INVESTORS PROGRAM GUIDE

2026

November 3

09:30 - 09:45h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

Innovation Playground: From Ideas to Urban Impact (Opening Session)

Innovation happens when ideas, people and opportunities come together. In this **opening conversation**, discover the vision behind Innovation Playground and how it connects startups, investors, researchers and city leaders to accelerate urban innovation. Get an overview of the Startup Program, featuring innovators from around the world addressing key urban challenges, alongside the Demo Area, Investors Program, dedicated 1:1 matchmaking opportunities between startups and investors, and networking initiatives designed to turn connections into collaboration and impact.

09:50 - 10:35h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

Global Startup Ecosystems & Urban Innovation

This session explores global trends in startup ecosystems, emerging innovation hotspots, investment flows and ecosystem benchmarking. Drawing on StartupBlink's international rankings and research, it will examine the key ingredients that make urban innovation ecosystems competitive and resilient, while highlighting where the next generation of opportunities is emerging. A valuable introduction to the Innovation Playground, providing the global context for the startups, investors, cities and ecosystem leaders featured throughout the program.

10:45 - 11:30h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

Paris Region Reverse Pitch: What Public & Corporate Innovation Programs Want

What if startups didn't have to pitch first? Hosted by Choose Paris Region, Reverse Pitch flips the traditional format. Instead of startups pitching to corporates, seven innovation leaders from major companies, public institutions and the Paris Region innovation ecosystem pitch their open innovation opportunities directly to startups and scale-ups.

Highlighted Private Side Event

10:30 - 12:30h

Zone: CC4 - Room 4.2 Register here by 1 Nov

Scaling Across Europe: Founder Stories from Emerging Innovation Regions

Europe's emerging innovation regions are producing world-class mobility startups, yet too few succeed in scaling across borders. What is holding them back?
Founders who have been through the journey will share what worked - and what stood in their way. Through an interactive discussion with the audience, we will bring together founders, cities, investors, corporates, CEE governments and EU organisations to explore how to bridge the gaps in funding, procurement and market access to help startups scale across Europe.

Content Block

CLIMATE, ENERGY & URBAN RESILIENCE

11:40 - 12:20h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

Climate Dialogue

A space where projects, corporates, and investors can have smooth conversations about solutions and innovative technologies that can help drive the world toward sustainability goals on the 2050 agenda.

12:25 - 13:25h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

Startup Pitches: Climate Resilience & Environmental Intelligence

Cities are increasingly challenged by climate risks, environmental pressures and the need for more efficient urban operations. This session showcases startups helping governments and utilities improve resilience through wildfire and flood prediction, urban tree and water infrastructure monitoring, air quality and noise intelligence, urban sensing, and smarter management of public infrastructure.

Networking Opportunity

13:35 - 14:35h

Investors Lounge (Innovation Playground) > Hall 3

Content Block
FUTURE BUILDINGS & URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE

13:35 - 14:15h
Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

Building Startups That Investors Back

What makes a startup stand out in Construction Tech, PropTech and urban infrastructure? Bringing together perspectives from venture capital, startup acceleration and ecosystem building, this conversation explores what investors look for, how startups can validate market demand, build strategic partnerships and scale successfully. Practical insights for founders preparing to raise capital, accelerate adoption and grow their businesses.

14:20 - 15:05h
Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

Startup Pitches: Future Infrastructure & Built Environments

How do we plan, build and operate the cities of tomorrow? This session brings together startups transforming urban infrastructure and the built environment through predictive intelligence, AI-powered planning, climate-responsive design, sustainable construction, energy innovation and smarter public spaces. Discover solutions helping cities become more efficient, resilient and future-ready.

Networking Opportunity
15:15 - 16:15h
Investors Lounge | Innovation Playground > Hall 3

15:15 - 15:45h
Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

QBE AcceliCITY Resilience Challenge — Finalist Showcase & Winner Announcement

2026 finalists, three winners, and thirty minutes that could change what gets built in your city next. The QBE AcceliCITY Resilience Challenge Top 5 Solutions take the stage for a live fireside panel — introducing their solutions, unpacking the urban challenges they're solving, and sharing what they need to scale. The session closes with the live winner announcement.

15:55 - 16:15h
Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

2026 Gangnam Global Startup Pitching: Innovative AI Solutions

Co-hosted by Gangnam-gu and KOVA and operated by SparkLabs, the "Gangnam Global Startup Pitching: Innovative AI Solutions" session is a global acceleration program featuring Gangnam-gu's tech-driven AI startups. Join us to discover innovative companies aiming for global expansion with solutions like real-time multilingual translation, kids' financial education platforms, jewelry design, and 3D human body data analysis.

16:25 - 16:45h
Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

Into ASEAN & Malaysia: Powering Smart Cities Through Innovation & Partnerships

Join MRANTI as they open this showcase on cross-border sandbox partnerships, followed by four high-growth scale-ups pitching field-tested smart city tech which spans on AI infrastructure, IoT platforms, digital twins and unified city context brokers. Discover market-ready innovations and connect directly with leaders shaping future cities.

Content Block
INTELLIGENT CITIES & URBAN SERVICES

16:55 - 17:40h
Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

The Investor Reverse Pitch: Where Capital Is Going Next

What are investors really looking for in the next generation of startups? In this fast-paced reverse pitch session, leading venture capital investors, impact investors and ecosystem builders will share the technologies, sectors and founder profiles they are most excited about. From climate and energy to mobility, infrastructure and urban innovation, discover how investors identify startups that combine growth potential with positive urban, social and environmental impact, and how impact investing and inclusive entrepreneurship are helping shape the cities of tomorrow.

17:45 - 18:45h
Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

Sessions continue on next page →

17:45 - 18:45h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

Startup Pitches: Solutions for Resilient & Sustainable Cities

Cities face growing challenges around sustainability, infrastructure, public service delivery and environmental resilience. This session showcases startups helping governments, utilities and businesses address these challenges through solutions ranging from water intelligence and pollution prevention to urban management, trusted data, connectivity and intelligent buildings.

November 4

09:30 - 09:45h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

Innovation Playground: Insights, Highlights & What's Next (Opening Session)

Discover the key ideas, emerging trends and standout innovations shaping Innovation Playground. Whether you are joining us for the first time or returning for **Day 2**, this session offers a snapshot of the startups, investors, researchers and city innovators driving the program. We will revisit key takeaways, spotlight new connections and opportunities emerging across the ecosystem, and preview the sessions, activities and innovation challenges still to come, including the research-focused program on Day 3.

09:50 - 10:35h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

Cities' Challenges

Cities worldwide are embracing open innovation to tackle urban challenges and accelerate smart city transformation. This event will showcase how public entities launch innovation calls, test emerging technologies, and collaborate with startups and solution providers. Discover upcoming innovation procurement opportunities, public-private programmes, and real opportunities to co-develop the solutions shaping tomorrow's cities.

10:45 - 11:30h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

Urban Shark Tank: Where Cities and Innovators Shape Sustainable Futures

Step into the exhilarating world of Urban Shark Tank, where bold innovators from companies dive into the depths of creative presentations of use cases to captivate a panel of cities committed to climate-smart solutions. Witness the fusion of entrepreneurship, creativity, and sustainability as groundbreaking companies present their visionary ideas, looking for support and collaboration of forward-thinking urban leaders in cities.

11:40 - 12:25h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

Building Europe's AI Ready Public Sector

Public administrations worldwide are moving from AI experimentation towards real-world deployment. But becoming AI-ready requires more than technology. Bringing together European policy research, public-sector implementation experience and the BSC AI Factory, this session examines where public-sector AI adoption stands today, the barriers holding it back, and what is needed to move from pilots to responsible, scalable AI and deliver public value.

12:15 - 13:00h

Stage: Shaping Mobility > Hall 2

Community Showcase: Startups Transforming Urban Transport (I)

Urban mobility startups are helping address some of the most pressing challenges facing cities today. In this session, companies from the Barcelona Innova Lab Mobility (BILM) community and local and international mobility ecosystems will showcase innovative solutions to improve the efficiency, sustainability and accessibility of urban transport. Participants will discover emerging technologies and real-world mobility applications.

12:35 - 13:20h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

From Pilots to Services: Scaling City & Regional Digital Twins with EDIC

European cities and regions have tested digital twins, AI, data spaces and immersive urban technologies through many pilots. The next challenge is adoption at scale. This session presents how the LDT CitiVERSE EDIC is moving from fragmented initiatives to concrete services, shared infrastructure and adoption pathways that help cities and regions implement interoperable, reusable and sovereign smart city capabilities.

13:10 - 13:55h

Stage: Shaping Mobility > Hall 2

Community Showcase: Startups Transforming Urban Transport (II)

Urban mobility startups are helping address some of the most pressing challenges facing cities today. In this session, companies from the Barcelona Innova Lab Mobility (BILM) community and local and international mobility ecosystems will showcase innovative solutions to improve the efficiency, sustainability and accessibility of urban transport. Participants will discover emerging technologies and real-world mobility applications.

13:30 - 14:15h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

From Pilot to Scale: Insights from Field Experience of Emerging Cities

This session will examine why pilot projects often struggle to scale and what is required to translate them into sustainable urban policies and initiatives. Drawing on the experiences of local governments, private sectors, and leading cities, the discussion will explore key factors for advancing smart city initiatives in emerging cities. The session will also highlight the value of start-ups' participation in addressing urban challenges.

14:25 - 14:45h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

What Makes an AI Innovation Ecosystem Thrive?

What does it take for regions to build AI innovation ecosystems that can compete globally? Alex Tortosa and Matt Burton explore the conditions that enable emerging technologies to move from startups to real-world scale, bringing together talent, capital, corporates, public policy and regulation — while addressing the risks, trade-offs and responsibilities that come with rapid technological adoption. The conversation examines how regions can create the conditions to turn AI ambition into lasting innovation and economic value.

Content Block
GOVTECH & PUBLIC INNOVATION

14:50 - 15:15h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

Bridging Innovation and Demand: Connecting Capital, Cities and Markets

Innovation succeeds when great solutions meet real demand. This conversation explores how business acceleration, internationalisation, capital and market access can connect with the needs of cities and industries. From supporting startups and scale-ups to creating pathways for deployment, what does it take to bridge innovation and demand and turn promising solutions into scalable impact?

15:20 - 16:00h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

Startups & Governments: From Experimentation to Adoption

Public innovation advances when technology finds a meaningful place within institutions. Making that happen requires trust, real validation, effective procurement and clear pathways to scale. This session explores how public institutions can work with startups to move from experimentation to adoption, and what conditions are needed to turn open innovation into lasting public impact.

16:05 - 17:05h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

Startup Pitches: GovTech & Inclusive Communities

How can cities become more transparent, responsive and inclusive? This session showcases startups helping governments make better decisions, strengthen citizen engagement and improve public services. From urban data platforms and civic participation tools to affordable housing, independent living solutions, cultural activation and local economic innovation, these startups are building more connected and inclusive communities.

Networking Opportunity

17:05 - 18:00h

Investors Lounge (Innovation Playground) > Hall 3

17:15 - 18:00h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

Urban Innovation and Technology — made in LatAm

Across Latin America, technology firms are building digital tools that strengthen how cities govern and make decisions. This session brings together LatAm technologists and municipal leaders with direct implementation experience to examine what it takes for digital twins, permitting automation, and scenario-planning platforms to move from pilot to public-interest instruments — supporting climate resilience and inclusive urban development.

November 5

Mobility Startup Pitch Day

09:30 - 10:05h

Stage: Shaping Mobility > Hall 2

Startup Pitches: Moving Cities Forward

How can cities move people more safely, efficiently and sustainably? This session showcases startups advancing urban mobility through public transport innovation, parking optimization, traffic intelligence, road infrastructure and data-driven mobility services. Discover solutions helping cities improve operations, enhance safety and create better travel experiences for citizens.

10:15 - 10:40h

Stage: Shaping Mobility > Hall 2

Startup pitches: Data-driven cities and sustainable mobility

These startups use data, simulation and analytics to make urban mobility cleaner and healthier. From climate modelling and air-quality insights to mobility trends and carbon impact, they help planners and operators make evidence-based decisions. Expect pitches on how better data can reduce emissions, improve public health and shape liveable cities.

10:50 - 11:25h

Stage: Shaping Mobility > Hall 2

Startup pitches: Smart navigation and shared mobility services

This session showcases digital platforms that change how people move day to day. Startups present navigation technology, bike and vehicle sharing, payments, connected car data and seamless booking. The common thread is intelligent software making travel much simpler, flexible, inclusive and affordable.

11:35 - 12:05h

Stage: Shaping Mobility > Hall 2

Startups Pitches: Infrastructure, safety and advanced transport tech

Hardware-driven innovation takes the stage, from magnetic levitation and railway monitoring to road safety scoring, aviation and sensing technologies. These startups tackle the physical side of mobility, making vehicles, rails and roads safer, more efficient and more reliable, while exploring the next generation of advanced transport systems worldwide.

12:15 - 12:35h

Stage: Shaping Mobility > Hall 2

Built in Europe, ready for the world: mobility's next frontier

Europe is the place in the world with some of the great opportunities to build in mobility: dense historic cities, ambitious climate and safety rules, and 27 different markets. In this session, Techstars and EIT Urban Mobility make the case that Europe's regulation, cities, industrial depth and values give its founders an unfair advantage, and explain how to turn those advantages into companies.

12:45 - 13:30h

Stage: Shaping Mobility > Hall 2

Startup Pitches: Mobility Solutions in Action

How can cities make mobility more accessible, sustainable and responsive to people's needs? This session showcases startups improving urban mobility through innovative transport services, active mobility planning, mobility intelligence and real-time communication. From shared mobility and overnight travel to cycling infrastructure, parking insights and data-driven decision-making, discover practical solutions helping cities optimize infrastructure, improve operations and create better travel experiences for everyone.

November 5

Research & Academia Day

09:15 - 10:20h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

Young Minds, Smart Cities: HackaTEEN 2026 Grand Finale

The public finals of the international Spanish-Czech Challenge HackaTEEN 2026 competition. A total of 10 teams from the Czech Republic and Spain will present their proposed solutions to real-world challenges facing modern cities to the audience at the SCEWC. The session will offer a unique insight into how young people envision the future of smart cities and will culminate in the announcement of the winners and an awards ceremony.

10:30 - 13:00h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

Accelerating Urban Innovation Through AI Research

SCEWC is launching a new Call for Research Papers to continue bridging state-of-the-art AI research with the smart city ecosystem. Best & selected papers will be featured in a dedicated session. Selection criteria: CITIES, AI (of any kind), Min TRL5 (min a proof of concept done). Excluded any commercial product as main topic.

13:10 - 14:10h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

EUonAIR Hackathon Finals

The EUonAIR Hackathon Finals bring together talented students from across Europe to co-create and showcase AI-driven solutions addressing urban challenges. Organised by Universitat CEU Abat Oliba, as members of the EUonAIR European University Alliance, the event highlights collaborative, innovative ideas that contribute to smarter, more sustainable and inclusive cities.

14:20 - 15:05h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

Hackathon Porto: Making GenAI Trustworthy for City Interoperability

Can Smart Cities use LLMs to increase interoperability and reduce software integration costs? Yes! The results of this hackathon show: two teams used messy data from Porto Digital, underpinning real policy challenges, to gain hands-on experience in designing deterministic agentic data pipelines. This session shares what worked, what didn't, what public-sector AI needs to be trustworthy, and how it can be scaled globally through OASC's MIMs.

15:15 - 16:30h

Stage: Innovation Playground > Hall 3

From Urban Research to Real-World Impact

How can research help solve the complex challenges facing cities today? Bringing together leading universities and research institutions, this session explores how research is translating into real-world impact across AI, climate adaptation, mobility, energy and digital innovation. Through short research spotlights and a moderated discussion, speakers will share insights, breakthroughs and collaborative approaches that are helping shape more sustainable, resilient and human-centric cities. As a **closing session** for Innovation Playground, it highlights the critical role of research, knowledge exchange and cross-sector collaboration in driving the future of urban innovation.

A special thank you to our Innovation Boosters!