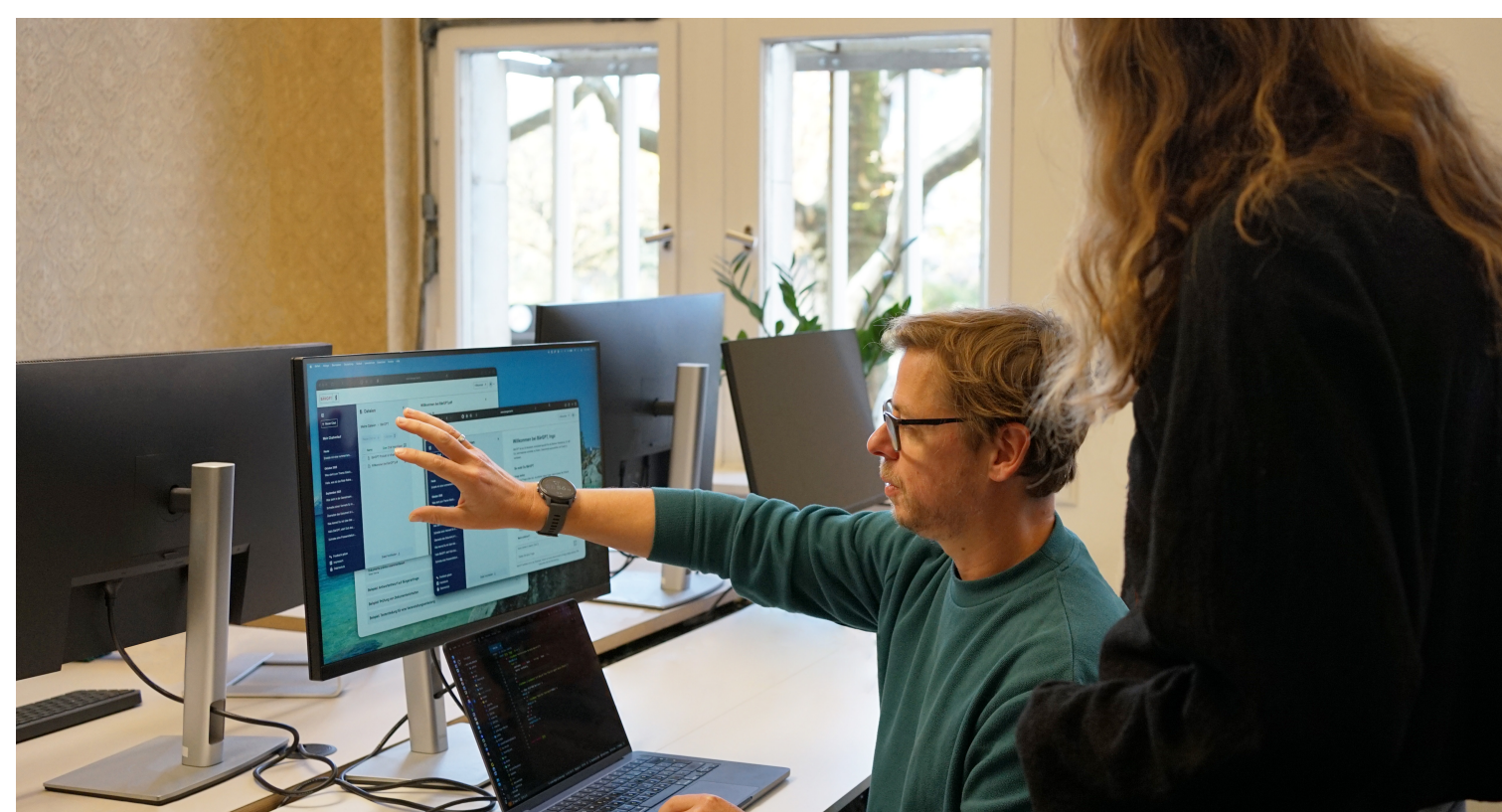
[Service Design / Blog](#)

No Fear of the Application

A form can be intimidating, overwhelming, and in the worst case lead people to forgo benefits they are actually entitled to. The application for basic income support is no exception – eligible applicants must navigate an extensive process, which in practice means only a fraction ever submit an application at all. That's precisely why it's worth taking a close look at user-friendliness when digitising the process. Together with the Senate Department for Labour, Social Affairs, Equality, Integration, Diversity and Anti-Discrimination (SenASGIVA), we took a closer look at this application with our service design toolkit in hand. Björn Mohr and Tobias Witt share what adjustments we were able to make.

[Read the article](#)

Spotlight 3



[AI / Blog](#)

On the Gradual Loss of One's Own Voice: When AI Sounds Better Than Humans

AI makes us more productive, faster, and – let's be honest – in some cases more eloquent. But at what cost? Ingo Hinderling, Head of Prototyping & Research Projects at CityLAB, takes an honest look at his own working life: What happens when cover letters become flawless but interchangeable? When suddenly everyone on LinkedIn sounds the same? And what does vibe coding mean for developers and career starters? A text about AI, authenticity, and the question of how we want to engage with it consciously in our innovation lab. Did Ingo write it? Find out for yourselves.

[Read the article](#)

Social Media Highlight

LinkedIn

Urban Future Conference 2026

Zdravo! From 24–27 March, the international urban development community gathered in Ljubljana. We were there as part of the Berlin delegation, bringing our perspectives on administrative innovation, leadership, and service design to the stage. What our colleagues experienced and learned, they shared on our LinkedIn.

[Read the article](#)

Events

CityLAB Berlin **SOMMER**
KONFERENZ 2026 3rd June at Umweltforum Berlin

with **PROF. BIRGIT MAGER, MATTHIAS HUNDT** and **GABRIEL YORAN, PH.D.**

03.06.2026

Conference

The CityLAB Sommerkonferenz

9:00 AM – 8:00 PM, @Umweltforum Berlin

Our biggest event of the year is drawing ever closer, and we're already so excited that the whole community will soon be coming together again at the Umweltforum. You've been waiting for the speaker announcements? Here are three highlights we can already share: Matthias Hundt, newly appointed State Secretary for Digitalisation and Administrative Modernisation / Chief Digital Officer (CDO), Gabriel Yoran, entrepreneur, author, and co-founder of Steady and Steganos, and Birgit Mager, pioneer of service design and since 1995 the world's first professor in the field. More information to follow shortly. Not yet registered? Now is the right moment!

[More information and registration](#)

22.04.

Barcamp

Open Data Barcamp

9:00 AM – 4:00 PM, @Hamburg

The Bertelsmann Stiftung is inviting participants to the 5th Open Data Barcamp in Hamburg — and we'll be there! The barcamp offers open data practitioners and enthusiasts from public administration and civil society space for knowledge exchange and networking. This year's focus is on civil society organisations as providers and users of open data. Registration is open until 10 April.

[More information and registration](#)

29.04.

Meetup

Maptime – Maps Beyond the Screen

6:00 PM – 9:00 PM, @CityLAB Berlin

What if maps could not only be seen on a screen, but also felt and experienced? This Maptime event focuses on projects that make spatial data physically tangible. From textile cartographies and robot-assisted data embroideries to an interactive installation that turns Berlin's traffic data into a playful experience – artists, designers, and developers show how maps can be reimaged through materiality, craft, and technology. And what goes best with data and maps? That's right, pizza!

[More information and registration](#)

28.05.

Conference

Berlin Open Data Day 2026

9:00 AM – 4:00 PM, @Rotes Rathaus

The Berlin Open Data Day brings together actors from federal, state, and municipal levels to discuss the future of open data and digital administrative transformation. The programme features impulses, best practices, and exchange around the question of how open data can contribute to a modern, high-performing public administration. Of course, insights into the Data Hub Berlin and ODES Framework projects will also feature. Come along and connect with us!

[More information and registration](#)

Looking ahead

Now get out and enjoy the fresh air – read you in April!

Contact

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