Best Practice

On our way to a smart city – Kick Off of the city Bielefeld with eigenland®

#Digitizing together in Bielfeld

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The digitization office of the city of Bielefeld is shaping the path to being a smart city in a future-oriented way and is driving Bielefeld's digital transformation forward.

We now encounter digitization everywhere: we communicate digitally, we inform ourselves digitally, and we work together digitally. Therefore, the city of Bielefeld has set itself the goal of using the resulting opportunities and potentials for urban development and creating innovative solutions for new paths.

For its journey to becoming a smart city, the team of the Bielefeld Digitization Office is following the guiding principle

> **discover**
> **connect**
> **inspire**

As enablers and bridge builders, as the digitization office describes itself, the team has made a conscious decision to shape the journey together with citizens citizens and stakeholders.

All citizens of Bielefeld are invited to participate and network through a participative and people-centered approach. A digital and, based on this, a sustainable and future-oriented urban development of Bielefeld can only be created when the focus is on the people.

To activate the knowledge and experience of the participants and to shape individual topics concretely together with everyone interested, the digitization office has initiated several innovation circles.

„The goal of the innovation circle is to reach an agreement on how to deal with urban data. This will set an important milestone for intelligent and networked urban development in Bielefeld."

Bürge Uprak Project Manager Open Data Digitization Office City of Bielefeld

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Data sovereignty as an important milestone for intelligent, networked urban development

One of the four innovation circles is dealig with the key topic of „urban data".

To kick off the new working group, which the City of Bielefeld's Digitization Office launched a few weeks ago, stakeholders from business, science, administration and civil society gathe- red to discuss the topic of data sovereignty.

Due to the current Corona situation, the originally planned personal kick-off took place as a hybrid event in the highly recommendable Founders Foundation in Bielefeld. The initiators of the Digitalization Office Bielefeld as well as the speakers and the facilitator were live on site. The approx. 25 participants joined digitally.

The kick-off was opened by moderator Dirk Ludewig, who guided the participants through the interactive program of the 2.5 hour event.

Futurologist Andreas Reiter gave a very im- pressive speech about the possibilities of data-based applications in leading smart cities at the start of the event.

Involving people & using intuitive knowledge

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A short eigenland® workshop, in which the participants discussed the topic of data sovereignty together followed to deepen the impulse.

The eigenland® session took place in two groups at the same time, so that every participant had the chance to share their perspectives and opinions with everyone else.

Prior to the event, the digitization office of the city of Bielefeld, which has been an eigenland® license partner and has been using the eigenland® system independently, developed ten short statements on the topic of „urban data".

Jan Oßenbrink briefly opened the workshop and explained the intuitive and playful approach to the participants. Then the workshop started. The participants dialed into the web-based eigenland® tool and intuitively evaluated the ten statements with the help of virtual stones on their smartphones.

The different stones symbolize the statements „This is fully true" (=gold) to „This is not true" (=tar).

Afterwards, the evaluation of the statements was analyzed by the eigenland® tool and the results were made into reports for the participants. The agreement on the individual statements and the agreement within the team are very interesting. Statements where the level of agreement is very low or the agreement within the team is low automatically get marked red by the system since it makes sense to focus on these statements in the discussion.
The results of the session were discussed openly and appreciatively in two groups at the same time. That way participants can share their perspectives and experience, ask smart questions and activate a first development process.

I have ideas on how data can make the lives of citizens more comfortable and sustainable

86%
Agreement

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Data is the raw material of the 21st century

In the discussion, it quickly became clear that data sovereignty is a very complex topic with many aspects.
Therefore, the first step was to ask the right questions in order to develop answers and solutions within a strategy process. The participants agree that data is the new raw material of the 21st century that offers huge opportunities on the way to becoming a smart city.

At the same time, data, and especially your own data, is valuable and therefore requires immense sensitivity in its usage. Everyone would like to know when their own data is collected and what it is used for.
Therefore, the first things to figure out are:

> **How can the city of Bielefeld obtain the relevant data and and use it in the interest of the citizens?**

> **Who is actually allowed to decide which data is important for who?**
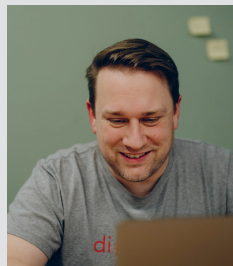
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Kick-off of a constructive development process

From the point of view of the participants, dealing with data is a matter of „give and take". The discussion makes it clear that for providing personal data, a service must also be given in return. In this context, the participants agree that binding guidelines for handling data are essential. Digitization is changing a lot areas of the public services in cities. It is only possible for cities and communities to benefit from digitization in the interests of their citizens if they are able to handle the data they receive appropriately.

At the same time, there is an agreement that the city of Bielefeld should become independent of the technology groups on its way to becoming a smart city in order to be able to act quicker and more flexible. First ideas have already been collected. The next steps will further concretize how this can be achieved.

The evening showed that a constructive development process was launched.
The goal of the innovation circle and the working group, which will start in January, is to create an agreement in Bielefeld's urban society on the use and handling of urban data..

„I am always impressed by how easy it is to give all participants a voice with eigenland: That's exactly what we need to engage the entire city community."

Jens Edler, Senior Project Manager Digitization Office City of Bielefeld

From left: Dirk Ludewig (Moderator), Jan Oßenbrink (Managing Director, eigenland GmbH), Matthias Eichler (Head of the Digitalization Office), Bürge Uprak (Project Manager Open Data), Andreas Reiter (Futurologist ZTB Zukunftsbüro), Ludmilla Middeke (Digital Scout and Project Manager) and Jens Edler (Senior Project Manager)

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