

Deliverable Proof – Reports resulting from the finalisation of a project task, work package, project stage, project as a whole - EIT-BP2021

Name of KIC project	Amsterdam - Healthy, Clean Cities Deep Demonstration
the report results from that	
contributed to/ resulted in the	
deliverable	
Name of report	Work Package 4: Cross-Cutting Work Area A, Government as an enabler for communities development
Summary/brief description of report	Outlines four strategic experiments conducted for 'Government as an enabler for communities development' in Amsterdam in the context of the energy transition, with a mix of City, civil society and energy community actors and using a new and unique mixed participatory method – a 'Democratic Climate Lab' – online and in-person. Describes what was learned and recommendations for next steps including desired goals and the capacity building and adjustments needed to realise them. Also outlines how developments have been applied across the portfolio for Deep Retrofit, Mobility and Circular Economy.
Date of report	23-12-2021

Supporting Documents: attach in pdf format. This document is confidential; the participants have been anonymised. A list of participants can be provided upon request at Democratic Society.





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1. Executive summary

The City of Amsterdam is on its way to a community-led transition to decarbonisation and climate resilience, developing a more integrated engagement approach that sees it increasingly working alongside communities, and adopting a more experimental mindset that is taking civil servants out of their comfort zones and building their capabilities for innovation.

The City of Amsterdam is on its way to a community-led transition to decarbonisation and climate resilience, developing a more integrated engagement approach that sees it increasingly working alongside communities, and adopting a more experimental mindset that is taking civil servants out of their comfort zones and building their capabilities for innovation.

Clear progress has been made by the City since 2020's Healthy, Clean Cities Deep Demonstration (HCC DD) on engagement and activation, which highlighted the need to 'institutionalise' participation, build capacity on climate amongst civil servants, and better engage diverse and marginalised groups in sustainability initiatives – beyond "frontrunners" – to bring about more coordinated and sustainable transition towards decarbonisation and climate resilience. 2020 work was conducted in the context of Amsterdam's energy transition - the shift from large-scale, centralised, intensive fossil energy production, to renewable sources such as solar and wind that can be produced in 'democratised', decentralised ways. The energy transition was again the setting for 2021 work, seeing the City working alongside energy communities "groups of citizens, social entrepreneurs and public authorities who collectively invest in producing, selling and managing renewable energy."¹ There are at least 30 active energy communities, ranging from highly-localised solar projects to larger scale district heating projects. Most are small-to-medium-size, localised projects.

2021 sees the City taking a more socially innovative approach, creating opportunities for community-led projects to enable an energy transition that is integrated, democratic and relational, rather than siloed, technocratic and transactional. In the words of Professor David Runciman, Professor of Politics at the University of Cambridge, "*Making climate change a democratic not a technocratic issue is the fundamental political challenge of our times.*" Taking this democratic approach has required the City to examine its role in enabling community development, learning to act as a collaborator rather than a top-down director of action. It needs to know what tools, processes and infrastructure can best support community-led climate transition, and then work out how to implement them. This report for *Work Package 4: Cross-cutting work area A - Government as an enabler for communities development* outlines strategic experiments designed to find out what the City needs in this role, and where it needs to adapt and build its capabilities.

The City of Amsterdam worked with EIT Climate-KIC and design partners Democratic Society (Demsoc) and Dark Matter Labs (DML) to develop and carry out experiments. Demsoc leads civic participation work with cities to further thinking and practice on how democracy can address the

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https://econpapers.repec.org/article/eeetefoso/v_3a158_3ay_3a2020_3ai_3ac_3as0040162 520309495.htm



climate question. DML designs and develops institutional infrastructure to respond to the technological revolution and climate breakdown.

Four strategic experiments were conducted involving energy communities, starting with establishment of a 'Democratic Climate Lab' (the Lab), a new and unique, interactive and inclusive platform for discussion, experimentation and prototyping for what is needed to achieve a decarbonised future in Amsterdam based on key principles of deeper and wider civic engagement for climate action, including collaboration amongst diverse actors, peer learning, and experimentation for new forms of governance. The Lab is a 'living space' helping institutionalise participation and build the City's capabilities and capacities on climate action, in a democratic way demanding of the times. Three experiments were run through the Lab, all designed to build the City's capabilities for civic engagement in climate action, and define its role as an enabler of community development. A mixed methods approach was taken, involving expert interviews with diverse energy system actors (n=12), collaborative sensemaking with civil servants and HCC DD partners, and a "Toolbox for Change" community-led workshop with energy communities, civil servants and civil society.

The Toolbox for Change (Appendix A) – and three innovation opportunities highlighted within it – is a highly valuable and actionable innovation output from the 2021 work that stands to influence budget, resourcing, policy, and new forms of governance for the City in 2022 and beyond to achieve not only decarbonisation, but other goals of social and economic wellbeing. The Toolbox sets out energy community perspectives on what's needed to achieve Amsterdam's energy transition goals over the next 10-30 years, focusing on 1) shift to decarbonisation and renewable, sustainable energy generation, 2) 50% local ownership, and legal, regulatory and financial infrastructure suited to energy communities, and 3) new forms of governance to support energy community development and transition. The three innovation opportunities highlighted in the Toolbox to help achieve these goals are:

- Commons Register: a new regulatory model based on the 'commons' shared resources that are collectively managed to grant exceptions on tenders for social enterprises, cooperatives (including energy communities) and make it easier for these groups to get legal and financial recognition
- Public-civic partnership: a new arrangement placing responsibility for capability building and knowledge transfer in the hands of energy communities;
- Policy free experimentation zone: a new 'playing field' for and by energy communities, to shape Amsterdam as an experimental energy community city, without restrictions of policy and tendering processes.

The City is supporting energy communities to present Toolbox propositions to Aldermen in early 2022 at the 'Day of the Cooperatives', aiming to get their buy-in for policy and planning adoption in the new year.

2021 has seen significant development in the City's capabilities and democratic approach to climate action, as it shapes its role as an enabler of community development. In 2022 and beyond there are further opportunities for the City to deepen and widen civic engagement through more inclusive practice and centering voices of communities commonly marginalised. Maintaining relationships with communities and making space for them to discuss and experiment with new forms of governance for transition is critical, and the Democratic Climate Lab can continue to be used for this purpose. There is also further room to build City capability within its own ranks, through ongoing 'exposure' of civil servants to community engagement activities like the Toolbox

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for Change workshop . The power of hearing first-hand, frontline experience is transformative in civil servant mindset and actions, and has a knock on effect between colleagues. This all adds up to shift the government towards a more participatory, experimental mindset, fostering more innovation practice and application across the board.

2. About this report

This report is prepared by Democratic Society (Demsoc) – a HCC DD design partner – in collaboration with the EIT Climate-KIC, the City of Amsterdam, and Dark Matter Labs (DML), for **Work Package 4: Cross-cutting work area A - Government as an enabler for communities**, a cross-cutting component of the **Amsterdam 2021 Deep Demonstration** portfolio.

About EIT Climate-KIC Healthy, Clean Cities Deep Demonstrations

EIT Climate-KIC is a European knowledge and innovation community, working towards a prosperous, inclusive, climate-resilient society founded on a circular, zero-carbon economy.

Cities face an enormous challenge in becoming healthy places to live, while reaching net-zero emissions in a short period of time. Across the HCC DD, EIT Climate-KIC is working with ambitious mayors, municipalities, and design partners to develop portfolios of innovations capable of unlocking transformation across city systems.

About Democratic Society

Democratic Society works for greater participation and dialogue in democracy.

Democratic Society is Europe's leading international democracy organization, supporting our cities and residents to ensure that radical climate transformation is a democratic not just a technocratic process. Through democratic design, organizational development and practical participation exercises, they are building long-term resident participation in all the decisions, plans and projects that affect them.

Demsoc is a networked organisation, and we draw on the talent and experience of an international team to support each city. A local connector builds networks and delivers work in each city, but also represents the city's needs to the wider Demsoc community. Through this they bring in specialist advice, learning from other cities facing similar challenges, and promoting the city's innovations around the world.

We achieve our aims by:

- Promoting a culture of openness and participation in public services
- Delivering practical, empowering participatory projects, products and services that enhance and support collaboration between citizens and public services
- Advocating for new and innovative methods of participation, the culture change that
 organisations need to make this happen and the skills citizens need to become active
 participants

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- Promoting an evidence-based approach that demonstrates good practice, effective use and clear, strategic benefits
- Producing and publishing resources that support learning and effective participation
- Providing sectoral and thought leadership around democracy, democratic strengthening and effective participation.

Demsoc is a design partner in the EIT Climate-KIC Healthy, Clean Cities Deep Demonstrations, leading civic participation work with cities.

3. Civic engagement for democratic climate action

Cities are taking steps to address climate change, reimagining city life and reflecting on how to reverse chronic congestion, polluting buildings and shrinking green spaces. Cities consume the majority of natural resources and produce the majority of waste and carbon emissions, so they have no choice but to show evidence of climate action. Yet this change is hampered by low levels of civic engagement; citizens and communities are not fully engaged in "collaborative" City decisions. When Cities talk about how they are collaborating and with whom, we hear of consultations with industry, working groups, member networks and associations, and getting feedback and approval from citizens and communities. Seeking approval of government ideas is not participatory; it's treating citizens as an afterthought. And of the citizens that are 'consulted', it's often a subset of the population, typically 'frontrunners' with more access to resources and power. This lack of genuine civic engagement results in division and risks that continue to concentrate power in private and state structures and take agency away from citizens in determining their climate futures.

Cities can better address the climate challenge by addressing the democracy challenge, shifting from the *technocratic and transactional* to the *democratic and relational*. A democratic, relational approach calls for *deeper and wider civic engagement* to reimagine life in cities, putting citizens' interests at the heart of policy and connecting citizens to their democratic institutions, giving cities more voice, representativity and reach across Europe. It requires *collaboration across diverse actors* and *peer learning* to lead system change, with the degree to which actors come together in expanded forms of participation having a bearing on what's possible for climate action and more just, resilient futures. It also requires City leaders and civil servants to *create space for new forms of governance*, making space for experimentation and discussion to unleash new energy and ideas amongst diverse actors for what tools and institutions are needed to achieve a decarbonised future². To enable this space for experimentation and discussion, Cities need to adopt a more *humble governance* approach that sees them working alongside other actors,



² https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/climate-institution-building-after-cop26-by-mariana-mazzucato-2021-11



actively listening to and trusting citizens with the mandate to find solutions to issues close to them, rather than directing citizens from the top-down³.

A key civic engagement component for this work was *inclusion and diversity*, seeking to centre lived experience and voices commonly marginalised in design and decision-making processes for climate action, based on principles of Design Justice⁴. These principles acknowledge the enormous impact of design on our lives, and how those who are most affected by unintended consequences of design – such as design of climate policy – are those that often have the least say in decision making processes. These principles form part of Demsoc's evolving Democratic Climate Model⁵ which highlights how democratic, participatory practices can lead cities and regions to respond differently to climate change. The Model is underpinned by *meaningful participation* and legitimised by *continuous community consent*. A vital feature of the Model is that it strengthens democratic institutions in the long term through expanded citizen participation. The Model was conceived by Democratic Society based on its experience as a design partner in the EIT Climate-KIC Healthy, Clean Cities Deep Demonstrations programme since 2019, and was used to shape the experiments featured in this project- See *Experiments* for more information.

4. Project overview

"Government as an enabler is about changing the relationship between the state and the citizen. Rather than controlling and managing, the city is a peer, sharing resources and know-how. It is a shift from conducting the orchestra to making the concert hall available for practice, with the city sitting at the same level of community players and writing the score together." – Democratic Society, 2021., F

The "Government as an enabler for communities development" cross-cutting programme of work took place in Amsterdam from March to December 2021. The City of Amsterdam worked with EIT Climate-KIC and design partners to develop and carry out a portfolio of experiments. Demsoc led this programme of work and the experiments, in collaboration with Dark Matter Labs.

The work expands upon the outcomes of the 2020 Amsterdam Healthy, Clean City Deep Demonstration⁶ funded and promoted by EIT Climate-KIC. In 2020 Demsoc used its own HCC DD approach (Fig 1), which aligns with the HCC Cities Flow, to work with cities to uncover their strengths in civic participation and climate action, build on these through the development of the portfolio of strategic experiments, and involve the community in carrying out and governing the experiments.

The 2020 report was the main deliverable from the Uncover stage. This 2021 report is the deliverable for the Design With stage, reflecting how the HCC DD has progressed over 12 months.

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³ https://demoshelsinki.fi/julkaisut/the-more-complex-and-uncertain-a-policy-issue-is-the-more-useful-it-is-to-approach-it-through-humility/

⁴ https://designjustice.org/read-the-principles

⁵ https://www.demsoc.org/blog/climate-resilience-needs-community-roots

⁶ See Deliverable Proof – EIT-BP2020: D2 Engagement and Activation Overview, 'Diagnostics'.



Figure 1. Demsoc HCC DD approach, showing 2020 to 2021 progression

The 2020 work focused on understanding the current state of citizen engagement and climate action in Amsterdam. It applied a "diagnostic methodology"⁷ to identify and differentiate between systematic, emerging and novel engagement and climate practices, looking at the existing range of initiatives, policies and practice, and identifying existing strengths, assets and capabilities that Amsterdam has in engaging citizens and climate action. 2020 experiments were conducted in the context of Amsterdam's energy transition towards decarbonisation, with the intention that findings would be broadly applicable and replicable across other domains: Deep Retrofit, Mobility and Circular Economy.

4.1 Building on 2020 learnings

Four learnings emerged from the 2020 work, that directly shaped the 2021 approach to "Government as enabler of communities development":

- Learning 1: Need to 'institutionalise' participation: Develop an 'integrated engagement approach' on the role of civil servant as collaborator; Capitalize on the enthusiasm and energy within the city council by adopting a social innovative approach coming from appreciative inquiry and asset based community development
- Learning 2: Address mismatch between speed to become carbon neutral and carrying out a democratic energy transition: Create more opportunities for citizen-led projects



⁷ See Deliverable Proof – EIT-BP2020 for methodology information.



and initiatives to enable a democratic energy transition, using deliberative methods; Prioritise learning from pilots and find means of replicating these and scaling them

- Learning 3: Need for capacity building on climate amongst civil servants: Training for civil servants in democratic climate competencies; Create a knowledge exchange and learning network by promoting a more reflective practice with regular learning sessions
- Learning 4: Focus on frontrunners can lead to the potential exclusion of other groups of Amsterdammers: Targeted engagement and outreach to include diverse and marginalized groups in sustainability initiatives; Be more inclusive, catering to different kinds of people. For example, by supporting and empowering more locally based citizen groups working mostly offline on sustainability and against energy poverty and informal offline hubs, like for example Jungle in the East and De Groene Hub in the South East.

4.2 The energy challenge in Amsterdam

As in 2020, this year's experiments were again run in the context of Amsterdam's energy transition, focused on the Government's enabling role for communities development.

Who makes up Amsterdam's energy communities?

There is no singular definition of energy communities. A comparative study of French and Dutch energy community ecosystems describes them as "groups of citizens, social entrepreneurs and public authorities who collectively invest in producing, selling and managing renewable energy."⁸ The European Commission states that "Energy communities organise collective and citizendriven energy actions that will help pave the way for a clean energy transition, while moving citizens to the fore. They contribute to increased public acceptance of renewable energy projects and make it easier to attract private investments in the clean energy transition. At the same time, they have the potential to provide direct benefits to citizens by advancing energy efficiency and lowering their electricity bills. By supporting citizen participation, energy communities can moreover help in providing flexibility to the electricity system through demand-response and storage."⁹

There are at least 30 active energy communities in Amsterdam, ranging from highly-localised solar projects to larger scale district heating projects. Most are small-to-medium-size, localised projects. Some are led by citizens that organise themselves, some are supported by the City, either directly or through a network organisation in which 'frontrunners' in the energy transition are active. Other communities are supported and represented by networks, including 02025 locally and Energie Samen nationally. The role of these networks is to support active energy communities through sharing of knowledge and experience for example on how to find the right type of funding, and provide access to tools and networks. Some communities operate independently, such as Jungle, or are supported by civil society groups such as !WOON. Communities are also supported by District Brokers, who are the first points of contact for residents and entrepreneurs at the municipal level. Municipalities are involved in most energy projects but in no specific fixed form, working on subsidies and multiple formats of support.

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https://econpapers.repec.org/article/eeetefoso/v_3a158_3ay_3a2020_3ai_3ac_3as0040162 520309495.htm

⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/energy/topics/markets-and-consumers/energy-communities_en



One way Amsterdam's energy communities are building support for the energy transition is by taking measures to improve the livelihoods of people in their neighbourhoods, particularly those with lower incomes, for example by providing localised "Fix Brigades" to fix heating in people's homes. Some have programs to educate locals about energy consumption and more sustainable practices, such as regular Speaker sessions and repair cafes.

The challenge for the City is how to harness the local knowledge, skill and motivation of these ever-growing community initiatives in ways that bring about a just, equitable energy transition. Four key goals for the City are identified in relation this challenge:

Goal 1: shift to decarbonisation and renewable, sustainable energy generation

The City of Amsterdam are committed to decarbonisation and sustainable energy generation, with a goal of reducing CO2 emissions by 55% in 2030 and 95% in 2050¹⁰.

The City's energy communities are focused on renewable energy sources, and cooperative models such as district heating¹¹. Renewable sources (e.g. solar, wind, hydro, tidal) and their ability to be produced on a 'democratised' decentralised, small-scale make them well suited for energy communities. The City's ambitions for renewable energy generation are set out in their <u>draft Regional Energy Strategy</u>. Renewable energy generation is expected to primarily be for domestic use – or public-communities, most are engaged with small-scale solar generation. These are important and growing, but make up a small percentage of the City's total energy supply.

Goal 2: 50% local ownership, and legal, regulatory, and financial infrastructure suited to energy communities

Local ownership is a particular focus in the Netherlands. National policy states that by 2050 for at least 50% of sustainable land-based energy production, citizens should benefit directly from local ownership, which involves community investment in and management of energy production and distribution, for example renewable energy sources. Local ownership is important because it harnesses the power of energy communities as key actors in the energy market skilled in implementing renewable energy sources and technical knowhow at a local level. Local ownership also fosters new models of governance centered on co-production and co-development, which sees the City "deciding with citizens rather than for citizens."¹²

However, there are significant legal, regulatory, and financial complexities barriers to local ownership by energy communities, all of which are complicated for energy communities to make sense of in their smaller scale capacities. There are differences in the law for producing, selling and distributing energy and differences in how specific energy sources are treated e.g. heat. There are also no legal entities available in the Netherlands for energy communities as 'social enterprises' to register for social impact purposes; they fall through the regulatory cracks; EU legislation recognises citizen energy communities, but this has not yet been translated into Dutch law. Further to this, newly proposed Dutch laws might make it virtually impossible for



¹⁰ https://www.amsterdam.nl/en/policy/sustainability/

¹¹ https://www.rug.nl/research/esrig/news/2021/what-makes-district-heating-cooperativessuccessful-final-report-neighborhood-heat-project?lang=en

¹² https://energy-cities.eu/models-of-local-energy-ownership-and-the-role-of-local-energy-communities



heating-focused energy communities to exist. These laws are facing strong criticism, and are still under review. *"How the law maker is seeing this at the moment, this is a problem. It's difficult to innovate if these things are not possible.'* – Lennart Zwols, City of Amsterdam.

A new <u>Environment and Planning Act</u> coming in 2022 will bring major changes in regulations and policy for the physical living environment and the existing system of spatial rules. Added to this, a new national and local participation 'framework' will come online soon. These are further significant changes for energy communities to try and navigate.

There are no financing models suited to energy communities; minimum investment requirements can start at 1 million Euro, and financing of loans between multiple neighbourhood parties is complicated and unfeasible.

There is also not a lot of shared knowledge about local ownership and what it means or stands to offer to the City and how it will work in practice. There are ideas for technological solutions for citizens to trade with each other via a smart grid, but "*the communities are not there yet*" – Lennart Zwols, City of Amsterdam. The mechanics of shared responsibility with a locally-owned, community-led model is a stumbling block; there is no 'playbook' for this. The City is also aware of the need to involve more diverse actors, not just frontrunners; finding ways to access and motivate people is "the million dollar question". There are all factors impeding local ownership and stumbling blocks to operationalisation at scale.

Despite all this, a shift towards local ownership holds great potential for change and disruption of fossil energy, which is a dominant feature of the City and country's energy portfolio. The material and technological requirements of fossil fuel production (i.e. large, centralised, intensive) concentrate power in both the private and state structure. Building power through connecting and strategising amongst renewable energy communities, as well as state-supported subsidy programmes and policies, can help shift power away from such centralised structures.

However, any efforts to decarbonise the energy supply in Amsterdam are assumed to be in tension with the fossil fuel industry and its importance in the Dutch economy; as a major fossil fuels transporter and processor there are serious economic incentives for the Netherlands to keep the industry afloat.¹³

Goal 3: new forms of governance to support energy community development and transition

The City recognises the critical role of energy communities in helping the transition, along with working with citizens, civil society, businesses, and academia and others to get there, collectively shaping new forms of governance to address the climate challenge. The Government's enabling role from a democratic perspective is critical to enabling energy community development and addressing the three goals above. Governance-related questions it needs to address are:

- What is the policy for supporting energy communities?
- How to shape community-led, public-civic-partnership models in Amsterdam, and make a difference at scale to disrupt carbon lock-in beyond immediate activities and footprints;
- How citizens can participate and have accountability in changing infrastructure;



¹³ https://www.eia.gov/international/analysis/country/NLD, https://www.iea.org/reports/thenetherlands-2020



• How the Government in its enabling role brings together disparate cooperatives so that they can build a counter power that is 'stronger together'.

5. Experiments

Experiments conducted in 2021 had four overarching goals: 1) address 2020 learnings, 2) address key energy challenges, 3) shift the DD into the 'Design With' stage, finding ways to widen, deepen and strengthen civic participation, 4) ensure broad applicability to other domains of Deep Retrofit, Mobility and Circular Economy, as per the cross-cutting programme need.

Four experiments were conducted. Experiment 1 was setting up a **Democratic Climate Lab ("the Lab")**, followed by Experiments 2-4 designed and run via the Lab to define 'Government as an enabler of communities development". In this section we outline the background and hypotheses for each experiment, followed by *Strategic learnings* in section 6.

5.1 Experiment 1: Democratic Climate Lab

We started by establishing a **Democratic Climate Lab ("the Lab")**, a new and unique, interactive and inclusive platform for discussion, experimentation and prototyping for what is needed to achieve a decarbonised future in Amsterdam based on key principles of deeper and wider civic engagement for climate action, including collaboration amongst diverse actors, peer learning, and experimentation for new forms of governance. The Lab is a 'living space' helping institutionalise participation and build the City's capabilities and capacities on climate action, in a democratic way demanding of the times.

Background	 Provide a way for cities to assess and reflect on their progress towards climate resilience in just and democratic ways, based on four major 'conditions' for democratic climate action: diversity of actors, participatory culture, resourcing, and subject-matter expertise; Link social justice and equity with climate transition, with a higher goal of shifting thinking and practice on reaching carbon neutrality from technocratic and transactional to democratic and relational; 'Institutionalise' participation, and build capabilities and capacities for democratic climate action within government to enable more climate
	 Support peer learning amongst diverse city actors, encouraging discussion and experimentation aimed at <i>informing new forms of governance</i>, considering what tools and institutions are needed for carbon neutrality and climate transition; Provide a platform for city and programme partners to design and implement experiments to explore <i>conditions of 'Government as enabler for communities development'</i> and further develop integrated service approaches for democratic climate action;



	 Produce <i>repeatable, innovative, scalable methods and processes</i> for democratic, deliberative, civic engagement for climate action, for use across multiple contexts and communities e.g. Deep Retrofit, Mobility and Circular Economy;
Hypotheses	 To 'institutionalise participation' a dedicated, safe environment is needed where diverse actors can discuss and experiment with new tools and new forms of governance, with civil servants as collaborators; A third-party hosted Lab will be more welcoming to communities, who may be mistrustful of government; Can serve as a connecting point for people, mechanisms and strategies that widen, deepen and strengthen civic participation; Offers a way of bringing in principles of Demsoc's emerging Democratic Climate Model, which expresses different conditions of democratic, participatory practice seen as necessary for cities and regions to respond differently to climate change.
Details	 Participants: EIT Climate-KIC, City of Amsterdam, Democratic Society, Dark Matter Labs, Bankers without Boundaries ("HCC DD partners"); Demsoc-facilitated; Format: hybrid online & in-person, supported by a 'living' Miro board for experiment coordination and collaboration https://miro.com/app/board/o9J_1_7U1LI=/ (password: participate); Designed to exist in the 'Third Space", a physical, virtual, cognitive, and conceptual space where participants may negotiate, reflect, and form new knowledge and worldviews working toward creative, practical and applicable solutions, finding innovative, appropriate research methods, interpreting findings, proposing new theories, recommending next steps, and even designing solutions such as new information objects or services"¹⁴.

5.2 Experiments 2-4: Defining 'Government as enabler of communities development'

Experiments 2-4 were designed and run via the Lab, all with common aims to:

- Identify conditions for "Government as enabler for communities development" from the perspective of energy communities and their needs;
- Identify goals, capabilities and adaptations needed for the City to support energy communities as critical actors in the transition to a decarbonised energy future;
- Identify how these conditions relate to four themes of interest to the City, and tie into the integrated service offering and Government enabling role towards carbon neutrality:



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¹⁴ https://www.morganclaypool.com/doi/10.2200/S01096ED1V01Y202105ICR074



local ownership, regulation, governance and finance, and community knowledge exchange.

Experiment 2: Expert interviews with diverse energy system actors

12 interviews with diverse city actors in June and August 2021 to understand the current energy system landscape, shifts since 2020 Deep Demonstration work, and ideas for shaping the Lab and experiments.

Background	 Gather feedback on how the Lab would best work for diverse actors; Seek feedback from experts on directions that we might take, including connections they see with existing initiatives; Get a current picture of the landscape of existing initiatives e.g. incubators, communities of practices, opportunities for connecting actors and who is best placed to do this, and use this knowledge to start setting out the frame of the proposed Lab. Also identify other 'experts' to speak with; Learn more about emerging themes to help shape experiment design.
Hypotheses	• Centering voices of communities commonly marginalised i.e. going beyond frontrunners will create a stronger starting point for the 2021 experiments, by already inviting deeper and wider engagement.
Details	 Participants (n=12): 3 civil society, 2 grassroots groups, 5 government - technical, 2 public institutions, 1 energy community; Format: 1 hour interviews; 5 online, 5 in-person; 1 facilitator, 1 notetaker; audio recorded and photos taken (with consent).

Experiment 3: Collaborative sensemaking with civil servants

Civil servants engaged in three sensemaking and reflection sessions with HCC DD partners to build narratives and shared understanding of what's needed for a democratic energy transition.

Background	 Opportunity to regularly playback and investigate learnings as they emerge in a dedicated time slot; keeps all parties aware of what's happening in a more productive, engaging, targeted way that also keeps work moving forward; Build up narratives and understandings progressively, making space for 'aha moments' and potential change of direction for challenge
	 Cross 'siloes' and disciplinary boundaries as part of strategic learning, and build sensemaking and experiment mindset capability in civil servants.





Hypotheses	 Exposing civil servants to sensemaking and reflective practices will help them step out of their comfort zone to build a more experimental culture and allow exploration of 'unobvious solutions'. Getting into a habit of reflection can increase the innovation capacity of public sector workers¹⁵; 'Unguarded' sensemaking and peer learning is a way to get comfortable with working in complexity and not having all the answers; HCC DD partners see themselves as actors in the system who have roles and responsibilities for democratic climate action, not just project delivery; Will build a more collaborative way of working; partnership of actors working through complex topics, in ways that the City can replicate and scale.
Details	 Participants: EIT Climate-KIC, City of Amsterdam, Democratic Society, Dark Matter Labs, Bankers without Boundaries ("HCC DD partners"); Intentionally kept small, requiring one attendee from each group; Format: bi-weekly 1.5hr sessions intended, 3 sessions completed; Rotating host system; host runs session as they want. Group asks questions and take notes relevant to their interests e.g. civil servants listen out for information relevant to strategy or policymaking, that might also help explain what is being learned/achieved in the project to Aldermen; No requirement to use specific tools or collaboration boards (i.e. break free from "usual tools" where possible, when limited to online meetings), to give the session a different feel and structure from project meetings.

Experiment 4: "Toolbox for Change" community-led workshop

Half-day in-person workshop with civil servants, energy communities and civil society in Amsterdam in October 2021 to define conditions for "Government as an enabler for communities development" focused on frontline, on the ground experience of 'energy system actors'.

Background	• What does civil servant collaboration with people with frontline, on the ground experience (energy communities) in a workshop format lead to
	for energy transition e.g. action plans, network building, mindset shifts?;
	 What conditions do energy communities see as necessary for "Government as enabler of communities development"?;

¹⁵ https://states-of-change.org/stories/making-the-case-and-space-for-reflection; https://states-of-change.org/stories/exploring-the-unobvious-why-governments-need-toexperiment-outside-their-comfort-zone





	 What are energy community goals, what tools, actors and actions do they need to get there, and how can the Government best support this?; Look for learnings in themes of Local Ownership, Regulation & Governance, Community Knowledge Building; Is this a method we would recommend repeating as part of civil servant capability building for working with communities?
Hypotheses	 Energy communities need dedicated space and time for exchange on issues of longer term importance, outside of their daily tasks and commitments; By listening to energy communities, civil servants can truly realise the scale and scope of EC capabilities for driving the energy transition, while also strengthening relationships, networks and alliances needed to serve the work; An appropriate physical space to gather that is not associated directly with the government encourage attendance by divers actors; A third-party facilitated, community-led workshop will create the right settings and dynamics for participants to find common ground, in the collaborative company of civil servants; Facilitation expertise is critical for workshop success – ample time to explain context, and get participants comfortable with approach and materials; Physical interaction between energy communities and Aldermen in Workshop 2 (postponed to January 2022), will stimulate the buy-in from the latter to take energy community-led propositions into 2022 strategic planning.
Details	 Participants (n=14): 7 x energy communities, 2 x member networks, 2 x civil society, 2 x government - technical; facilitated/supported by Demsoc (n=4); Format: Half-day, in-person workshop at Olympic Stadium; Two activities: 1) Defining 'City as Enabler'; 2) co-producing a Toolbox for Change (see Appendix A), setting out Goals for local ownership, decarbonisation, and improvement of social cohesion and wellbeing, setting out Tools, Actors and Actions to get there, and highlighting the Government's enabling role. Also featured an inspiration wall with Toolkit examples provided by the City; Evaluation: Brief survey at end of session to get participant feedback and learn what can be improved about the approach and activities.





6. Strategic learnings

6.1 Key learnings from experiments

Eight repeatable, scalable learnings that can be applied to other domains.

1. Collaboration with communities shifts civil servants' mindsets and actions

- Experimental practices that promote a democratic, relational approach to climate action

 such as the Toolbox for Change community-led workshop centre voices of lived
 experience, and preferably communities commonly marginalised. Such practices help
 shift mindsets and ways of working among diverse actors, helping them find common
 ground and 'speak in one direction' towards desired change and what's needed to get
 there, inclusively.
- At the community-led workshop civil servants heard first-hand the energy community's needs, barriers and motivations, and gained a stronger understanding of their capabilities, commitment to change, and need for greater agency to pursue their programme of work. Sitting alongside energy communities as collaborators meant civil servants were directly able to discuss possibilities for the City's enabling role and "tools" for change.

2. Local approach and social ties are critical for accessing the right people

- Social capital and trusted networks play a large role in who can get access to who for experiments and participation activities. All experiments were reliant on civil servants and local partners to recruit energy community and civil society participants. Demsoc also had a 'local connector' in Amsterdam building up this contact list and helping shortlist people for experiments.
- It is best if the interviewing group is a third-party not affiliated with or working for the City, because distrust of the City by some community/cooperatives can impair research.

3. Appropriate physical/virtual space and time for deeper, wider, inclusive engagement

- Cooperative and communities think in terms of their daily, weekly and monthly tasks; they have their hands and heads full. The community-led workshop demonstrated how having dedicated space and time outside of daily commitments is critical for communities to be able to discuss and agree upon approaches to issues of longer term importance. The City can play this supporting role on an ongoing basis.
- The choice of venue is also important to encourage wider engagement with communities. The location should be neutral, inviting, and culturally safe, and not directly affiliated with the government; some communities and individuals do not trust the government and its intentions and would be less likely to attend a 'government owned' venue. The Olympic Stadium was a suitable workshop venue, for example.

4. Importance of language for ease of access and shared understanding





- Prioritising the mother tongue (Dutch) in interviews, session facilitation, and output materials (e.g. the Toolbox for Change) proved important for keeping the approach local, accessible and understandable. In some cases it was the key point of access to participants in specific neighbourhoods for interviews. We learned not to assume that everyone is comfortable speaking, reading or writing in English.
- Use of the term 'actors' and reference to the Actor Framework got people thinking more critically about their roles and responsibilities for democratic climate action and who else can play a part, while also breaking them away from high-level, generic labels of 'Cities, citizens and communities'. 'Actor' language also helped HCC DD partners be more reflective on their role as *actors* in the change process, not just delivery partners operating at arm's length to the challenge.

5. Emphasise peer-learning, for longer term benefit

- Peer-to-peer participation has multiple benefits over short and longer terms: people living together in friendship and collaboration can generate outcomes that no service, no matter how well designed or resourced, ever can¹⁶.
- Feedback loops with community participants are also important so everyone knows what the outcomes of participation were. This recognises community contributions to the process, and gives participants more agency to build and act upon the outcomes and learnings they helped generate.
- Within the HCC DD partner group, we observed that "experts" sharing openly and asking questions of peers, revealing that not all answers are known, feels awkward. In this setting, intention and value needs to be clear to all parties to ensure ongoing attendance.

6. Design participation around people, not institutions

- A mix of experiment types (interview, workshops, sensemaking) enabled more participation of diverse actors, but there is room for improvement. We learned that energy communities are "fragile ecosystems"; social ties and sense of belonging are important motivators for being part of an energy community, and there is cautiousness about what might happen if circles are expanded to include those lesser known. This meant that a select group was involved in the Toolbox for Change community-led workshop; it is intended that more actors will take part in a follow-up workshop to present the Toolbox to Aldermen in January 2022.
- Deeper and wider engagement with diverse voices for example through earlier expert interviews helped build a broader understanding of the current energy landscape.

7. Integrate experiments with existing community-led actions; don't start from scratch

- Participation fatigue is common amongst community groups and member networks, who are often consulted for feedback and ideas. People may not have the energy or willingness to join a new working group or 'Lab'.
- For maximum chance of deeper and wider engagement, we learned integrating experiments with existing community-led initiatives works best, where the target audience is already present. For example the Toolbox for Change community-led workshop experiment was built into an energy community event being hosted by 02025



¹⁶ https://tessybritton.medium.com/designing-participation-systems-around-people-not-institutions-b2188e08b854



and Oranje Energie, and the second workshop in January 2022 will be part of the Day of the Cooperatives programme where again the target audience will already be present.

8. Set expectations for what a Lab is, and what it can achieve in constrained conditions

- A shared board (e.g. Miro) is no substitute for a physical Lab; it is not a Lab by definition. Expectations for what a <12 month online Lab can offer need to be realistic, because most Labs or Hubs are run as physical spaces, and typically supported by staff and budget over a period of years for example as part of a research institute.
- We learned 'Labs' have different connotations for different actors, some of whom are familiar with Living Labs and Social Innovation Labs. Some are wary of 'Labs' because of frequent contact by Lab researchers; one group said they would not participate in earlier Lab experiments for this reason. Should the concept be repeated, we'd call it a Hub or collaboration space, and be sure to clearly state the intention and value to actor(s) invited.

How an online 'Democratic Climate Lab' furthers civic engagement for climate action

- 'Onboarding' programme partners (e.g. civil servants, design partners, local partners) into principles and practices promoting a democratic, relational approach to climate action. These can be referred to throughout the project for consistency and standards in the participatory approach being taken.
- Creating dedicated space for design of civic engagement activities with programme partners, for example community-led workshops and participatory design activities;
- Sharing learnings and hosting sensemaking activities to help keep knowledge flowing between programme partners and ensure the right direction of travel;
- Repeatable, scalable approach that can be adapted for other contexts e.g. Deep Retrofit, Mobility, Circular Economy.

Tips:

- At least one person needs to own the shared online board, and maintain good housekeeping e.g. upload notes from sensemaking sessions in a timely manner, and tell people they're available; close the loop, keep the board active.
- Avoid putting too much information on the online board, and sharing it with too many people; keep it to a closed group who know each other and are familiar with its structure and purpose within the project. Never send the board to people to make sense of 'cold'; offer familiarisation walkthroughs so they understand it and how to use it.

6.2 Broader analysis of the experiments

Here we expand analysis of learnings from the four experiments using two components of Demsoc's evolving Democratic Climate Model which emphasise 'conditions' for democratic climate action: the Actor Framework and City Canopy.

Actor Framework analysis

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Leading systems change requires collaboration across diverse actors. How much and how actors come together has a bearing on what's possible for climate action and more just, resilient futures. An Actor Framework helps to express this, and helps cities think about who else could be at the table for climate action, hoping to inspire new collaborations for change¹⁷.

The Framework breaks down the types of actors and their roles, and how these roles could or should contribute to democratic climate action. Plotting actors using the Framework also helps us think about whose voice is missing and helps calculate the degree of 'Diversity of actors' for democratic climate action, part of the City Canopy analysis in the next section. Types of actors include artists, activists, researchers, civil society, companies, governments, and journalists. The three tables below set out which actors were and weren't involved in Lab experiments, for consideration about their contributions to democratic climate action.

Actor type	Civil society	Energy communities	Funders	Government - technical leads	Member networks	Public institutions
Role as commonly understood	Builds movements that holds us accountable to the greater good	Groups of citizens, social entrepreneurs and public authorities who collectively invest in producing, selling and managing renewable energy	Decides how funding will be spent via grants to programs or initiatives with aligned interests	Liaison between internal and external actors to ensure delivered services uphold policy and city needs	Advocate for member communities to ensure critical needs are met	Culturally safe, neutral space for public interaction and learning
How this role could or should contribute to climate action in a democratic way	Embed movements within institutions and ecosystems.	Frontline action towards decarbonisati on, focused on people over profit, lowering cost of living, and increasing social wellbeing and	Shift decision making power on funding spend to networks in which it is investing.	Protect against corrupting interests, balancing political interests with what is best for the community.	Push for member needs being sustainably met.	Capability building for the public in civic engagement and democratic decision making processes including

Which actors were involved in Lab experiments, and what was their (potential) contribution?

¹⁷ The Actor Framework is integrated and adapted with permission from Panthea Lea at <u>Reboot</u> (New York), whose work focuses on inclusive practice and designing collaborations for courageous change.





		community cohesion.				support for digital literacy.
Who was involved	Democratic Society, Dark Matter Labs, Bankers without Boundaries, Commons Network, Waag, !WOON	Amsterdam Energie, Amsterdam Wind, Green Light District, Jungle, Oranje Energie, Zuiderlicht, WG Terrein / Ketelhuis WG	EIT Climate- KIC	City of Amsterdam civil servants (n=1); City of Zaanstad civil servant (n=1)	02025 (local), Energie Samen (national)	Oba Library, who are part of <u>Europe</u> <u>Challenge for</u> <u>Libraries</u> . See also <u>Citizen</u> <u>Voices for</u> <u>Digital Rights</u> on digital literacy, access, empowermen t, which included Amsterdam.

Which actors were not involved in experiments, and what could they have contributed?

Actor type	Activists	Artists	Community members (citizens)	Companies	Government - politicians
Role as commonly understood	Protest unjust systems, practices, institutions	Imagine futures that honours each person's dignity	Lives, works, plays in this place	Produce goods and services that people need to meet their needs	Create policies and deliver services to serve their people
How this role could or should contribute to climate action in a democratic way	Help define paths to dismantling them.	Advocate for these new realities.	Spread knowledge and practices to benefit neighbours, improving wellbeing and social cohesion of community.	Production and distribution via ethical, sustainable practices.	Protects against corrupting interests of citizens at a policy and leadership level.
Who could have been involved	Social Tipping Point Coalition. Climate Psychology Alliance (Dutch), Climate	The Beach. Cascoland, TAAK, Turn Club	de Meevaart, MidWest, Buurtcooperatie de Eester, Ru Pare Community, members of the	Alliander, Ecostroom, EnergieDirect, Green Choice, NLE, Rockstart, Skoon Energy,	Aldermen e.g. Deputy Mayor Marieke van Doorninck, Spatial Development,

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Conversations, Klimaatzuster	public at Day of the Cooperatives (postponed to 2022)	Stadgenoot, Vattenfall, Vrijopnaam, Wise; should also include small- medium enterprises	and Sustainability, Rutger Groot Wassink, Alderman for Social Affairs, Diversity and Democratization
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	Grassroots Groups	Journalists	Researchers	Other - third-party institutions
Role as commonly understood	Care for communities to ensure critical needs are met	Monitors institutions and social for violations of our social contract	Assess different possible paths to a better future	Uphold certifications and standards
How this role could or should contribute to climate action in a democratic way	Push for needs being sustainably met.	Combat narratives that fuel fear, divisiveness, and hate.	Shaping discourse and policy towards more resilient climate futures.	Holding government and enterprise accountable for actions breaching standards
Who could have been involved	De Groene Hub	National newspapers: NRC Handelsblad, Trouw, de Volkskrant, de Correspondent (online), Local newspaper: Het Parool	HvA, AUAS, Platform31, TNO	MienskipsEnergie, Keurmerk

There could also be more representation from energy communities from other neighbourhoods who are not typically part of frontrunner discussions, to ensure more centering of voices commonly marginalised. More involvement of public institutions, for example use of library sites in non-central locations to host community workshops, would also be desirable in future.

City Canopy analysis

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The second component of the Democratic Climate Model used for analysis of experiment learnings is the City Canopy. The Canopy uses the analogy of the aerial view of dense trees covering a city to offer protection, growing from the outside in. It offers a way of aggregating and visually representing a city's climate resilience based on four categories of 'conditions' for democratic climate action observed in Demsoc's climate programme work: 1) Diversity of actors; 2) Participatory culture; 3) Resourcing; 4) Subject matter expertise. The higher the level of these conditions - and thus the denser the canopy that covers the city – the more coverage and protection the city is offered for a durable, climate resilient, decarbonised future. See Appendix B: City Canopy for a description of levels Low, Medium, High relevant to each of the four categories.

The Canopy is not a way of judging cities, nor can it provide a complete or fully accurate picture. It is a *conversation starter* for identifying foundational conditions, emerging shifts, and future possibilities for change towards climate resilience.

Figures 2 and 3 show our impression of Amsterdam's City Canopy. This is based on 2021 experiment analysis conducted together with Dark Matter Labs. Supporting descriptions appear below.

Foundations: Conditions observed to be present at commencement of the work. These observations came from Experiment 2: Expert interviews, and from secondary sources e.g. 2020 Deep Demonstration diagnostic, and other City, partners and third-party reports.

Emerging shifts: Conditions observed to have shifted over the course of the programme through various forms of engagement and action: new methods, new ways of working, new relationships, or political or social action, among other reasons.

Future possibilities: 'Gaps' that the City could address to more fully realise their ambitions towards decarbonisation and climate resilience. We address these in '*Section 7: Recommendations and next steps*'.







Figure 3. Amsterdam's City Canopy – Future possibilities

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DIVERSITY OF ACTORS

"We should be celebrating people with limited means as they are operating in a more sustainable way than those with Tesla cars and heat pumps. These are the frontrunners really, not the Tesla driving people." – Jungle Amsterdam, August 2021.

"The intercultural background of the neighbourhood is very challenging. People that are 'advancing'... 80% or so are all white. The difficulty is, how do we make things intercultural and involve people from other backgrounds who have other concerns?" – !WOON, June 2021.

Foundations

• Frontrunners are more present in energy transition discussions, to the exclusion of other actors. Member networks representing frontrunners are consulted by the City, but this leaves out voices of energy communities who are not part of these networks, such as those in lower-socioeconomic parts of the City.

Emerging shifts

- Expert interviews were conducted with diverse energy system actors including those not part of the frontrunner networks. This contributed to broader understanding of barriers and opportunities for the Lab.
- Civil servants have increasingly closer ties with communities. This includes District Brokers and teams of <u>Aardgasvrij</u> (Amsterdam natural gas-free), and other climate programs.
- Energy community initiatives in more diverse parts of the City are creating space for community bonding, exchange, support.

PARTICIPATORY CULTURE

"We need social tipping points. People getting together and organising themselves and wanting social change when it comes to climate action." – Participation specialist, City of Amsterdam, June 2021.

Foundations

- The 'energy transition' and 'energy commons' are not easily understandable concepts for most people. Governments and energy communities talk about it in different ways, which prevents people from clearly understanding its intention, creating a barrier to adoption at scale.
- Citizens and communities are disconnected from decision-making processes. Energy communities feel that the City "just doesn't get them" and what access and resources they need. Small group of civil servants are aware of realities for those in lower socioeconomic areas, but they are in the minority. Central office staff with no connection to energy communities are too far removed from understanding their needs, barriers and motivations. Decisions get made without involving communities, such as the recent windmill implementation, causing protests and deepening community mistrust in the government.
- Design sessions with citizens made difficult by complexity and mistrust of the municipality; belief they are being brought into processes to be 'moulded' into what the City wants.

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Emerging shifts

- Energy communities, civil society and civil servants are developing a manifesto for local ownership by energy communities. See Appendix A: Toolbox for Change.
- In early 2022 energy communities, civil society and civil servants are pitching their vision for Amsterdam's energy transition to Aldermen at the rescheduled Day of the Cooperatives, based on the outcomes of this 2021 DD work. It is hoped this will lead to adoption in 2022 strategic policy and planning, and in the longer term lead to lobbying the Hague for exemptions for Amsterdam as an 'Energy City'.

RESOURCING

"We are drowning in everchanging city rules and policy. Subsidies are there but energy communities are not compliant". - Energy community, "Toolbox for Change" community-led workshop, 27 October 2021.

"There should be much more regular City conversations on the energy transition - how to inform, engage people to be part of the solution." – Energy community, "Toolbox for Change" communityled workshop, 27 October 2021.

Foundations

- Environments and capabilities: Lack of time, space, environments for sharing expertise and guidance between diverse actors. Lack of capability building, knowledge sharing, and transparency about what the energy transition is. Smaller initiatives can't share their message at scale. Community sustainability initiatives try to expand to new neighbourhoods and produce their own flyers, but get limited response.
- Funding and investment options: Energy communities are being designed out of tender processes and are not able to access viable funding options. For example, where a public buy-in of X million € is required, this is impossible for energy communities. Some activities are high risk in terms of investment, and not having access to funding in development phases before getting permits also puts energy communities in a position of vulnerability. In general there is a lack of data on availability of suitable finance for energy communities.
- Peer-to-peer (P2P) trading prevented: electricity suppliers require a licence so currently prosumers must sell excess electricity back to their supplier rather than between each other.
- Legal structures and liabilities: No one size fits all diverse requirements for solar, wind, heating and energy efficiency focussed communities. Currently no legal entity for social enterprises and communities lack a 'legal pattern book' to guide legal structuring. If a rooftop with photovoltaics installed is publicly owned and requires maintenance, this liability falls on the energy community.
- Project timeframes and available resourcing: Long project periods mean volunteers change over the course of a project, legal and financial challenges may arise and contracts must be flexible to adapt to these. Organising and running projects often falls on individual volunteers, causing an operational burden of tech projects.
- Measuring impact: financial and social impact of projects hard to measure to attract finance.

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Emerging shifts

- Capability building is happening slowly inside the government when respected City stakeholders support other colleagues and 'try and involve them in sustainability'.
- Democratic Climate Lab and strategic experiments took further steps to creating a peer learning environment, but more needs to be done to create an atmosphere for learning and knowledge exchange.
- Energy communities, civil society and the City will continue to refine Toolbox for Change ideas (Appendix A).

SUBJECT-MATTER EXPERTISE

"There are communities of practice at small scale about energy in the public commons, There's lots of knowledge around neighbourhood strength, lots of enthusiasm." – Participation specialist, City of Amsterdam, June 2021.

"We have people in the City of Amsterdam who are thinking in the same ways, because Amsterdam is one of the owners of third generation systems. If you only have a hammer, every problem looks like a nail, so we're also fighting status quo. We need to show there are other ways to solve the problem. If we deal with people with low incomes, we have to find solutions that fit." – !WOON, June 2021.

Foundations

- Discussions about an integrated approach have a technocratic, expert-led focus. Mentality change and consideration of social, relational factors is also important. This risks a narrowed view on solutions that diminishes citizen agency for change.
- Energy communities report feeling undervalued and underestimated for their entrepreneurialism and capabilities for sustainability, because the funding structures and initiatives that are offered to them by the government show the City "doesn't get them" and create further barriers for them to succeed.
- Civic AI and smart contracting: digital and data-related barriers for citizens
 - Site mapping difficulties identifying suitable sites and their ownership details
 - Financial modelling lack of tools to model finances throughout project lifecycle
 - o Data collection automated metering not always possible, meters inaccessible
 - o Forecasting difficult to accurately forecast demand and supply
 - Load balancing challenges for distributed energy generation
 - Fault detection faults can be difficult to diagnose
- Civic AI and smart contracting: contractual innovation-related barriers for citizens
 - Shared ownership fractional ownership and revenue distribution can be complex
 - Governance structures lack of suitable governance structures for diverse actors
 - Legal expertise lack of templates/patterns to support legal structuring





Emerging shifts

• Energy communities have frontline, daily experience of barriers and possibilities for a locally owned, community-led energy transition. They are reaching things at scale, have skills, capabilities, drive, and are actively thinking about inclusivity, and are demonstrating entrepreneurialism for sustainability. The City is increasingly working with energy communities as collaborators, rather than directing action from the top down.

7. Recommendations and next steps

7.1 Future possibilities towards climate resilience

Diversity of actors

- More inclusive and collaborative practices; find ways to centre voices of communities commonly marginalised.
 Greater possibilities and innovative directions emerge from having more diverse voices at the table, which also involves addressing conflict and crossing boundaries;
- Consider whose voice is missing, and what their inclusion could bring for leading system change. Review the Actor Framework analysis (see *6.2: Broader analysis of the experiments*);
- Seek more alignment opportunities with civic and bilateral initiatives, to maximise the change of deeper and wider civic engagement in places that communities are already convening;

Recognise the value of local approach and representation

 Non-there
 Non-there

 Non-there
 Non-there

Figure 4. Amsterdam's City Canopy – future possibilities

- within districts; recognise and celebrate diversity in how energy communities organise themselves, and prioritise what they need, by truly knowing what they need from first-hand observation and experience;
- Strengthen ties and understanding between District Brokers and democratisation, participation, innovation team members to ensure knowledge sharing, information flows, and 'speaking in the same direction' for community-led change.

Participatory culture

• Continue to work with energy communities to build and share a common narrative of 'energy transition' and 'the energy commons' across the City. Invite a mindset

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appreciative of what energy communities are capable of, and how to work with them, instead of against them;

- Broaden the lens on the energy transition away from the household; be transparent about the amount of energy consumption in industry, manufacturing, logistics;
- Widening understanding between actors: energy communities, government, citizens creates a higher likelihood of adoption, and more collective input to solutions that benefit all;
- Continue to find ways to connect people to power: support opportunities for energy communities to connect with senior stakeholders such as Aldermen, and assist with lobbying/advocacy at National level.

Resourcing

- Recognise the City's critical role of playing host and facilitator, making space for diverse actors to interact, to spark ideas and momentum. Make space for communities to lead.
- Make time and collaboration space for energy communities to do longer-term thinking and knowledge exchange, outside of day-to-day operations. This will also require administrative and technical support.
- Host more conversations to progress the narrative on energy transition and the energy commons and deeper and widen knowledge exchange into communities and neighbourhoods.
- Recognise that energy communities have different needs at different stages: no one size fits all. Work with energy communities to co-design adaptable models, tools e.g. funding and financing options e.g. Capital Map, and regulatory and governance models e.g. Commons Register (see Appendix A: Toolbox for Change). Also consider how these new tools and models can work for different sectors, programmes, workstreams (Deep Retrofit, Mobility, Circular Economy);
- Conduct multi-stakeholder evaluation e.g. with City administration, energy communities and other actors; evaluation itself as a collective (inclusive) approach. See Appendix A: Toolbox for Change for potential indicators for evaluation.

Subject matter expertise

- We recommend placing more value on frontline, on-the-ground experience of communities as a form of expertise, and trusting communities with the mandate to find solutions to issues close to them.
- Applying technical knowhow to generate technical maps and models to better support Civic AI and smart contracting e.g.
 - Mapping sites automated identification of location and energy generating potential of sites e.g. rooftops or wind turbine locations from satellite imagery and ownership data.
 - Modelling local energy requirements analysing local energy demand data and matching to potential renewable capacity.
 - Demand side response and load balancing real-time scheduling of storage and consumption according to demand.
 - Revenue distribution equitable revenue distribution from ownership and generation data.
 - Remote fault detection power analysis to identify faults or misuse.





- Modelling impact analysis of investment, revenue, costs and social impact over lifecycle of project to help attract green and social finance.
- Smart ownership contracts fractional ownership and revenue distribution via smart contracts.
- Legal patterns open templates for legal structure.
- Governance framework open templates for governance structure.

7.2 Embedding democratic practices to shift mindsets and action

Capability building within the Government

- Some civil servants already have buy-in to a participatory approach, and some already have relationships with, and understanding of, the needs of communities like energy cooperatives. But many of their colleagues don't share these understandings. There is a gap and possibility to fill to ramp up democratic capability within the City.
- We recommend starting with civil servant observation and collaboration with communities in facilitated workshops in appropriate physical or virtual space not directly linked to the City, like the Toolbox for Change community-led workshop experiment at Olympic Stadium. The power of hearing from people with frontline, on the ground experience is transformative for civil servants, and can have a knock-on effect between colleagues, helping to shift the government towards a more participatory, experimental mindset which in turn fosters more innovation practice and application.

Further institutionalisation of participation and democratic practice

We encourage ongoing use and iteration of the Democratic Climate Lab concept in Amsterdam in 2022 for different domains: Deep Retrofit, Mobility and Circular Economy, to help further institutionalise participation in the City and build the foundations and tools for new forms of governance necessary to navigate the climate transition in socially just, equitable and democratic ways. However, we'd recommend calling it a Hub, or collaboration space, to avoid misunderstanding of the term 'Lab'.

- More in-person discussion, prototyping and experimentation on tools and institutions for new forms of governance involving a mix of actors with frontline, on the ground, "lived" experience, that expands beyond frontrunners;
- More alignment with civic and bilateral initiatives, to maximise the change of deeper and wider citizen engagement in places that people are already collaborating and building alliances;
- More socialisation of sensemaking and reflective practice between the City, EIT-Climate KIC and design partners with citizens and civil society, to continue to build an experimental mindset for innovation practice. Time is needed to cultivate relationships; widen the circle slowly, intentionally.
- More testing and iteration of tools and principles of the Democratic Climate Model for how democratic principles can lead cities and regions to respond differently to climate change. We invite the City to try tools, and are happy to offer support in doing so.





7.3 Assets that will help the work going forward

Toolbox for Change

The Toolbox for Change (Appendix A) – and three innovation opportunities highlighted within it – is a comprehensive, highly valuable and actionable innovation output from the 2021 work that stands to influence budget, resourcing, policy, and new forms of governance for the City in 2022 and beyond to achieve not only decarbonisation, but other goals of social and economic wellbeing.

The Toolbox sets out energy community perspectives on what's needed to achieve Amsterdam's energy transition goals over the next 10-30 years, focusing on 1) shift to decarbonisation and renewable, sustainable energy generation, 2) 50% local ownership, and legal, regulatory and financial infrastructure suited to energy communities, and 3) new forms of governance to support energy community development and transition.

The three innovation opportunities highlighted in the Toolbox to help achieve these goals are:

- Commons Register: a new regulatory model based on the 'commons' shared resources that are collectively managed. A Commons Register would grant exceptions on tenders for social enterprises, cooperatives (including energy communities), treating them as separate from market and government actors. This would make it easier for these groups to get legal and financial recognition. It would involve 'translation' of EU regulation recognising citizen energy communities into Dutch law – which might require lobbying the Hague – and could be independently judged by a third party organisation such as the <u>Dutch Council for Cooperatives</u>.
- **Public-civic partnership:** a new arrangement placing responsibility for capability building and knowledge transfer in the hands of energy communities; for and by energy communities, which also accounts for risk capital and legal support.
- **Policy free experimentation zone:** a new 'playing field' for and by energy communities, to shape Amsterdam as an experimental energy community city, without restrictions of policy and tendering processes. This idea is in part inspired by Ghent in Belgium which has official 'Energy City' status providing exemptions and room for experimentation, for example with its Living Streets project¹⁸.

The City is supporting energy communities to present Toolbox propositions to Aldermen in early 2022 at the 'Day of the Cooperatives', aiming to get their buy-in for policy and planning adoption in the new year.

Relationships, networks and peer learning

- Strengthened relationships and networks: maintain momentum with energy communities, including support of their 'pitch' to Alderman in January 2022 at the Day of the Cooperatives;
- Peer learning: sharing of tacit and explicit knowledge on what's needed for climate transition



¹⁸ https://energy-cities.eu/project/euki-living-streets-ghent/



8. Portfolio implementation status

A – Deep Retrofit / Energy

As of November 2021 the City is already working with recommendations from the Toolbox for Change community-led workshop, with energy communities and other bilateral initiatives in motion, including a 'School of the Commons' involving other City stakeholders and changemaker networks. The City is also having more detailed discussions with DML and Bankers Without Boundaries on smart contracting, civic technology and financial models, stemming from outcomes of this work.

In January 2022 the City will support energy communities to pitch their Toolbox for Change vision for Amsterdam's energy transition to Aldermen at the rescheduled Day of the Cooperatives, seeking to influence budget, resourcing, policy, and new forms of governance for the City in 2022 and beyond to achieve decarbonisation and other goals of social and economic wellbeing.

B – Mobility

Principles and approaches stemming from this work programme are informing the City of Amsterdam's proposal "Collective Distribution and Transport Over Water - Code the Streets 2.0". The project is set in the Kinkerbuurt neighbourhood, with scope to test future urban logistics scenarios and data driven logistical systems to improve liveability in neighbourhoods in a sustainable, safe, and secure way while considering the city rules and cost reductions.

Guidance is being provided to the City on applying "Government as an enabler of communities development" learnings focused on engaging diverse local actors, making space for discussion and experimentation in new tools and forms of governance led by communities, and thinking and acting in a more democratic, relational way beyond technological solutions alone.

C – Circular Economy

No current plans for adoption, but outcomes of this work concerning civic engagement for democratic climate action and the government's enabling role should be broadly applicable.

Other

The City of Amsterdam is working on an action program spanning energy, food and mobility. They intend to align their parameters and benchmarks with the outcomes of this "Government as enabler for communities development" work.

9. Conclusion

An ambitious agenda was set for experiments in this cross-cutting work programme, to progress the Amsterdam HCC DD from 'Build On' in 2020 to 'Design With' in 2021. Despite some setbacks

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due to the pandemic and limited ability to experiment with deepened and widened civic participation in person, a vast amount of insight was gathered concerning experiment methodologies, conditions for "Government as an enabler of communities development", and practical insights into Government-supported tools to support transition, which should set the City of Amsterdam up well for progressing an experimental, strategic approach into 2022 planning and policymaking.

The experiments conducted helped to address 2020 learnings focused on institutionalisation of participation, building capability in civil servants, and helped the City take steps towards more inclusive practice. By pursuing the next steps set out in this report, we hope to see the City progress to "Deliver With" in 2022. Overall we feel that the experiments have helped civil servants but also HCC DD partners begin to see climate transition as democratic and relational, not just technical and transactional, bringing them more into line with the perspectives of communities on the frontline of climate transition, which we see as very hopeful for change.

10. Acknowledgements

Democratic Society would like to extend a sincere thanks to all those who participated in Democratic Climate Lab experiments. Special thanks also go to City of Amsterdam staff.



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Appendix A: Toolbox for Change

The **Amsterdam Energy Transition: Toolbox for Change v1 (PDF)** presents Goals, Tools, Actors & Actors, and City as enabler functions towards Amsterdam's democratic, community-led energy transition. The Toolbox was co-produced by energy communities and networks, civil society and City actors at a workshop facilitated by Democratic Society in Amsterdam on 27 October 2021.

It is produced in Dutch and English. All Toolbox for Change files:

- Toolbox for Change (A3 PDF) English | Dutch
- Toolbox for Change reference <u>English | Dutch</u>
- Tool and Actors Cards English | Dutch



Figure 4. Toolbox for Change, English version (11 November 2021)







Figure 5. Energy community, energy network, City and civil society actors creating the Toolbox for Change, 27 October 2021



Figure 6. Energy community, energy network, City and civil society actors discussing the energy commons, Toolbox for Change Workshop 1, 27 October 2021

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Figure 7. Energy community participant sketch of the commons (digitised)

Figure 7 is a digitised version of a sketch made by an energy community participant during the Toolbox for Change workshop (see Figure 6). They explained that the traditional setup is typically company, cities, working together, which keeps citizens out and disconnected. The energy communities desire to create a middle space – a *commons* – where resources and capabilities a shared. The four roles are what the energy communities need from the *commons*, and what needs to be considered for new forms of governance leading towards community ownership.





Appendix B: City Canopy levels



	Low level	Medium level	High level
Diversity of actors	Homogeneous voices and knowledge systems, narrow view of culture; little to no inclusive practice evident.	Evidence of inclusion of more diverse voices and knowledge systems; steps being taken towards more inclusive practice.	Diverse voices and knowledge systems; inclusive practices evident that continue to centre voices of communities commonly marginalised.
Participatory culture	Lack of institutionalised participation; citizen participation as afterthought; hierarchical and 'transactional' approach with citizens and communities, sharing ideas but not inviting participation; change seen as	Citizen participation becoming more interwoven; evidence of deliberative democratic processes allowing citizens to participate in decision making e.g. citizen assemblies for	Institutionalised participation; citizen participation interwoven; 'relational' leadership sharing power; change understood as emergent from accountable, accessible, collaborative process; expanded participation for innovation and





	point at end of process; industrial-era governance.	climate, participatory budgeting.	experimentation at all levels of governance.
Resourcing	Funding projects and outputs for the short-term, with ambiguous goals; use of public resources to satisfy predetermined agendas; lack of capacity and capability for change work.	More citizen-led, eco- systemic approaches to funding being considered; reframing of goals in longer term contexts; evidence of steps towards capacity and capability building within government, and by government with communities.	Funding options, with clear, concrete goals; eco-systemic approach supporting emergent possibilities to be explored for the long term, for scalable, durable sustainable change; redirects public resources to community collectives; capacity and capability building within government, and by government with communities.
Subject matter expertise	Focus on experts - often with a technocratic mindset - for decision making and implementation; lacks recognition and respect for lived experience of community; frames as problems to be solved, seeing conflict, boundaries and complexity as problems to be avoided; delivers single-point solutions not suited to long term scale, durability or sustainability; maintains status quo.	Lived experience of community more recognised; more collaborative approach being taken to address complex challenges, looking beyond traditional experts; evidence of government listening to and taking onboard citizen and community viewpoints alongside expert views.	Lived experience of community respected as form of expertise; government trust in citizen and communities to find solutions to issues close to them; frames as possibilities to be explored; sees acknowledging conflict and crossing boundaries as necessary to make sense of complexity; disruptive to multi- level, interdependent systems (fossil energy, fragility and concentrated power).

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Appendix C: Democratic Climate Lab

'Living' Miro board for experiment coordination and collaboration <u>https://miro.com/app/board/o9J_I_7U1LI=/</u> (password: participate).



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Appendix D: Glossary

Actor framework	Leading systems change requires collaboration across diverse actors. How much and how actors come together has a bearing on the degree of rooted collaboration for climate resilience. Democratic Society's Democratic Climate Model features an Actor Framework to help us explain the types of actors involved in climate action, what roles they play, and how their roles must evolve to bring about just and sustainable climate futures. It also helps us think about whose voice is missing. Types of actors include artists, activists, researchers, grassroots groups, civil society, companies, governments, and journalists.
Aldermen	The city council, the College of Mayors and Alderpersons, and the district committees together form the Amsterdam city government. The city council is the highest governing body and consists of elected representatives of the people of Amsterdam. The College of Mayor and Alderpersons is responsible for daily operations and policy implementation. The city council chooses the alderpersons (also known as deputy mayors). There are seven alderpersons, each with their own portfolio of topics.
City Canopy	The 'City Canopy' is part of Demsoc's evolving Democratic Climate Model which highlights how democratic, participatory practices can lead cities and regions to respond differently to climate change. The Canopy offers a way of aggregating and visually representing a city's climate resilience based on four categories of 'conditions' for democratic climate action observed in Demsoc's climate programme work: <i>1) Diversity of actors; 2) Participatory culture; 3) Resourcing; 4) Subject matter expertise.</i> It is not a way of judging cities, nor can it provide a complete or fully accurate picture. It is a conversation starter for identifying foundational conditions, emerging shifts, and future possibilities for change towards climate resilience.
	It is a bird's eye view of a city, using the analogy of tree coverage across a City or region. The higher the level of these conditions – and thus the denser the canopy that covers the city – the more coverage and protection the city is offered for a climate resilient, decarbonised future that will stand the test of time.
Commons	Any shared resource that is collectively managed – from community gardens to Wikipedia. "The commons" convey the space where communities write their own rules, stewarding resources and communication collectively. Shared self-reliance can be turned into collective autonomy when communities take matters into their own hands, to steward the health and care of the community. (Source: <u>Commons Network, 2021</u>)





Democratic Climate Lab	A new and unique mixed participatory method deployed in the 2021 Amsterdam Healthy, Clean City Deep Demonstration for Work Package 4, offering an interactive platform for discussion, prototyping, experimentation for new forms of governance, tools and institutions needed, amongst diverse energy system actors. Underpinned by principles and practices of the Democratic Climate Model (see below).
Democratic Climate Model	Demsoc's evolving Democratic Climate Model ¹⁹ highlights how democratic principles can lead cities and regions to respond differently to climate change. The Model is underpinned by meaningful participation and legitimised by continuous community consent. A vital feature of the Model is that it strengthens democratic institutions in the long term through citizen participation.
Energy community (EC)	"groups of citizens, social entrepreneurs and public authorities who collectively invest in producing, selling and managing renewable energy." ²⁰
Energy transition	The shift from large-scale, centralised, intensive fossil energy production, to renewable sources (e.g. solar, wind, hydro, tidal) which can be produced in 'democratised' decentralised ways.
Local ownership	Community investment in and management of energy production and distribution, for example renewable energy sources. Local ownership begins with local people analysing their situation and recognizing their capacity to make change.
Smart contracting	A smart contract is a computer program or a transaction protocol which is intended to automatically execute, control or document legally relevant events and actions according to the terms of a contract or an agreement. (Source: <u>Wikipedia</u>)
Smart grid	A smart grid is an electricity network that uses digital and other advanced technologies to monitor and manage the transport of electricity from all generation sources to meet the varying electricity demands of end users. Smart grids coordinate the needs and capabilities of all generators, grid operators, end users and electricity market stakeholders to operate all parts of the system as efficiently as possible, minimising costs and environmental

¹⁹ https://www.demsoc.org/blog/climate-resilience-needs-community-roots 20



https://econpapers.repec.org/article/eeetefoso/v_3a158_3ay_3a2020_3ai_3ac_3as0040162 520309495.htm



impacts while maximising system reliability, resilience and stability. (Source:
<u>IEA</u>)

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