

Public Participation Makes Digital City Truly Smart



Public involvement is transforming the digital city into the smart city of the future. With the EU “Smarticipate” project, the Fraunhofer Institute for Visual Computing IGD is centring its presentations at Intergeo 2016 on getting city dwellers involved in planning and political decision-making processes. The specialist exhibition, three presentation slots at the Intergeo conference, the Intergeo report and the Intergeo TV ‘Opinion Leader Talk’ video format with Dr Joachim Rix will all focus on public participation through visualisation and interaction based on geographical data.

What transforms the digital city into the smart city? According to Dr Joachim Rix from the Fraunhofer Institute for Visual Computing IGD, transparency and involving the general public in political decision-making and planning processes are key. “Current planning processes are linear, with administrative bodies planning, conducting discussions and making decisions. If the public, but also politicians, are given the right resources at an early stage to collectively drive forward decisions, this provides a completely fresh basis to shape processes, gain wider acceptance and ultimately create a sound footing for a sense of wellbeing in their city,” says Rix. The Fraunhofer IGD is heading up the “smarticipate” project, which is being funded by the European Commission. The participation platform is the centrepiece of the presentations by the Fraunhofer IGD in three topic slots at Intergeo and the Intergeo conference.

Hamburg, Rome and London

Smarticipate is a pilot project in the cities of Hamburg, London and Rome that is set to be used throughout Europe in the future as a platform for supporting decision-making. The basis for decision-making processes is provided by the underlying data (including geographical data) supplied by the cities. The three cities are processing the sometimes extremely large and always heterogeneous volumes of data in such a way that members of the public and all stakeholders in the decision-making process are given a visual, easy to understand overview for information but also for interaction. As the host city for Intergeo 2016 and a pioneer throughout Germany when it comes to the smart city, Hamburg is a pilot city in smarticipate. It is using the platform as a tool for its residents to find locations for new trees in urban areas and collectively select types of trees. In Rome, smarticipate will help with decisions on new uses for empty buildings and identifying locations for urban gardening projects. London is going even further, with the aim of residents using available data as a basis to decide for themselves the issues where smarticipate can help.

Smarticipate

The Fraunhofer IGD is showcasing smarticipate at the Intergeo conference. One presentation deals with a method for participation processes based on visual geoinformation. A second slot provides information on the smarticipate platform as a foundation for smart cities. And a third presentation reports on how cities rate the new approach to greater transparency and involvement. (Presentation category: Smart cities – supporting decision-making and involving inhabitants, Wednesday 12 October from 4 p.m.) The Fraunhofer IGD is exhibiting at Stand E4.031 in Hall A2. You can also see Dr Joachim Rix in the Opinion Leader Talk (www.intergeo-tv.com) and the next Intergeo TV news programme (register at)