



SUCCESS STORY

Rebirth for inner-city industry Horizon 2020 | Societal Challenge 5

The Horizon 2020 project “CENTRINNO” (New centralities in industrial areas as engines for innovation and urban transformation) aims to revitalise city centres by identifying and supporting urban manufacturers. By turning historic industrial sites into new manufacturing hubs, CENTRINNO will put innovation and local supply at the heart of our future cities. The Geneva FabLab “Onl’Fait” is one of the key participants.

European cities once drew their character and economic power from the manufacturing carried out in their centres. Even after decades of globalisation, high value-added, artisanal craftsmanship often survives as small pockets in inner-city centres. Building on this savoir-faire is the goal of the CENTRINNO project. One of the participants is Geneva’s first FabLab, Onl’Fait. Dr Cristina Olivotto, who founded the FabLab with Sébastien Mischler and Mathieu

Jacquesson, says that CENTRINNO “will help new artisans put down roots in these old centres of traditional manufacturing. By regenerating these sites, we can bring manufacturing back to city centres.”

‘By regenerating old industrial sites, we can bring manufacturing back to city centres’

A history of production

Onl’Fait will focus on Geneva’s Charmilles industrial zone. “Charmilles has been an industrial centre for over 100 years and there are still a number of small workshops there,” Olivotto says. “We want to develop collaborative manufacturing, whereby artisans share design, manufacturing, marketing and distribution, taking advantage of individual knowledge and building economies of scale. I am convinced that the transfer of new technology to the local community will help it to innovate.”

Democratising high-tech

Olivotto trained as a physicist but became an expert in science outreach and education before joining Onl’Fait when she founded “Sterren-Lab”, a company that organises science camps for children. So she sees bringing the public on board as critical. “We first want to understand Charmilles’ needs so that we can develop a strategy and identify solutions. Our objective is to build bridges with the artisans there and get Geneva’s vocational schools involved in using modern tools to develop craftsmanship.” For example, by making 3D printers and laser cutters available to all, CENTRINNO will help individuals and small companies maximise speed and scale. “Many artists and designers never realise their ideas because they lack manufacturing knowledge,” she explains. “Too many people think they are too small to do this. Now they will be able to get training and build relationships with experts.”

'Be bold, get all the help you can and understand that such a project takes time.' (Dr Cristina Olivotto)



Dr Cristina Olivotto (©Keystone-SDA/Keystone)

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PROGRAMME

Horizon 2020 Societal Challenge 5 (Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials) provides funding in support of cultural heritage, which is viewed as a powerful potential driver for economic growth, social cohesion and environmental sustainability. Projects in the area of cultural heritage typically have a strong demonstration character and hence involve organisations at the forefront of using cultural sites or traditions in a sustainable way.

FACTS & FIGURES

Project Name CENTRINNO – New centralities in industrial areas as engines for innovation and urban transformation

Programme Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials

Interviewee Dr Cristina Olivotto, Onl’Fait

Project Participants Municipality of Milan (Coordinator) and 25 other European partners

Research Area Cultural heritage

Project Dates 01.09.2020 – 29.02.2024 (3.5 years)

Project Cost €8 570 330

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More information www.onlfait.ch

