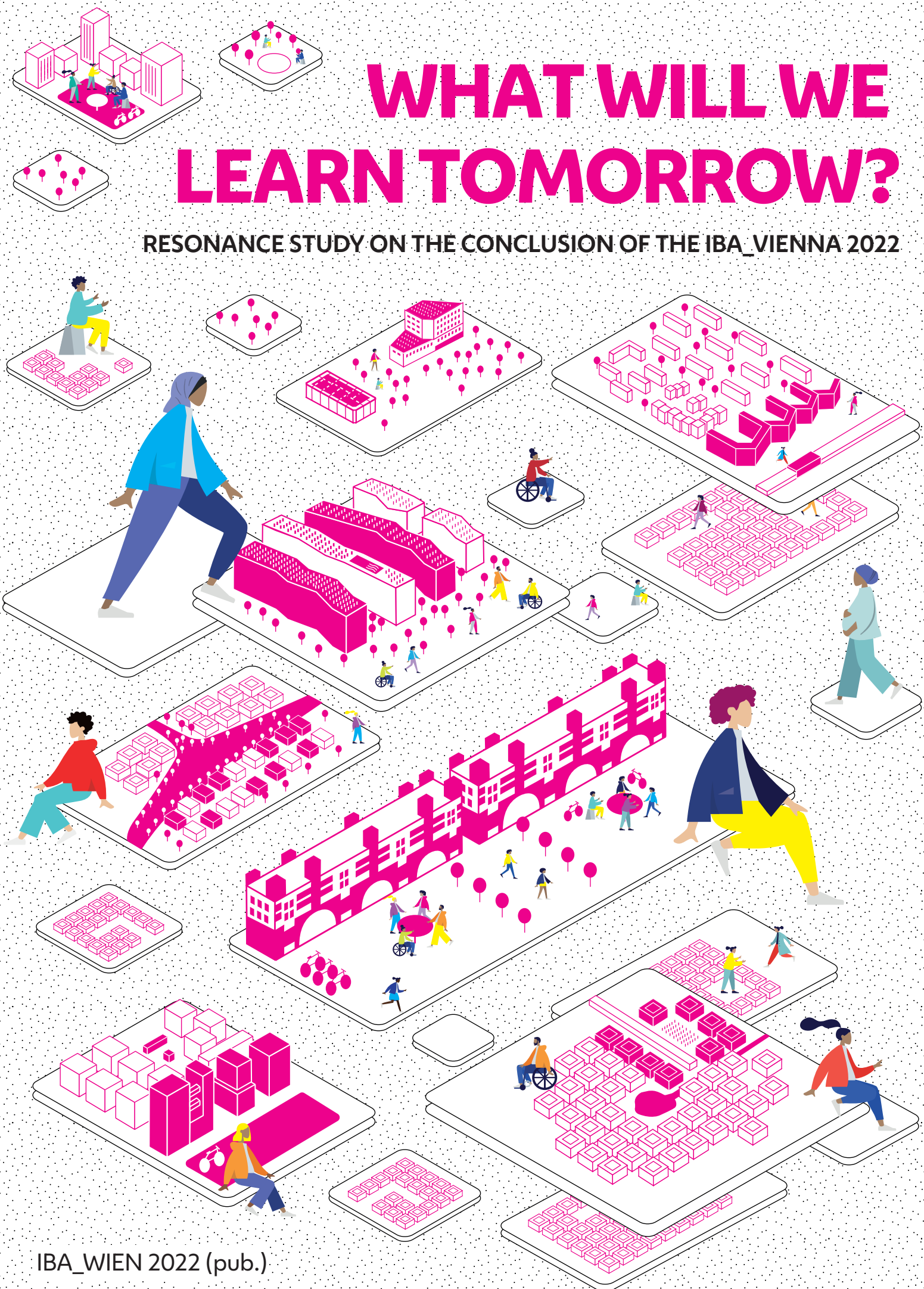
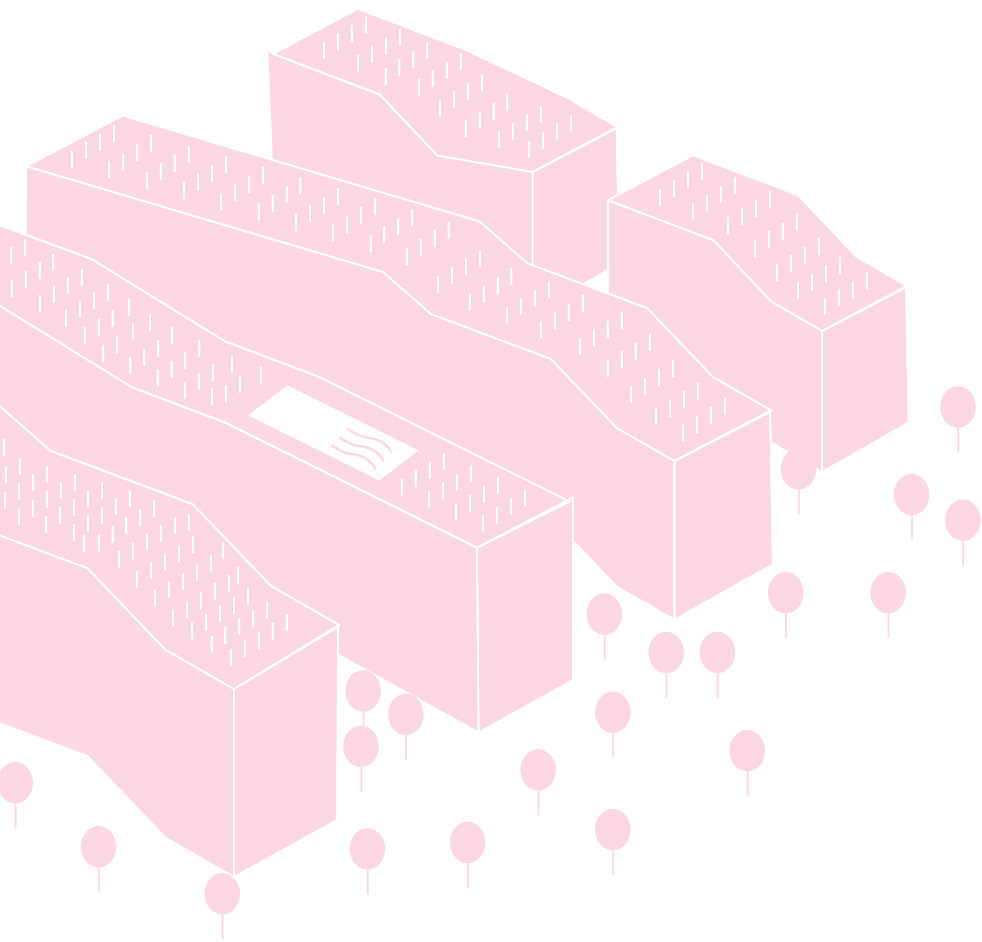


WHAT WILL WE LEARN TOMORROW?

RESONANCE STUDY ON THE CONCLUSION OF THE IBA_VIENNA 2022





Imprint

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WHAT WILL WE LEARN TOMORROW?

Resonance study on the conclusion of the IBA_Vienna 2022

Social housing. International Building Exhibitions. Both are over a hundred years old.

What at first glance seems to fit together – the world capital of social housing once again presents itself on the international stage with the first Austrian IBA – becomes complex on closer inspection. Because Vienna interprets the traditional instrument of the IBA in a different way and pursues novelty in social housing, although admired all over the world. Why, actually?

This resonance study reflects how the IBA_Vienna has worked and what it has contributed; with its team, but above all as a process with many participants from Vienna and the world. For this purpose, we asked 55 people from active institutions and the professional public how they experienced the IBA_Vienna from its beginnings in 2012 to the kick-off in 2016 and shortly before the final presentation in 2022.

This inquiry was rewarding. We received pronounced appreciation and critical comments, constructive suggestions and ingenious impulses, open contradictions and clear discussion needs, shared attitudes and further questions. We present these diverse responses, analyze them, classify them and learn from them.

This shows that the IBA_Vienna is not an isolated project in a limited period of time. It is embedded in larger themes and longer developmental lines. It is a small and temporary player in a complex, long-term oriented, continuously developed, productive and unique system of social housing. This system, just like the IBA as an instrument, has been in a permanent learning process for over a hundred years. It is evident that the IBA_Vienna, as a platform in this system, has been able to make learning processes visible and support them. For this it has itself learned continuously, and for this it is widely appreciated.

But what is most important to the interviewees is to look ahead: in the face of given challenges, learning will become even more important. The IBA_Vienna shows ways and possibilities for this beyond its own conclusion.

Social housing. International Building Exhibitions. Both learning for over a hundred years.

In 2022 they are meeting in Vienna and ask: What will we learn tomorrow?

Notes on abbreviations: In the singular as well as the plural, International Building Exhibitions are abbreviated as IBA (German: Internationale Bauausstellung). Specific IBA are cited with their location as well as their final year of presentation, e.g. IBA Hamburg 2013. IBA_Vienna, however, is referred to by its official abbreviation in this study dedicated to it.

What we want to investigate

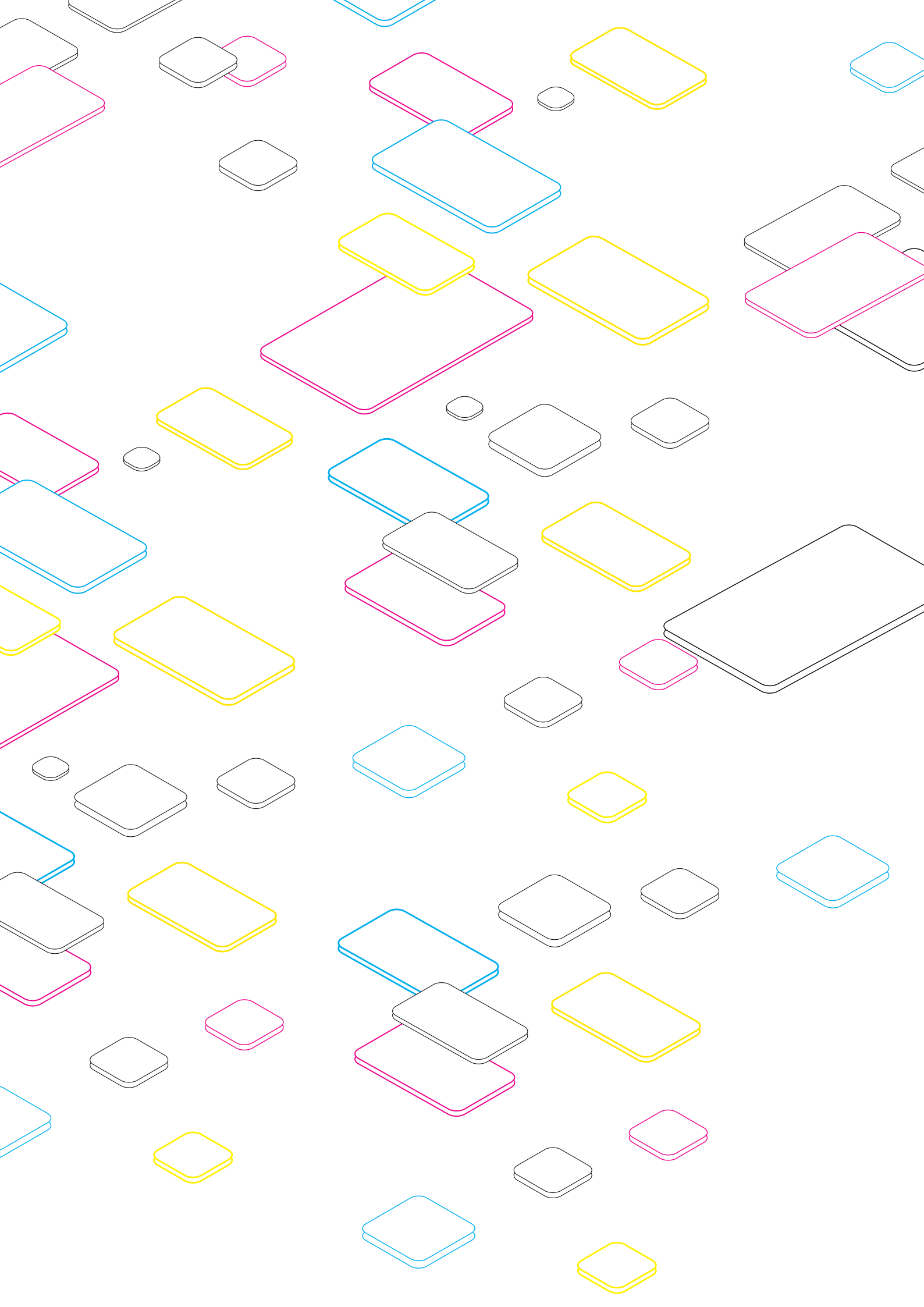
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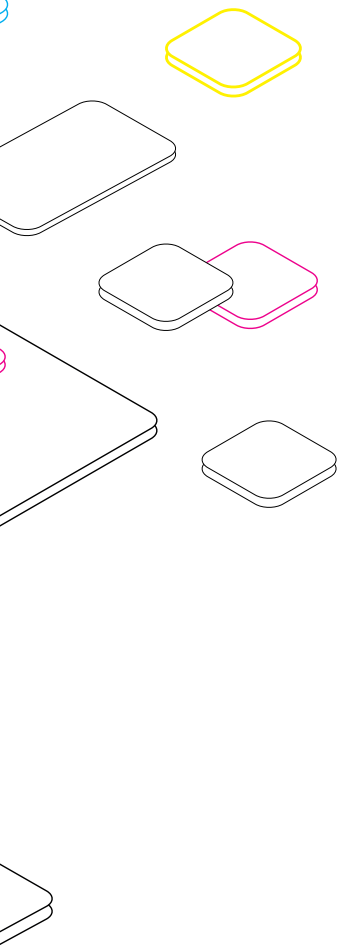
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FOREWORD

Kurt Hofstetter, Coordinator IBA_Vienna

The present resonance study was commissioned in order to gain insights into the process, the working methods and the results of the IBA_Vienna from various perspectives. After all, the presentation year was not simply intended to bring everything to a close, but to clarify in general terms what has proved successful about the work of previous years. Where, how and why did we succeed in setting processes in motion and making potentials visible that are suitable for positively influencing and advancing developments in the city beyond the duration of the IBA_Vienna? In order to make this possible, it is of course also important to shed light on what did not work well, where we failed and why. In order to enable statements that are as unbiased as possible, the IBA_Vienna team was deliberately not involved in the discussions with the various players. The voices of the participants and the observers are in the foreground, while the IBA_Vienna listens.

I would like to take this opportunity to say something personal as well as general: What has accompanied me in all my professional positions so far and has always propelled me even in difficult situations has been the endeavor that the results of our work should have an effect. Not just any effect, of course, but a positive effect for the people whose needs, demands and justified expectations formulate the actual work assignments for someone who, like me, has spent a large part of his working life in public service. Give and take. Exchange in a social fabric.

With a small but extremely committed, prudent team, sometimes endowed with secret magical powers, we have jointly attempted to bring this premise of effectiveness to the fore within the framework of the IBA_Vienna. We have dealt intensively with the question of whether and in what form the expectations placed on us from previous IBA – sometimes politely disguised, sometimes blunt and demanding – are contemporary and appropriate for our task: In what ways can they be reconciled with the theme of social housing and predominantly subsidized housing? How much should the available resources flow into a few excellent and outstanding lighthouse projects, with high visibility and charisma, but possibly low chances of dissemination – and how much into process-based developments with numerous participants, whose results are less visible and more difficult to communicate, but suitable for achieving sustainable effects directly with the acting players.

The seemingly easier path [1.] knows how to cleverly hide its pitfalls as long as one does not tread it with a clear attitude of unswervingly pursuing the original objectives and qualities striven for and thus developing an effect in the existing system. Patience, perseverance, endurance, frustration tolerance and other terms might come to mind if these pitfalls had to be named. The famous thick boards that have to be drilled. Perhaps not quite as exciting, but potentially rewarding for many.

The decision in favor of an „unexcited“ IBA was therefore a conscious one. „Making a virtue out of necessity“ is one of the responses we have often heard. That is certainly also true. The fact that the presentation of the results and the way they were processed in the presentation year are now being perceived very positively is all the more gratifying.

It is undisputed that a clearly defined duration with a start and end is essential for the format of an IBA. It is also undisputed that IBA_Vienna is „different.“ [2.] In any case, the decisive factor for its success is the fact that the formal conclusion is only the beginning

of the dissemination of the knowledge and experience gained during the IBA period. The further process will show which effects in the system of housing in Vienna were actually and sustainably achieved and once answer the question: What will we learn tomorrow?

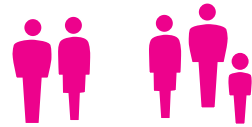
[1.] „Most of the projects would have come about either way. What is decisive is that a discourse was finally held.“ (quote from the interviews, see chapter „Internal resonances - Working methods“)

[2.] Whether it is sufficient to justify this with the slogan of the city marketing „Vienna is different“ may be doubted. Nevertheless, it is not surprising.

7 years

2016

59.352



People in apartments

12.263



Apartments built
(+ home units)

9.297



Subsidized apartments

2.513



Freely financed apartments

453

6.632



Existing apartments +
Refurbished apartments



New Community building apartments
(German: "Gemeindebau NEU")

2022



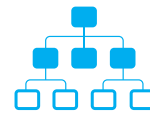
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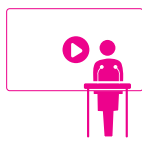
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220

420



IBA partners
(organizations)

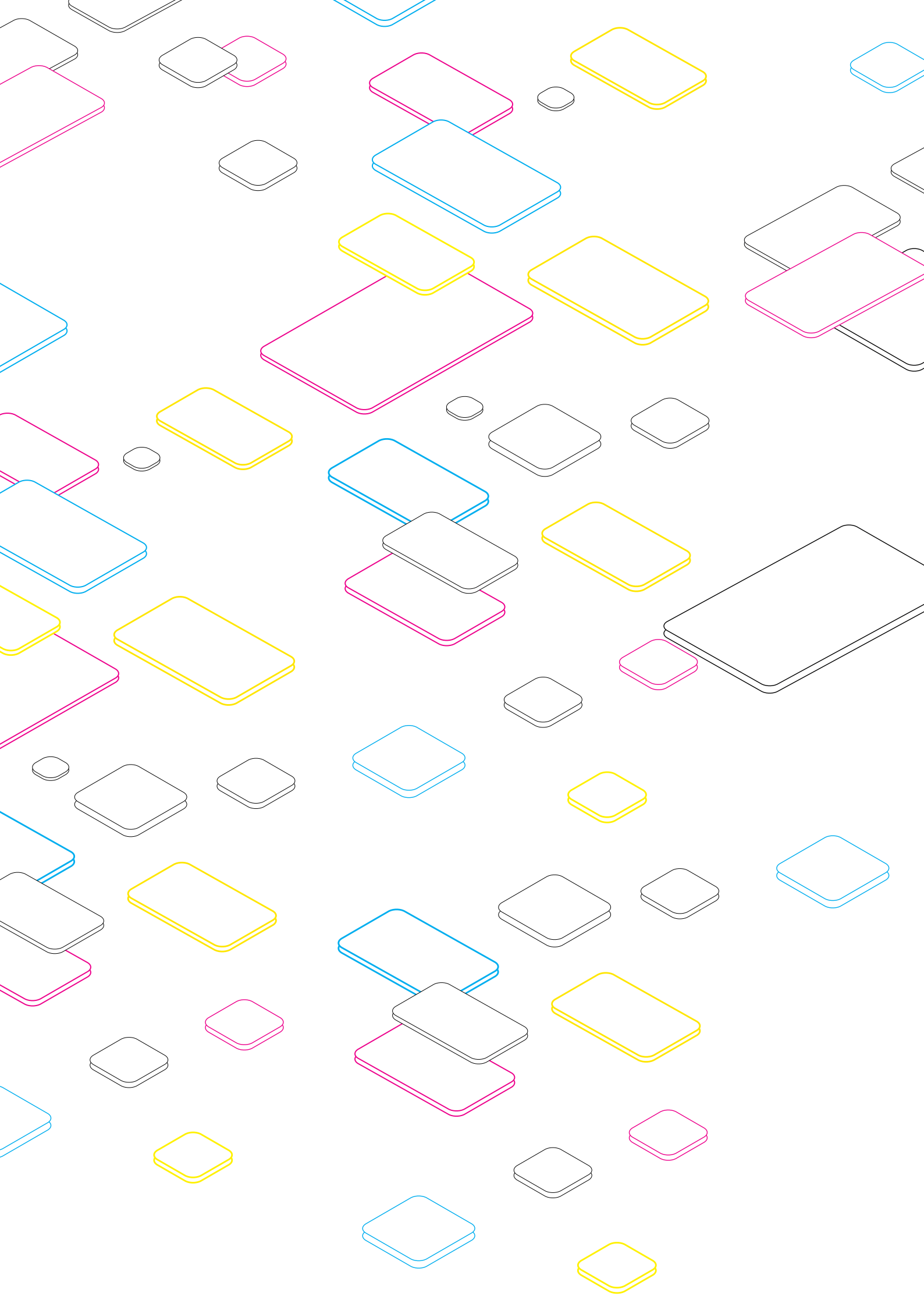


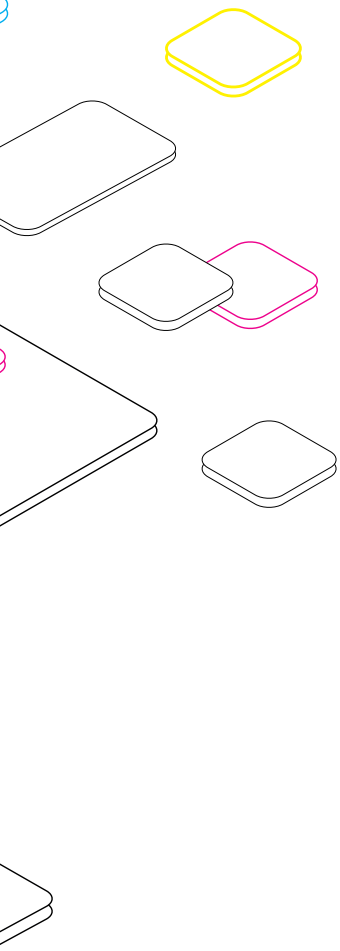
Events from 2016 to June 2022



IBA partners
(persons)

880





METHODOLOGY

Andreas Bernögger, Rudolf Scheuven, Kunibert Wachten

The IBA_Vienna was proclaimed in 2016 with the mission to initiate, support and communicate innovative projects and processes in Vienna's social housing sector in the face of global challenges. The research assignment presented here is to shed light on the extent to which and how this has been achieved. Shortly before the final presentation in 2022, the activities and processes that have taken place, more precisely the direct and indirect contributions of the IBA_Vienna as a temporary actor in the Viennese housing system, are to be reflected from various perspectives. On this empirical basis, the successful and fruitful aspects that can be further developed in the Viennese system will be identified, and findings and experiences will be fed back to the ongoing processes for the further development of IBA as an instrument.

Before addressing the challenges and limitations of such a study and developing a research design, the **nature of this resonance study** should be specified.

This study aims to provide a concise **reflection and interpretation** of a potentially elusive **overall process**. The inevitable complexity and comprehensiveness of the IBA_Vienna project – from the first thoughts in 2012 to the proclamation in 2016 and the final presentation in 2022 – results from many factors (see also graphic page 12-13). The time span. The scope and diversity of the projects. The diverse and numerous activities, formats and publications. The many different and variously intensive participants at different points in time. The breadth and depth of the topics addressed. The multitude of external influences that affect such a process thematically, financially, organizationally, politically, socially, etc. In addition, both the IBA as an instrument and social housing in Vienna have long traditions and differentiated modes of operation, each of which would fill books on its own – and which take time to understand.

This resonance study is thus intended as a **supplement to the exhibition year** with its diverse formats, which are dedicated to the presentation and discussion of the projects and contents. It is therefore not a contentual record or thematic summary. Nor is it a post-IBA exposé or memorandum. Nor is it a professional or scientific assessment of results, be they projects, events or publications. Nor is it an evaluation of the work and achievements of the responsible organizational unit.

The **theoretical basis** to be built now will name the most important terms: The instrument **IBA as the object of investigation** has a long history and is applied for the first time in Vienna. The **context of social housing in Vienna**, which is characterized as a **complex system**. Social **innovation** and sustainable **transformation** as the **mission** of this IBA in its context.

International Building Exhibitions (IBA, German: Internationale Bauausstellungen) are more than international exhibitions of buildings. The underlying concept can only be understood from its extensive history in Germany. An introduction is possible, for example, via the official website of the responsible Federal Ministry (www.internationale-bauausstellungen.de/iba-geschichte/). An in-depth treatment of this important part of German architectural and planning history can be found in various places in „Baukultur. Spiegel gesellschaftlichen Wandel“ (Durth/Sigel 2009).

„For over a century, the succession of International Building Exhibitions had produced exemplary results through new ideas, themes and experimental procedures beyond the usual planning practice, setting high standards for future projects.“ (ibid.: 723, English translation)

In the process, the instrument has increasingly transformed itself from very important architectural exhibitions with similarities to experimental housing estate initiated by Werkbund settlements at the beginning of the 20th century to a prominent special instrument of urban and regional development after the Second World War. Over the course of the only five IBA before 2000 (Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt 1901 and Weißenhofsiedlung Stuttgart 1927, both subsequently designated as IBA, the Interbau Berlin 1957, the IBA Berlin 1984/87 and the IBA Emscher Park 1999), which were very powerful in terms of their impact, the instrument gained an extremely high profile and built up its own set of instruments and vocabulary.

As important and much-discussed as IBA are in the professional scene, they are mostly unknown beyond it. For the vast majority of people who have not studied the history of ideas in this field in German cities or who happen to have been involved in an IBA, question marks and misdirections in Internet research (e.g. via the International Bar Association, International Beauty Academy and international exhibitions for bakery and confectionery) are to be expected. The concept of IBA is not self-explanatory.

In order to maintain and further develop this internationally respected but unprotected trademark of German planning culture, an expert council was established in 2009. In its „Memorandum on the Future of International Building Exhibitions“ (IBA Expert Council of the Federal Ministry of the Interior 2017; updated version from 2009), IBA are characterized as „experimental fields of urban and regional development,“ each of which attains significance far beyond its time and place and sets standards for everyday practice. „Precisely because every IBA has to reinvent itself again and again, ... continuous quality management is necessary[.]“ (ibid.: 5) Ten recommendations for future IBA were formulated on the basis of previous IBA. This was done when the few outstanding IBA of the last century (see above) inspired a multitude of new IBA and it was questionable whether and how these could live up to the tradition. From 2016 onwards, another IBA quality offensive was launched at the German federal level (cf. BBSR n.d.). This discussion is taken up in the chapter „Reflections on a different IBA.“

„For more than 100 years, International Building Exhibitions have been flagships and impulse generators for urban and regional development in Germany. More and more federal states and municipalities – now also in other countries – are turning to this format when faced with exceptional urban development problems. IBA is not a certified label, International Building Exhibitions are a form of self-obligation.“ (BBSR n.d., English translation)

In the authors' understanding, the core elements of an IBA process are usually as follows:
1. In a preparatory process, a **memorandum** is drawn up which, based on a problem pressure, identifies an internationally relevant **theme** and justifies the meaning and purpose of the respective IBA. 2. Publication of the memorandum and the founding of an IBA association

marks the start of the **IBA period**, usually lasting ten years, during which many different formats take place and application and development processes for specific projects are carried out in accordance with a dramaturgy to be developed. The aim is for the projects in the IBA area, which can be a district, a city or a region, to develop an „international excellence“ that goes beyond previous practice, thanks to the incentive of the IBA label and the additional opportunities it offers. 3. Usually in an **interim presentation** after five years and a **final presentation** after ten years, the IBA projects selected as „excellent“ are exhibited, which provide new answers to the internationally relevant question raised in the memorandum.

A more in-depth definition of what can be understood by an IBA can be found in the chapter „Internal resonances - Instrument IBA.“ This is done intentionally as a starting point for the empirical study and not here in the methodology, because the practical understanding on the part of the interviewees and not a theoretical definition should be the reference point for the further steps. This is because the IBA instrument was used in the specific context of Vienna and on the specific topic of social housing with some differences to established practice, which will be examined in more detail in the following chapters. However, an IBA should not only do justice to its history, but above all to its respective application.

Therefore, the **context** of the concrete object of investigation, IBA_Vienna, must now be addressed. Vienna's **social housing** system has been built up since the end of the First World War and now comprises a stock of 420,000 housing units, to which several thousand are added every year. This system enjoys worldwide recognition for its unique quality and quantity. Compared to this system, in which it operates (see graphic „Mother Vienna“ on page 20/21), the IBA_Vienna is a small and short-lived player.

„In this huge apparatus, the relationship between Vienna, the provider, and its citizens, who are provided for, increasingly resembles that of parents to their children.“ (Lenart 2021: 155, English translation)

The IBA_Vienna worked for six years with and in a dense network of responsible institutions and established instruments. All the resulting projects, regardless of whether the IBA_Vienna exhibited them and/or helped to develop them, are the results of the actions of many actors, the work of established and continuously developed instruments and regulations, many external influences and local conditions. So how can the **contribution of the IBA_Vienna** to projects, processes and content developments, and thus ultimately its success, be determined?

Vienna's social housing is understood as a **complex system** based on the Cynefin framework. This framework identifies five different domains of systems – simple, complicated, complex, chaotic and disordered – and the corresponding action and management strategies, which would be too far-reaching to describe here. It is sufficient to name the particularities of a complex system, which is characterized by multi-layered interrelationships that cannot be fully grasped and involve interdependencies. Outcomes – in this case residential buildings that are organized in a certain way and in which people live in a certain way – are created through the interaction of many actors and their relationships and

interactions. In such complex systems, causal **relationships** can only be recognized in retrospect and can never be proven causally. In dealing with complex systems, the management strategy „probe – sense – respond“ is therefore derived in the sense of an „emergent practice.“ (cf. Lowe/Hesselgreaves 2021: 54-56)

„Outcomes are emergent properties created by complex systems – therefore complex systems are required to produce different patterns of results.“ (Lowe 2021: 20)

Intuitively, this strategy fits the above-mentioned understanding of an IBA that responds to complex problems with an experimental approach (probe) and uses exhibition formats to create a discourse (sense) that goes beyond the project team with the aim of changing established practice (respond).

Therefore, although its original mandate was to do so, the present study cannot be an effect **analysis** (German: Wirkungsanalyse). On the one hand, because of the aforementioned impossibility of measuring and determining effects in complex systems. On the other hand, however, also for some practical research reasons. For example, many effects triggered by IBA_Vienna do not occur until much later: Do people in IBA projects live differently or better than in others? For example, is energy consumption lower and satisfaction higher? In addition, a comparison with the „non-effect“ of the IBA_Vienna would be necessary, for example by means of scenarios: What would the project be like without the influence of the IBA_Vienna? How would the practice of those actors have changed without a visit to the exhibition – and what effects would this (not) have had? ... Methodologically, cognitively and practically, this is impossible to present.

„One of the key challenges ... is that complex systems are unpredictable. In complex environments, we cannot reliably say that if we do x, then y will happen.“ (Lowe/Hesselgreaves 2021: 54)

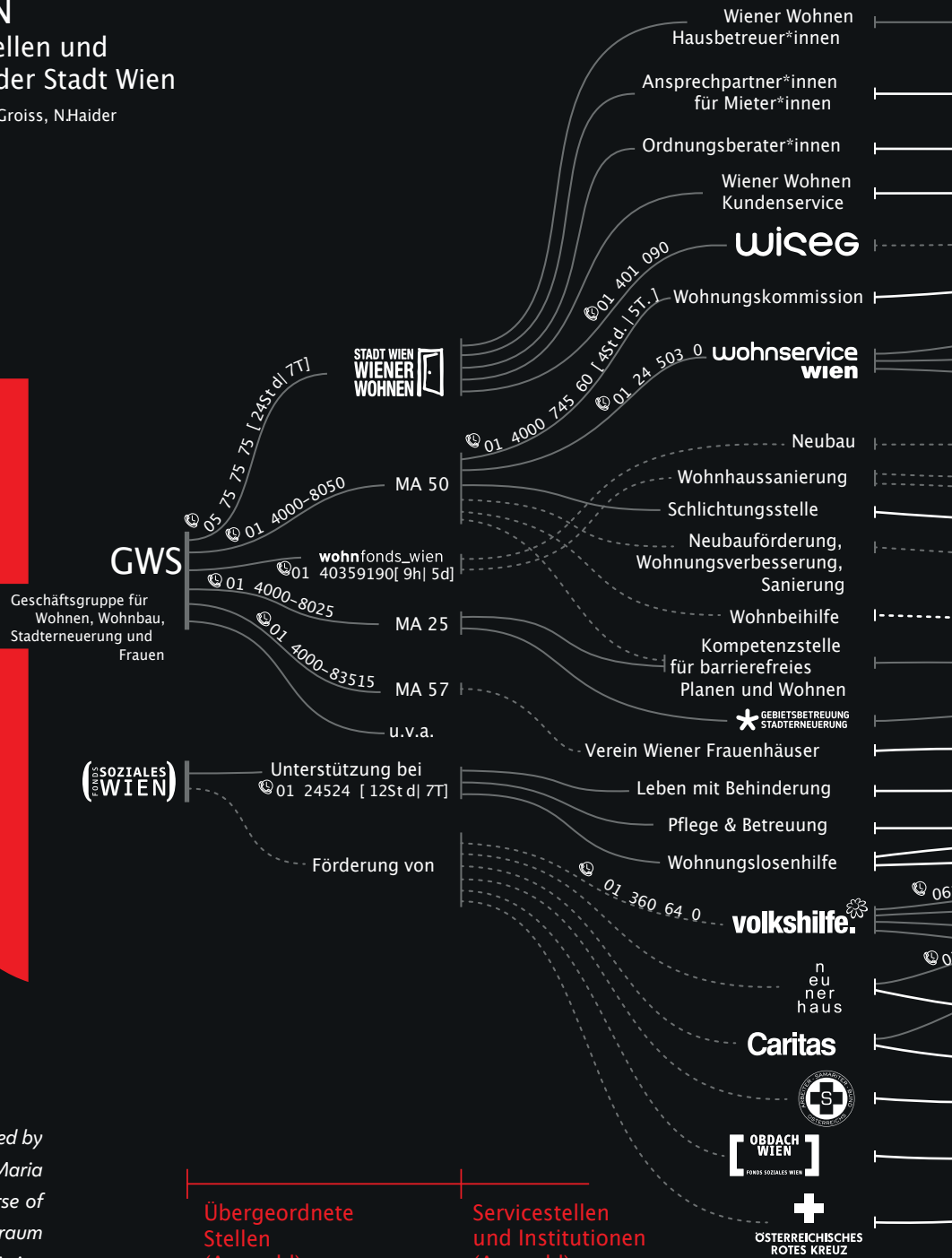
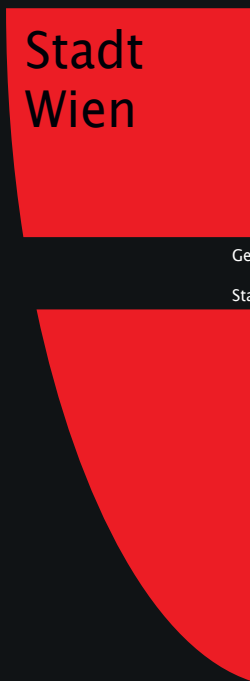
Even if no clear cause-effect relationships can be assigned in complex systems, there remains the methodological and practical possibility of pursuing the research interest: obtaining feedback from the actors active in the system. They can be asked about their views (which may develop over time), perceptions and assessments of the **contribution of the IBA_Vienna to the observed changes**, and they can evaluate and reflect on the events from their individual, subjective point of view. In addition, they can reflect on their personal, institutional as well as the learning process perceived in the system. The task of this resonance study is thus to collect, categorize, synthesize and then critically reflect on the perceptions and assessments of the actors who have accompanied, experienced and/or observed the IBA_Vienna.

Next, the **question of perspectives** arises. The well-known parable of the elephant and the blind explorers tells of how each explorer believes to recognize something different, depending on which part of the elephant's body is touched. A tree, a sail, a rope, a spear, ... For the IBA_Vienna this parable applies threefold. Firstly, because each person interviewed, like the blind researchers, only perceives some parts of the big picture. Like the body parts

MAMA WIEN

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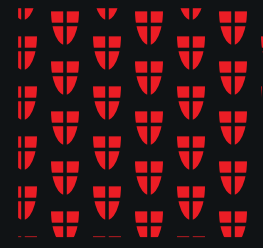
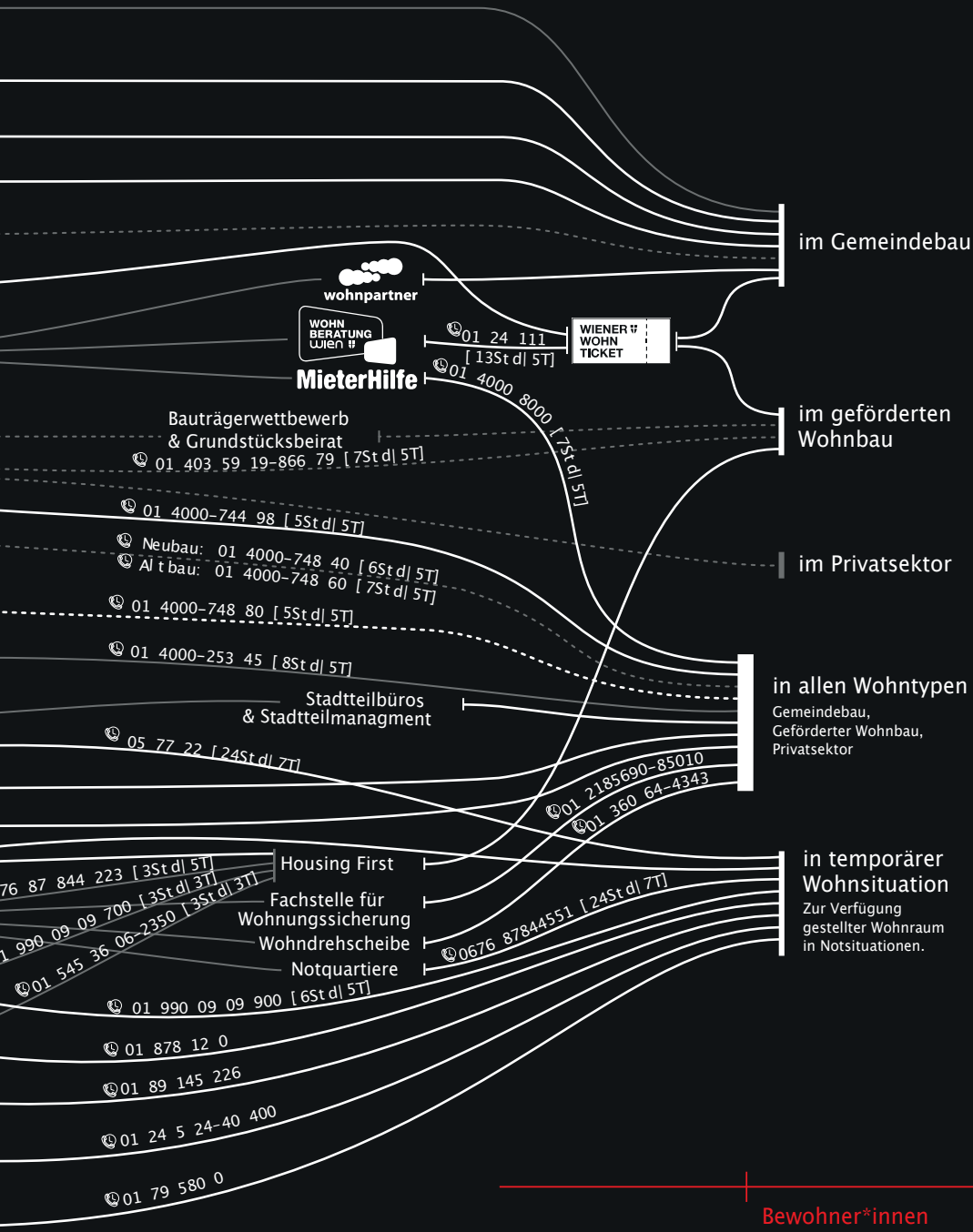
Übergeordnete Stellen (Auswahl)

Servicestellen und Institutionen (Auswahl)

Magistratsabteilungen

- MA 25 Technische Stadterneuerung
- MA 50 Wohnbauförderung und Schlichtungsstelle für wohnrechtliche Angelegenheiten
- MA 57 Frauenservice Wien

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Institutionen, Wohnungen und Wohngebäude als Empfängerinnen

- Verwaltung
- Finanzierung

Stadtbewohner*innen als Empfänger*innen

- Hilfeleistungen, Beratung und Vermittlung
- finanzielle Unterstützung

of the elephant, it is always only a few projects, events and processes that each person observes or experiences; it is never the entire body. Secondly, IBA, which is the elephant in this example, can mean very different things. For example, the responsible organizational unit or team. Or a sum total of projects. Or all those who contribute to or participate in projects, events or processes, regardless of their institutional embedding. Or even the overall process over several years. Or the exhibition with its projects and publications. And thirdly, of all the selective perceptions of the people interviewed, again only a part can be scientifically recorded and evaluated. Because the researchers on the second level, those who interview those who touch the elephant, are also confronted with the same premise of unavoidable complexity. So many projects with so many aspects and so many participants with so many roles at so many stages. So many events with so many guests and so many topics...

„Anyone who wants to understand or describe urban development processes must assume that neither complete mapping nor complete understanding is possible. For urban development is ... a permanent process ... [and a] bewildering variety of occurrences.“ (Selle 2018: 36-37, English translation)

The next step in order to get closer to this permanently ongoing and per se unclear process of the development of a complex system and the question of what a temporary actor could have contributed to this is now to ask what **kind of change** should have been brought about. In the self-descriptions of IBA_Vienna as well as in the literature on IBA, one immediately encounters the term innovation. And since the mission was to respond to global challenges, nothing else can be meant in the scientific sense than the now ubiquitous concept of **transformation to sustainability**.

Transformation is both a buzzword and a theoretical concept for which there are many different definitions. Their common denominator is the idea of fundamental change – as opposed to small, marginal or incremental changes (Feola 2015: 377). In this context, this change results from a combination of various endogenous and exogenous processes that include emergent, accidental and unintended, as well as intentional and deliberate factors (ibid.: 382). All concepts refer to system models that are described as complex, dynamic and multi-layered, which is why transformation as a process involves the interaction of different actors at different levels (ibid.: 381).

„Transformation is often understood as a comprehensive process of change that affects several subsystems of the overall social system. The processes of change in the subsystems are interdependent, i.e. they influence each other (reinforcing or weakening): changes in one system trigger changes in the other system and vice versa. Transformations refer to the transition from one equilibrium state to another.“ (Jacob et al. 2015: 5, English translation)

The question in this resonance study is therefore not only that of the degree of innovation of the projects, processes and methods of the IBA_Vienna, but also of the impulses and suggestions regarding the transformation of the social subsystem of social housing in Vienna.

Because innovation in this case cannot mean a global technical innovation or the market penetration of a new product, but only a locally bound change related to the practices, processes and organizational forms of various actors acting here, as well as the outputs and outcomes they produce, the term societal or **social innovation** is appropriate here (cf. Hutter et al. 2017: 15-31). A definition useful for here uses it to refer to „... those variations of ideas, practices, processes, objects, and constellations [...] that are experienced and justified as improvements in an accepted respect and that, through imitation and diffusion, change a domain of society with lasting effect.“ (Rammert 2010: 16, English translation)

„Innovations in spatial planning can be located within the hierarchy of societal and social innovations.“ (Christmann et al. 2016: 295, English translation)

Christmann et al. (2016, English translation) want to make „changes in spatial planning also investigable via learning processes and in the reflexive handling of existing practices.“ For this purpose, they define a broad concept of planning, namely „when actors systematically record and consciously reflect on actions related to the future in a professional (not everyday) way“ as well as „as a specific form of making decisions.“ In this context, they refer to all those who „engage in planning decision-making processes in the field of application“ as „actors of planning.“ Applying a societal or social concept of innovation, they understand „innovations in planning ... as emergent effects that arise from the interplay of changing framework conditions and the learning processes of individuals, professions, organizations, and policy fields. Changing framework conditions can certainly be used to explain why something changes, but the direction of change and the concretization of change into new practices cannot be understood from this perspective alone. Rather, the intentions, learning processes, and creative scope of the acting practitioners must also come into view.“ (ibid.: 277, English translation) This perspective spans the research interest of the resonance study on the IBA_Vienna and links the concept of social innovation with that of the development of complex systems via the concepts of emergence.

„In complex environments, learning is the only viable management strategy.“ (Lowe 2021: 19)

The overarching interpretation of the interviews will also come to the conclusion that the IBA_Vienna supported a learning process. For the **forms of knowledge** gain described in this regard, an independent categorization will now be developed inspired by established definitions, which in the eyes of the authors can better describe the case at hand.

Schönwandt (2013: 24-29) distinguishes between three core elements of a problem and thus also of any kind of planning: A(-) as the (usually negatively assessed) initial situation, which can be analyzed and is subject to a professional and political assessment. B(+) means the (usually positively evaluated) target state, which is to be professionally designed, politically decided and finally attained. And finally, M(?) denotes the measures, packages of measures, or actions (to be found) that are to be implemented on the way there (if necessary, in interaction and in sequence). Parallel to this, the terms system knowledge

(present state), target knowledge (target state) and transformation knowledge (path from one to the other) are familiar in transdisciplinary research (cf. among others Pohl/Hirsch Hadorn 2006: 32-36). Förster (2022, English translation) links these two category systems with each other and points out that „knowledge about problems and solutions emerges in an iterative working process.“

The outline developed here shows overlaps but also deliberate differences to the above categorizations and integrates the four categories of a SWOT analysis: strengths and weaknesses in the present, opportunities and threats in the future. The triad of **need knowledge – action knowledge – target knowledge** is understood as circular in this application case of a complex system and therefore not divided into present and future, but positive and negative assessments at a certain point in time. B is thus at the same time the next A, namely a next state, hopefully better in some aspects, but again to be perceived anew and evaluated in a differentiated manner, which is (re-)produced via continuously performed actions and measures. Thus, every state carries strengths and weaknesses, but also risks and opportunities – as Schönwandt also points out.

In summary, this resonance study understands Viennese social housing as a complex system in which the IBA_Vienna worked as a temporary actor from 2016 to 2022. We researchers collect polyphonic resonances from this system in order to analyze and condense them. With this theoretical baggage, but also their own practical experience in housing and urban development as well as with various IBA, the authors naturally carry all kinds of hypotheses with them. On how an IBA works and functions, for example, as set out in the aforementioned „Memorandum on the Future of the IBA.“ On what might have changed in the system of housing construction. About what opinions different players might have. And so on.

In view of the challenges and limitations outlined above, however, the **research design** now to be presented must necessarily adopt an exploratory, inductive approach that attempts, on an empirical basis, to offer as precise and useful a reflection and interpretation as possible of a process that is per se confusing.

To this end, three **research questions** will be answered:

1. **How did the IBA_Vienna work as a temporary actor in the Viennese housing system from the point of view of the actors involved – and what was its contribution?**
2. **What can be learned from the IBA_Vienna for the Viennese housing system?**
3. **What can be learned from IBA_Vienna for the instrument IBA?**

The time frame of the resonance study is limited by the final presentation of the IBA_Vienna from June to November 2022, because the results should already be presented in this framework. The procedure started in September 2021.

By awarding this contract, the IBA_Vienna is facing up to the critical reflection of its activities. In doing so, the implementation was carried out from a **proximity to the IBA_Vienna**, as Rudolf Scheuven, in addition to other activities in Vienna, has also advised the IBA_Vienna since 2016 and the future.lab of the TU Vienna, which he directs, has been a cooperation partner of the IBA_Vienna in recent years in events such as the IBA-talks, the hosting of the International Summer School New Social Housing or in the co-editing of the book „Neues soziales Wohnen“ (IBA_Vienna 2022 & future.lab 2020). However, the lead editing was done by Andreas Bernögger, who has not been active in Vienna in recent years.

As critical as this institutional proximity might be in terms of impartiality or partisanship, it was useful in the research process. For both the complexity of the IBA_Vienna and of the Viennese housing system demanded a certain familiarity that cannot easily be established from „further away.“ On the other hand, there is a relationship of trust between the client and the contractor as well as with the interviewed actors, which was necessary in order to be able to talk about potentially conflictual and politically charged aspects. Knowledge of the system and sensitivity proved to be elementary in the proceeding.

The possible problems of proximity had to be circumvented by **adding an external perspective**. Kunibert Wachten, as chairman of the IBA_Vienna's scientific advisory board, was able to recruit three people for this purpose who are very familiar with the topics of housing and urban development as well as with the IBA as an instrument, and who will be referred to below as **commentators**. **Uli Hellweg** takes the perspective of the IBA designer. Among other things, he was involved in the IBA Berlin 1984/87 and led the IBA Hamburg 2013. Today he works as a freelance consultant, moderator and author. **Brigitte Scholz** represents the perspective from the (administrative) practice of a major European city. She is head of the Cologne Office for Urban Development and thus a partner in the IBA_Vienna city network. Through her many years as project coordinator for the IBA Fürst-Pückler-Land 2010, she is also familiar with IBA as an instrument from her own work. **Klaus Selle** approaches the IBA_Vienna from a scientific perspective. His diverse publications also include works on special planning formats such as IBA. He is Professor Emeritus of Planning Theory and Urban Development at RWTH Aachen University but continues to be active in research and municipal consultancy.

The **qualitative interviews** with actors who shaped, experienced and observed the IBA_Vienna were conducted by Andreas Bernögger, Rudolf Scheuven and Judith M. Lehner (all future.lab) from October 2021 to January 2022. They took place in analogue or digital settings with one to a maximum of three people interviewed at the same time, each assigned to the same or similar category to ensure independence of expression. The 55 interviewees were assigned to seven categories: developers, architecture/planning, administration, intermediary partners, academia, observers and new actors, which also proved useful in the evaluation.

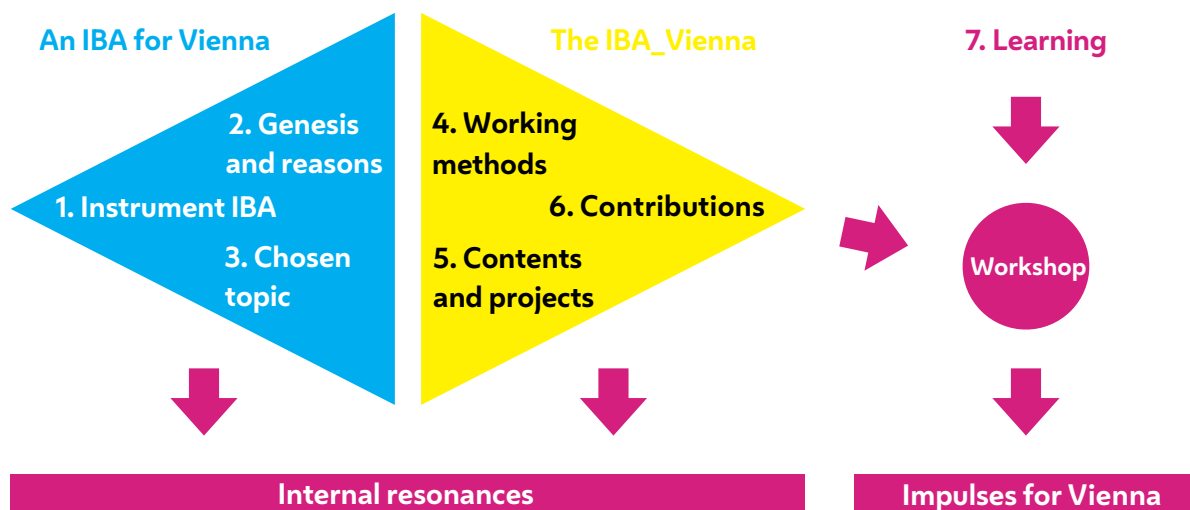
Guiding questions were formulated as orientation for the interviews, which were refined in the course of the analysis as follows, so that they can serve as an outline for the chapter „Internal resonances.“ Only the statements on guiding question 7 were not dedicated to a separate sub-chapter, but were further processed with learning effects derived from the other guiding questions into a first draft for the chapter „Impulses for Vienna,“ which became the basis for a workshop – more on this below.

1. How is the instrument IBA understood?
2. How were the genesis and reasons of the IBA_Vienna perceived?
3. How is the chosen topic „New Social Housing“ seen?

4. How were the working methods of IBA_Vienna perceived?
5. How are the contents and projects assessed?
6. What was the IBA_Vienna able to contribute?

7. What do we learn from this?

The subchapters pertaining to the first six guiding questions represent a systematization and condensation of the entirety of statements. This is supplemented by anonymous quotations from the interviews. The content of these statements was not changed, but they were merely grammatically and editorially edited so that they are concise and understandable even without the context of the interview.





Tour of the Sonnwendviertel. Photo: Andreas Bernögger

In **November 2021**, a **two-day intensive** was held with the three commentators. The future.lab team reported on the first interviews, initial theses were exchanged and various visits and discussion rounds were held. The commentators visited the IBA neighborhoods Per-Albin-Hansson-Siedlung, Am Seebogen and Sonnwendviertel, and spoke to the IBA team, institutions such as Wiener Wohnen and some project partners. In addition to their individual, cursory review of publications and projects, they were thus able to form a general, if not comprehensive, opinion on site.

This was followed by a continuous, approximately monthly exchange in online meetings. The future.lab team and the commentators reported on each other's observations, which subsequently lead to mutual impulses and questions for a deeper understanding of the IBA_Vienna. Kurt Hofstetter, Kunibert Wachten and Judith M. Lehner were available for questions and as sparring partners. In this way, the chapter „Internal resonances“ was drafted by future.lab based on the interviews and the chapter „External resonances“ was drafted based on the contributions of the three commentators.



Tour of the Seestadt. Photo: Andreas Bernögger



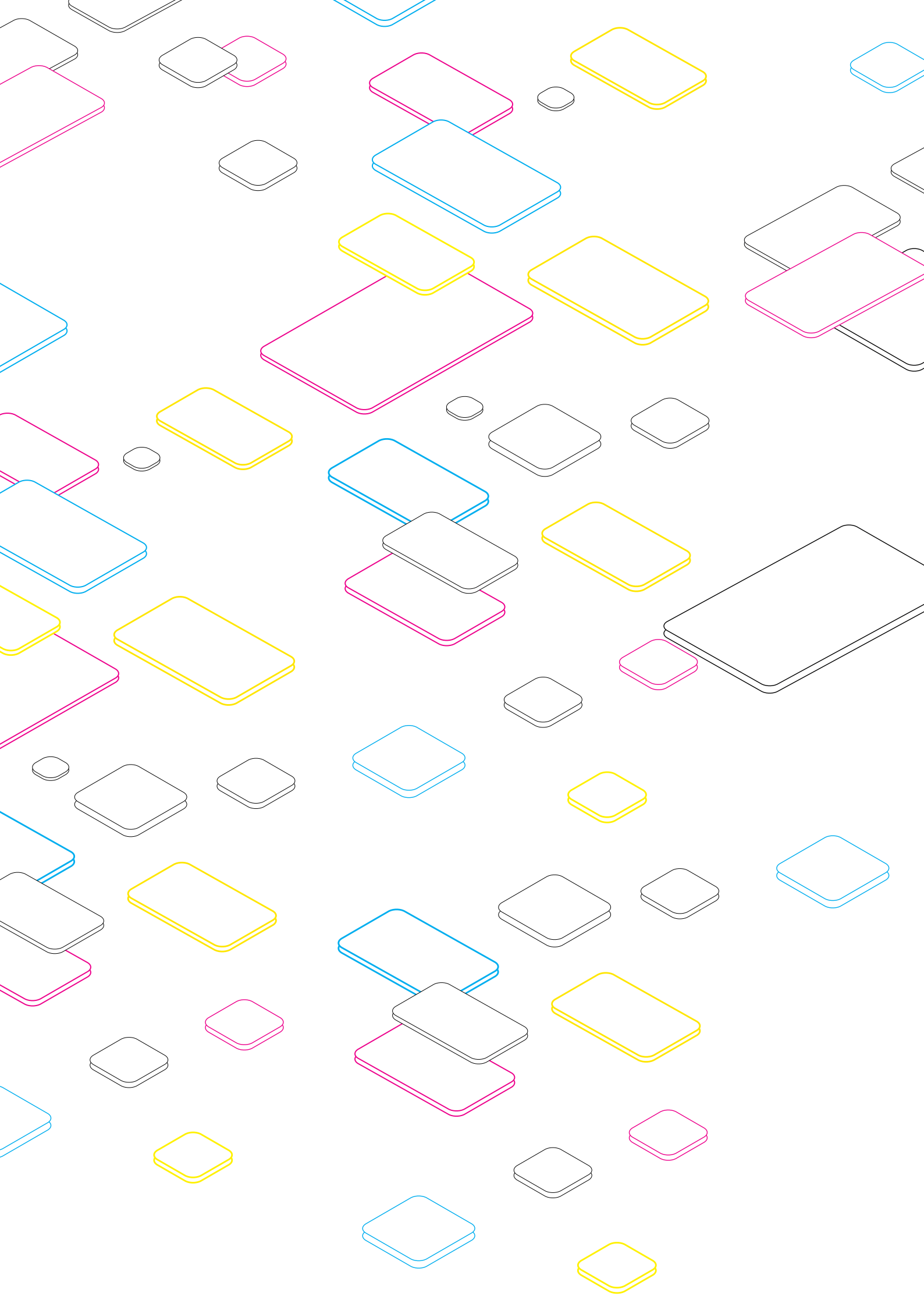
Exhibition of the IBA_Vienna: Photo: Yvonne Fetz

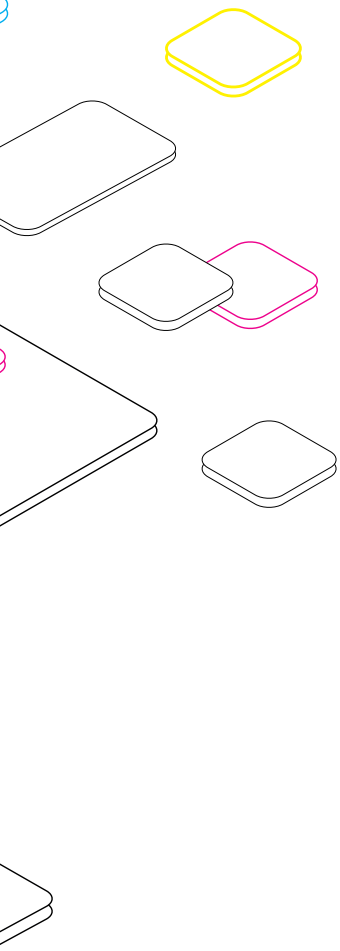
Finally, in **March 2022**, three **background discussions** were held with the Favoriten District Chief Marcus Franz, the initiator and first coordinator of the IBA_Vienna Wolfgang Förster and his successor and client of this study Kurt Hofstetter. Due to time constraints, IBA President Kathrin Gaál answered the questions in writing. With the exception of the interview with Kurt Hofstetter, which is reproduced in the chapter „Reflecting discussion,“ all statements from these background interviews were not directly included in the evaluation, but merely supported the authors in their deeper understanding of the contexts and in the specification of the argumentation.

A final milestone in the research process was a **workshop in May 2022**, to which again all interviewees were invited. In the exhibition hall of the IBA_Vienna, which then was under construction, the interim results of the chapter „Internal resonances“ and a draft of the chapter „Impulses for Vienna“ were discussed with about 15 of the 55 interviewees. For both, but more so for the second, important impulses were obtained from the stakeholders.

The interviews with the many Viennese actors made it clear: the need and willingness to exchange ideas about Viennese housing is great! We researchers heard many thanks from the interviewees, who appreciated the opportunity for reflection. Above all, however, as the overall evaluation will show, we understood that the IBA_Vienna can be read as part of a continuous learning process. Supporting this process shows itself to be an essential contribution of a small, temporary actor in an extensive, complex and long-term oriented system.

Because many statements referred to the future and the following tasks, the title „What will we learn tomorrow?“ was chosen for this resonance study at the conclusion of the IBA_Vienna 2022, in a variation on the exhibition motto of the IBA_Vienna „**How will we live tomorrow?**“ was chosen for this resonance study on the conclusion of the IBA_Vienna 2022, in a variation on the exhibition motto “How will we live tomorrow?”





INTERNAL RESONANCES

Andreas Bernögger, Rudolf Scheuven on the basis of 55 Interviews

1. How is the instrument IBA understood?

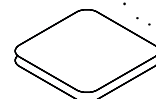
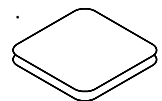
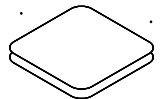
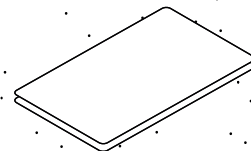
Key messages

The most important historical references of the interviewees are Weißenhofsiedlung 1927, Interbau Berlin 1957, IBA Berlin 1984/87, IBA Emscher Park 1999 and IBA Hamburg 2013. The latter is the best known, motivated many to an IBA in Vienna and shapes the image of a contemporary IBA. Overall, the understanding and knowledge of the instrument are diverse and vary in depth. Against this background, discussion and explanation in the respective context appear central.

There is agreement on the basic idea of an IBA as a space for experimentation and a driver of innovation. Many IBA have set milestones in the understanding of planning and triggered paradigm shifts. They are intended to generate local and international impulses and new images. Trend-setting answers to a locally and internationally relevant problem are developed and then communicated. To this end, the status quo must be analyzed and future-oriented paths must be pointed out. At the heart of every IBA are concrete projects. These are (further) developed during the IBA period and are given a stage for critical discussion.

At the beginning of every IBA there is a decision on the direction to be taken and an operational self-confidence with regard to the implementation of internationally outstanding projects. For this, an IBA needs an organization capable of action, additional resources and opportunities, but also a political mandate for innovation and experimentation.

The instrument has changed and developed a lot in its history. It has achieved a great deal, but for the researchers among the interviewees in particular, it is questionable in what way it can be contemporary. Primarily, a decrease in the scope for content and a shift in the focus of IBA to mediation and marketing are noted, which is perceived as a deviation from the basic idea. IBA_Vienna is also seen as part of this development (>2:).



IBA develop and communicate new solutions to significant problems.

After a Google search I suspected some sort of residential construction fair:

An IBA is a glimpse into the future with an urge to make it suitable for everyday use.

An IBA is much more than building!

IBA means state of exception, innovation and experimentation, discussion and learning.

An IBA can attempt what politics cannot.

Kurt later explained to me what an IBA is.

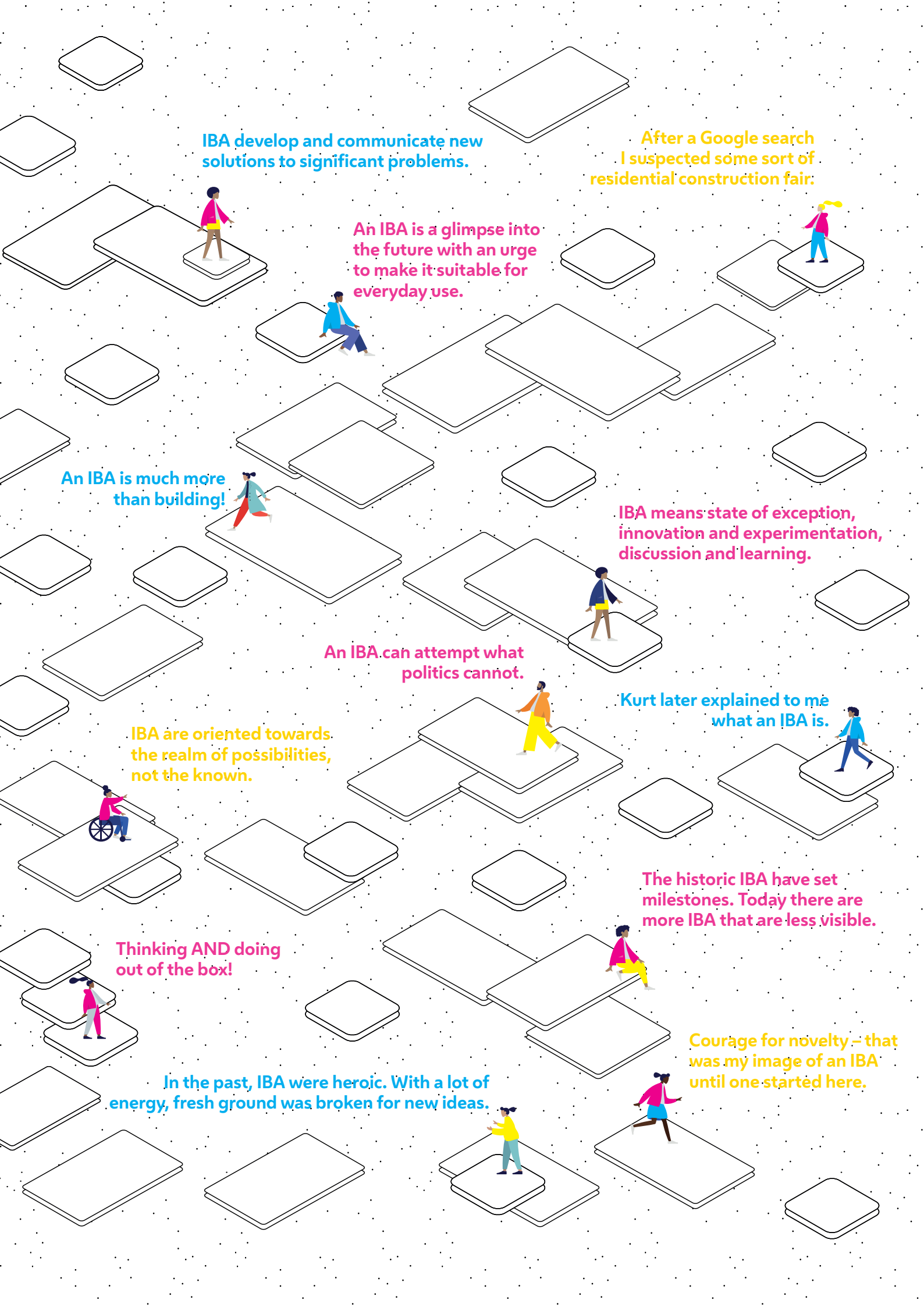
IBA are oriented towards the realm of possibilities, not the known.

The historic IBA have set milestones. Today there are more IBA that are less visible.

Thinking AND doing out of the box!

Courage for novelty – that was my image of an IBA until one started here.

In the past, IBA were heroic. With a lot of energy, fresh ground was broken for new ideas.



This first guiding question addresses the basic understanding of an IBA as an instrument and its history from the interviewees' perspective. This is a central reference point for the chapter "Internal resonances" because both individual and aggregated statements refer to it.

At the outset, reference must be made to a prominent source that is known to some of the interviewees and therefore shapes their statements: the Memorandum on the Future of International Building Exhibitions (IBA Expert Council of the Federal Ministry of the Interior 2017; updated version from 2009). In this memorandum, IBA are described as "**experimental fields of urban and regional development,**" each of which attains significance far beyond its time and place and sets standards for everyday practice. In order to maintain and further develop this internationally respected but unprotected trademark of German planning culture, ten recommendations for future IBA were derived on the basis of previous IBA (for more details, see the chapter "Methodology").

From the point of view of the interviewees, the most important **historical references** are the Weißenhofsiedlung Stuttgart 1927, the Interbau Berlin 1957, the IBA Berlin 1984/87 with its two pillars "Old and New," the IBA Emscher Park 1999 and the IBA Hamburg 2013. The latter, with its project work and its communication, has shaped the image of a contemporary IBA most broadly and suggested to many of the interviewees – above all to some housing associations and some administrative staff who visited Hamburg in 2013 – that Vienna should also present itself in this way. It was in these groups that the initiative for IBA_Vienna later found the quickest approval. The Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt 1901, subsequently described "as the first building exhibition on a permanent basis with international appeal" (cf. Durth/Sigel 2009: 53, English translation), the IBA Stadtumbau Sachsen-Anhalt 2010 and the IBA Fürst-Pückler-Land 2010 are rarely mentioned. Of the current IBA, occasional reference is made to the IBA Stuttgart 2027 and the trinational IBA Basel 2020. The more recent IBA in Heidelberg 2022, Thuringia 2023 and Parkstad 2020 – the first outside Germany – and those in preparation are barely touched upon.

The images of the rich history of the IBA vary in depth: sometimes comprehensive and historically contextualized, sometimes selective and focused on individual aspects, sometimes superficial and understood as a "good brand," sometimes (in advance) non-existent. The spectrum of the depth of knowledge between planning disciplines and other professional backgrounds is not surprising – but must be taken into account. What is also more interesting is the scope for interpretation of the instrument: while some interviewees focus more on architectural ideas and innovations in construction technology, others focus on the procedural and methodological changes or the planning policy and social dimensions. From these two differences and against the background of the range of existing and possible IBA approaches, it follows that, in addition to the content, the instrument must also be widely discussed, precisely justified and tailored to the respective context.

Those more closely involved agree on the basic idea behind the instrument: they describe an IBA as a very important **experimental space and innovation driver**, equipped with additional financial resources and administrative freedom. Historically, this was usually a response to a problem pressure or upheaval and the commitment to the necessity of developing new solutions beyond the everyday norm – in order to subsequently communicate these to a wider public. Thus, in the perception of the interviewees, IBA were and

are always also very political instruments that are intended to open up spaces of possibility beyond what exists and can be imagined today.

Local problems and international relevance meet in terms of content: an IBA should analyze the status quo in need of change and point the way to the future. In this sense, the proclamation of an IBA is already associated with a. a strong commitment in terms of content in the sense of a specialist policy decision and b. a high level of operational self-confidence with regard to its own ability to implement and demonstrate new solutions at the highest international level. In addition to resources and a mandate, this requires a stimulating and networked organization that is capable of acting autonomously and should therefore be located outside the administration – according to the assessment of most interviewees.

An IBA is thus understood as an **instrument of development and communication**. At its heart are concrete projects, for which it provides a framework and a stage. The project work is linked to a comprehensive (structural-architectural, conceptual, socio-cultural, medial, ecological, ...) design and innovation claim in the sense of an excellent representation of the international state of the art. However, the projects and processes of an IBA should also generate impulses at the local or city-regional level that go beyond what has been possible so far, that are radical and that are allowed to fail, in order to create constructive friction in and with the system. Above all, the IBA Berlin 1984/87, the IBA Emscher Park 1999 and the IBA Hamburg 2013 are mentioned here: at the time, various fundamental questions and views were intensively negotiated in political, professional and public discourse, each of which led to a paradigm shift and generated new images – with local and international resonance.

Both the local and the international level of innovation require a well-founded discussion, the inclusion of all relevant local stakeholders and knowledge carriers as well as the leading European minds – before, during and after. Only strong, continuous and timely communication internally and externally can integrate and develop the existing know-how, provide the valuable and necessary overview of the projects and topics, transfer new ideas in the sense of a paradigm shift from experimentation to everyday life and disseminate the practical findings.

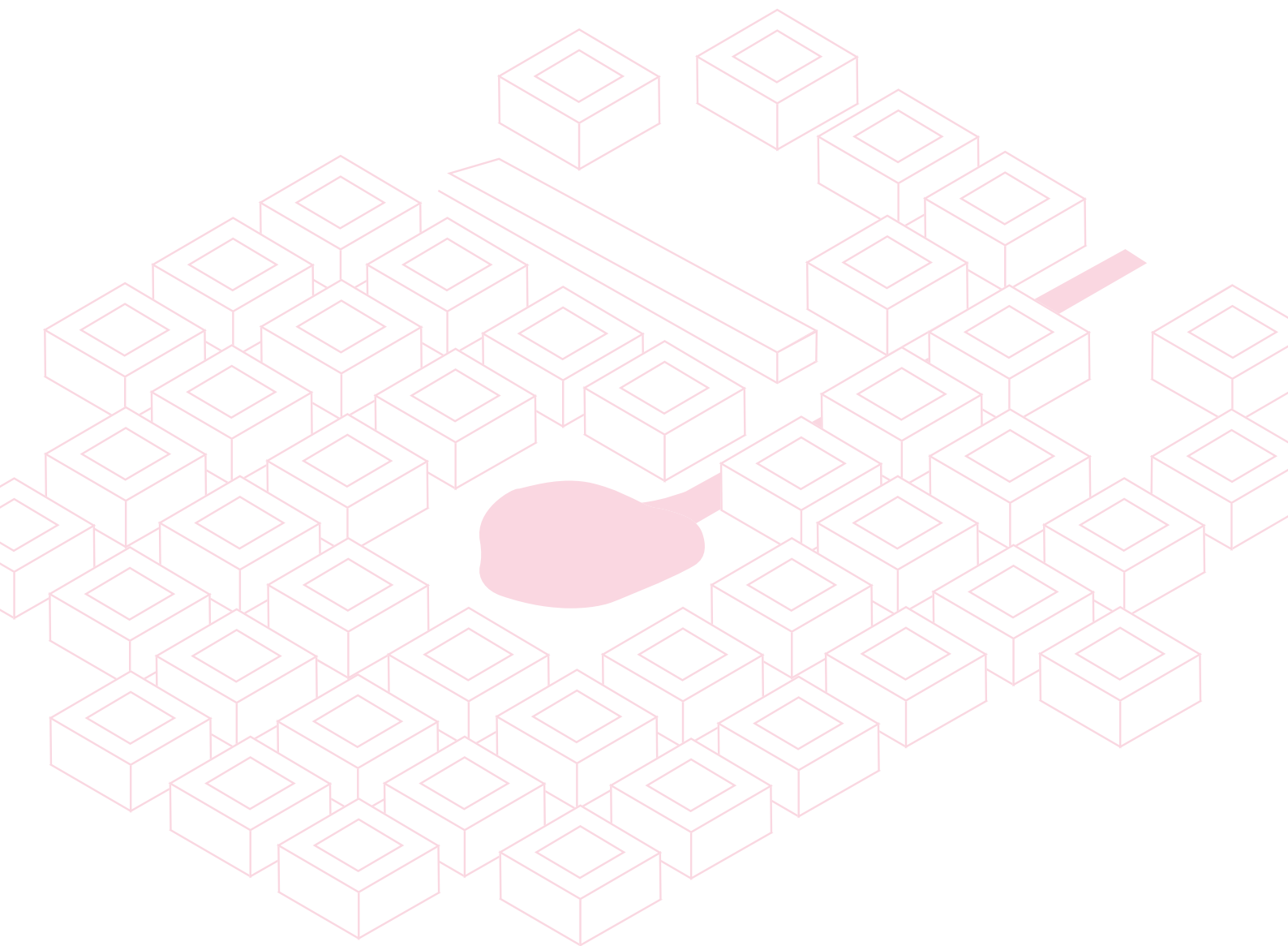
Interestingly, the significant role of the directors is not addressed. However, it is occasionally mentioned that all historical IBA are connected to key persons who opened up the space for the new types of projects or even won them.

Interviewees from the sciences in particular emphasize that the instrument has undergone constant **change and development** throughout its history and has thus achieved a great deal – but the question arises as to what extent it is still up to date. Among other things, it is noted that the name is outdated because the process dimension has been increasingly recognized as important in comparison to the built result. Attention shifted from the final presentation to the curated “state of exception” (cf. IBA Expert Council of the German Federal Ministry of the Interior 2017: 7, English translation). In the spatial dimension, urban planning was added to the scale level of buildings and open spaces with the Interbau Berlin 1957. The IBA Berlin 1984/87 extended the spectrum to urban districts and the IBA Emscher Park 1999 finally to regional development. All three set milestones in the

planning discourse with their commitment to modern urban development, gentle urban renewal and the treatment of the industrial heritage. In this three-step process, IBA went from being a particular instrument of architecture and building culture to one of urban and regional development and landscape planning. All the more recent IBA move within this spectrum – the IBA Basel 2020 extended the spectrum to include cross-border cooperation in a trinational region.

In the eyes of the authors, the expansion of scale and heterogenization are accompanied by essential instrumental implications that are often not present: the projects become more diverse, the sites more fragmented, the contents more manifold, the methods more interdisciplinary, the processes more multilayered, the actors more varied, the framework conditions more complex, the forms of presentation more multimedia and the realization periods longer. This circumstance also challenges every IBA to justify and explain itself precisely.

From an overarching perspective, the charisma of the IBA seems to diminish with its multiplication – which is probably mainly due to the fact that the financial resources and political mandates of the recent IBA for “thinking and doing out of the box” are far below those of earlier IBA. In this respect, a shift in the focus of IBA towards mediation and marketing is currently being observed, which no longer does full justice to the original demands made on the instrument. Among the IBA after the turn of the millennium, only Hamburg 2013 and Stuttgart 2027 are cited as positive examples with regard to their organizational framework conditions. For some interviewees, the IBA_Vienna fits into this development with regard to its mission and its possibilities.



2. How were the genesis and reasons of the IBA_Vienna perceived?

Key messages

In the genesis of the IBA_Vienna, Wolfgang Förster, long-time head of the city council's own housing research department, and Michael Ludwig, City Councilor for Housing from 2007 to 2018 and Mayor since then, are named as key figures. Preliminary discussions on a small scale since 2012 and an internal administrative preparatory process in 2015 led to the operational launch in 2016, with Ludwig becoming president and Förster coordinator. The IBA Hamburg 2013 was present as a role model during this time.

The preparation is often perceived as insufficient. This is because the drafting of a memorandum and broader participation did not take place as usual before but only after the official launch. This led a. to ambiguities with regard to reasons and contents, b. to irritations with regard to presumed criticism of the existing system and c. to an activation of relevant actors with latency.

The strategy and cause of the IBA_Vienna are partly perceived as a deviation from the basic idea (>1.). It does not want to solve a problem but to convey and develop a strength. Although the merits of Viennese housing policy are widely acknowledged by the interviewees and the professional political commitment as well as an intensified mediation of social housing are supported, many, however, miss a deeper critical-constructive examination of the status quo as well as of the conditions for housing production and neighborhood development. Great expectations are

attached to the two strong traditions of Viennese housing and the IBA as an instrument.

No independent organization was founded for the IBA_Vienna and it offered only limited opportunities for more experimental approaches. The minimal equipment, the short period of time and the organizational integration in a subordinate position within the administration triggered a certain disappointment, because this was seen as a lack of entitlement for innovation and integration. Only a few voices consider the exhibition of selected projects to be sufficient to fulfil the claim of an IBA.

The IBA_Vienna thus started in a somewhat skeptical environment. Nevertheless, by many committed people and institutions it was perceived and taken as an opportunity for innovation and further development of the tried and tested instruments.

Why have an IBA if there is no problem?

We have so many good projects and can always do an IBA. It was high time.

The kick-off was a normal housing research day with a lot of marketing.

In the beginning, our IBA only wanted to make the good things more visible.

There were good events and a lot of action. But it was unclear what was to be done.

There was no money for forward-looking experiments.

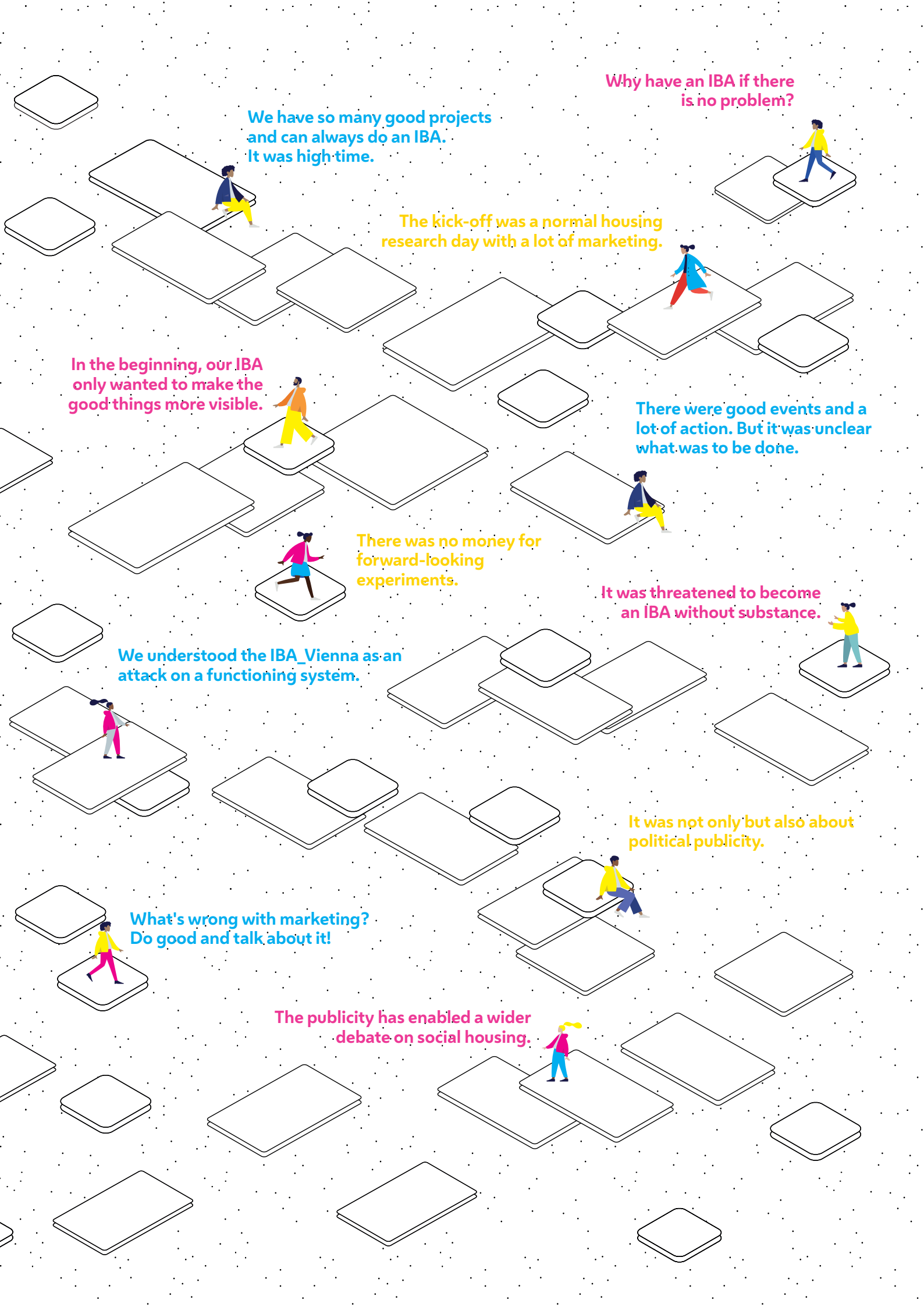
It was threatened to become an IBA without substance.

We understood the IBA_Vienna as an attack on a functioning system.

It was not only but also about political publicity.

What's wrong with marketing? Do good and talk about it!

The publicity has enabled a wider debate on social housing.



The IBA_Vienna has had an unusual and controversial start. The approach chosen is one of many possible ones, the successes and failures of which will be determined by the following key questions. First, however, space must be given to the critical expert discussion on the starting point. Without this step, the later process cannot be understood, even though many arguments only became visible after the start of the IBA_Vienna. This is intended to make it easier for readers to assess and classify these for themselves. In addition, it is important for the following guiding questions to measure the results achieved by the IBA_Vienna against its explicit mission and its concrete possibilities, and not against abstract and very different expectations.

The **official explanation** of the chosen strategy of the IBA_Vienna will briefly precede the reflection on the genesis and events of the IBA_Vienna from the perspective of the interviewees. This can be read centrally in the program published in 2017 – one year after the start of the IBA period – which also constitutes the memorandum on IBA_Vienna (cf. IBA_Vienna 2017). In it, reference is made to bilateral preliminary talks between the two key figures Michael Ludwig and Wolfgang Förster since 2012 and the operational start with a small core group in 2016. The initiator Wolfgang Förster, as the longstanding head of Vienna's internal municipal housing research and area support, was very familiar with the "Viennese model" of social and subsidized housing – on which he published two books and curated exhibitions in 2016 and 2018 – and excellently networked in the "Viennese housing cosmos." In his article "Why an IBA for Vienna? Reflections on an Unusual Action" ("Warum eine IBA für Wien? Überlegungen zu einer ungewöhnlichen Aktion" in: IBA_Vienna 2022 and future.lab (eds.) 2020: 10-12) he reflects on the conditions under which it came about:

Wolfgang Förster describes IBA as proven instruments of innovation that respond to existing deficits in a concentrated manner. The **Viennese approach** is different, he says, because it starts with internationally recognized strengths and raises the question of possible encrustations of the Viennese model of success – without, however, wanting to criticize or question the structures and institutions. The IBA_Vienna wants to be a counter-model and further development of other IBA by proactively responding with innovations to foreseeable global challenges such as the climate crisis, urban growth and migration. The "I" in IBA was the mutual opportunity to position the Viennese model internationally as a "counter to the market credulity of neoliberalism" and, on the other hand, to bring more international expertise to Vienna. He sees the IBA theme of "New Social Housing" as a logical continuation of "social sustainability," which was added in 2007, as the fourth pillar in the developers' competition (German: Bauträgerwettbewerbe) and its success. As risks of an IBA_Vienna he names on the one hand possible resistance and on the other hand too high expectations on the part of the actors in the housing system. This led to the need for a lean organization that did not add a new institution, with the aim of a network-like structure of cooperation – "IBA_Vienna, that's you too." Self-critically, he describes this retrospectively as courageous – it would have "only partially worked well." For the sake of political acceptance, the project should have started with little budget and no preparation. In the summer of 2015 the idea was anchored in the government program and the municipal budget, and in February 2016 the IBA_Vienna was proclaimed in the Kuppelsaal of the Vienna University of Technology. He ends with, "An IBA needs time to get into everyone's heads." (ibid., English translation)

Further on in the memorandum (IBA_Vienna 2017): “The organization of the IBA_Vienna differs fundamentally from most previous IBA in that, on the one hand, it is not organizationally outsourced and, on the other, it is very leanly staffed. This is justified by the fundamentally good endowment with institutions of the City of Vienna that deal with the topic of new social housing in the narrower sense.” (ibid.: 40, English translation) The City Councilor for Housing is also the IBA President; a steering group is composed of administrative units; the IBA_Vienna team of approximately six people consists of employees from three administrative units. By way of comparison, IBA Hamburg 2013 operated as an independent, additional organizational unit with around 30-40 staff. In Vienna, only an advisory board of academics and practitioners is additionally established under the leadership of Kunibert Wachten, and Rudolf Scheuven is brought in as an ongoing expert advisor. Both have since advised the IBA_Vienna and also contributed to this resonance study.

2012	Preliminary talks
2013	Exhibition IBA Hamburg
2015	Internal preparation
2016	Operational start
2017	Publication memorandum
2018/2019	Project qualification
2020	Interim presentation
2021	Quality assurance
2022	Final presentation

Now we switch to the perspective of the interviewees: With regard to the genesis, a few insiders recall parallel thoughts on other IBA approaches for Vienna, which, however, never ignited. In the successful initiative, the central role of **Wolfgang Förster** is clearly stated on all sides – the IBA_Vienna is owed to his personal commitment and reputation. After the IBA Hamburg 2013, he was able to win over **Michael Ludwig**, the City Councilor for Housing, for the idea, who initiated and facilitated the further process. These two are named as **key figures** without whom there would be no IBA_Vienna. The fact that Wolfgang Förster was appointed as an internal person to manage IBA_Vienna, and not an external director as is the case with other IBA, is perceived as fitting the strategy and being consistent.

The **preparatory process** took place under the leadership of Wolfgang Förster within the magistrate’s internal housing research department. The responsibility thus lay with the Housing Department headed by Michael Ludwig from 2007 to 2018. Employees of other administrative units were also involved in discussion rounds, for example from the urban planning department, the environmental department and the higher-level municipal directorate. While the interviewees from the administration reported on the

constructive working atmosphere of these talks, the other interviewees criticized the lack of a preparatory process and involvement before the start of the IBA_Vienna. There was also no in-depth exchange with the (German) IBA Expert Council.

The IBA as an instrument must be tailored and prepared for the respective context (>1.). In its "Memorandum on the Future of International Building Exhibitions" (IBA Expert Council of the Federal Ministry of the Interior 2017; updated version from 2009), the IBA Expert Council points out that the historically achieved significance and the qualities of the "IBA brand" must also be secured in distinction to other formats of urban and regional development (ibid: 5, English translation). "Preparatory formal and informal discourses, both in professional circles and in the public, are important for defining the themes." (ibid.: 7, English translation)

In February 2016, the professional world was involved for the first time when the IBA_Vienna was proclaimed with a festive event in the Kuppelsaal of the TU Vienna. It was prominently attended and remained in the memory of many. It was often praised as very interesting, but thematically still described as unspecific and superficially strongly marketing-oriented.

Understanding the **political motivation** for proclaiming the IBA_Vienna is important to many interviewees, because many arguments could not be adequately explained in the rapid process. The reasons perceived but also assumed in this abbreviation therefore show an ambivalent and partly confused picture, which is now to be sorted.

The most apparent political cause is perceived as the attempt to better communicate and market the – undisputed and underlined – merits and strengths of the Viennese housing system internally. The accompanying professional political commitment to social housing as an antipole to neoliberal tendencies at municipal, national and European levels finds broad support. Also the presumed desire for mediation to the broad population is mostly supported and at least understood – because the internationally earned reputation is hardly reflected "at home." The success of Vienna's housing policy is wrongly taken for granted in many eyes. The international stage is thus used to play across borders, which is well understood as a political strategy. However, it is critically noted that the IBA_Vienna is thus primarily used as a communication and marketing tool.

Arguing in this direction are those who are more closely involved with other IBA – not only, but rather architects and planners, researchers, intermediary partners and external observers. These support the basic idea of an IBA in Vienna, its thematic setting (>3.) and also the increased exhibition and discussion of the many good instruments, projects and developments. However, further expectations are attached to the IBA as an instrument with its significant history (>1.). The desire for optimization within the existing system, perceived as honest but moderate, is for these voices below the usual ambitions of an IBA.

At the beginning, there were strong **expectations** in the professional scene with regard to the opening of an experimental space. In part, this was related to building standards, cost-effective construction in the face of rising building prices and a more vital detachment from the regulations of the regular developers' competition, which were

perceived as rigid. However, the discussions held in this direction were not fruitful, as this was not within the scope of action of the IBA_Vienna and no additional money was made available for building experiments – this was the perception of architects in particular. But experiments were also encouraged in other thematic fields and processes (>3.).

Both within the administration and, above all, among some housing associations, there was a very positive image of the instrument following visits to the IBA Hamburg 2013, which gave rise to a desire for an IBA in Vienna. It was in these groups that the initiative fell on the most fertile ground. Some self-confident voices said that it was long past time for an IBA in Vienna, since many exemplary, internationally recognized and interesting projects were being constructed and developed here. Vienna had a sufficient amount of worthwhile projects to exhibit, and it would suffice simply to present the projects under current development. The housing associations in particular, however, stated that there was a lack of clarity with regard to further steps. The lack of inclusion had led to the IBA_Vienna not being widely supported at the beginning, despite all the enthusiasm, simply because of a lack of information and activation.

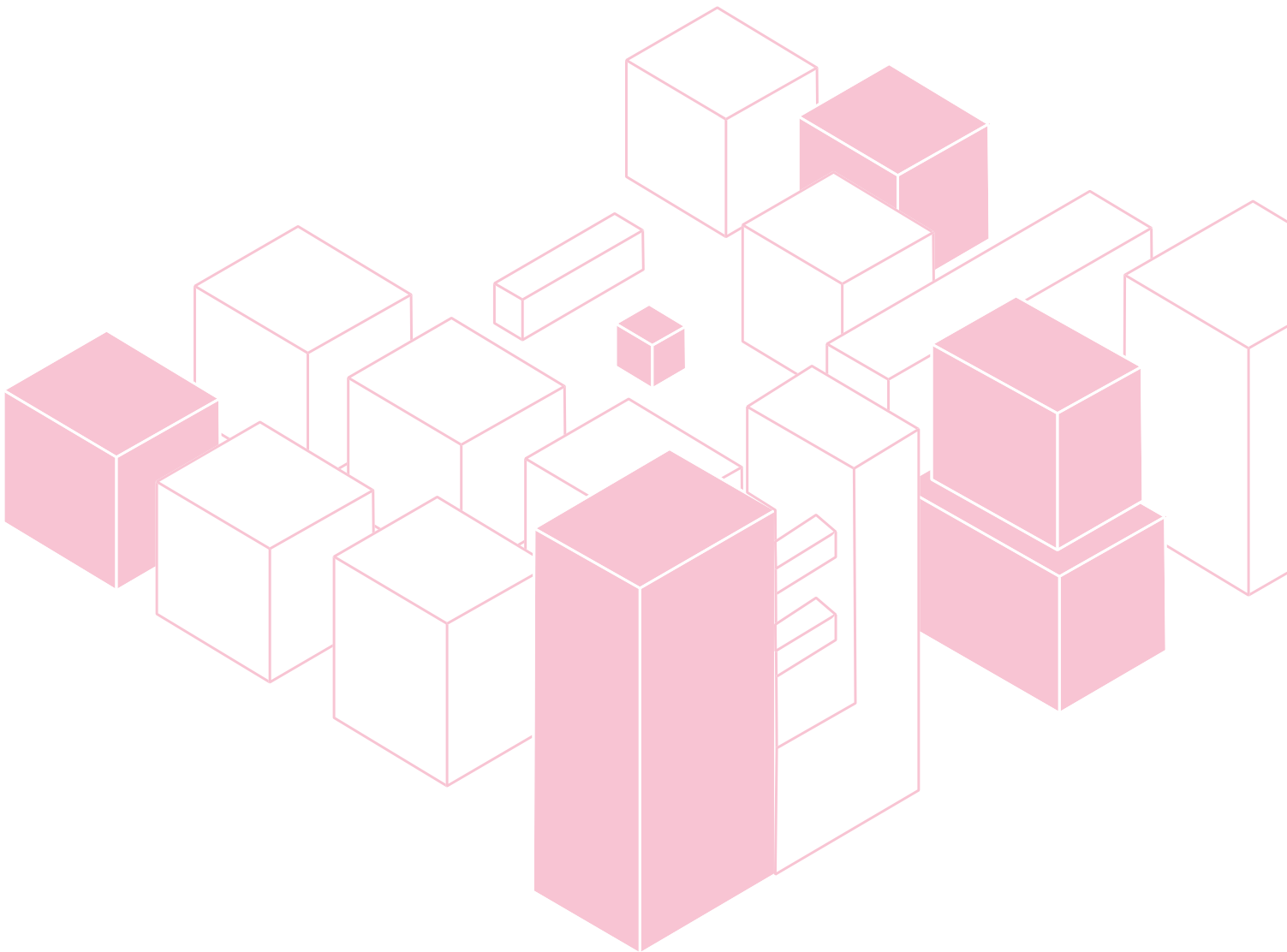
The memorandum of the IBA_Vienna was not published until a year after its launch. The goals and reasons were therefore insufficiently specified at the beginning, which showed Achilles' heels. The **"cold start"** left open the question, both internally and externally, of what was to be understood by the "new" in "social housing" in terms of content and methodology – and, conversely, to what extent the "old social housing" needed to be changed. The basic idea of an IBA always includes constructive criticism of the system – the aim is to respond to a problem situation with new approaches (>1.). However, many perceived that the IBA_Vienna did not define any concrete fields of learning, but was based primarily on the strength and tradition of Vienna, on its existing international reputation, on the continuity of the themes and on future challenges. This argumentation, which was perceived as vague and abbreviated and which would have required a longer preparatory process in order to be more precise and comprehensible, harbors a number of reservations and fears of loss. While some administrative bodies praised the approach but saw it as having little connection with their own sphere of influence – which could be different in the case of such a broadly conceived theme – it was once clearly stated that the IBA_Vienna was understood in its beginnings as an "attack on the existing system." Although this reservation was later dispelled and turned into fruitful cooperation, it bears witness to the initial difficulties.

The central point of criticism from the interviewees, however, was the **structural conditions** of the IBA_Vienna. The stated goals did not match the personnel and financial resources. The IBA_Vienna had only been given a mediation mandate and not a development mandate. For an experimental space it would have needed more backing and assertiveness in the project work. However, this is not seen as part of the initial mandate, namely to make themes and projects visible. Furthermore, the integration into the Housing Department surprises many; they think that if there is to be no autonomous organization capable of acting, the IBA_Vienna should have been located at least in the sense of a development department in the superordinate municipal department, in order to be able to act in an integrating and networking way between the departments and beyond. The chosen structure would have allowed too little room for freedom of action. In addition,

there was the short term of only six years from the start and five years from the memorandum to the exhibition – and originally an even shorter period had been envisioned.

As a retrospective conclusion – which is supposedly always wiser – it suggests itself that a concretization of the content and broader participation before the start could have clarified what should be attempted within the framework of the IBA_Vienna – and what not. This could have given space to the demand for a self-critical discourse and led to a broader commitment, since the stronger treatment of the topic, the visualization of current developments and the further development of the existing system are seen positively by the interviewees throughout. Wolfgang Förster's motivation to initiate an IBA in spite of resistance and limits is also perceived to be the opening up of such space in terms of content. With more money, time and leeway, IBA_Vienna would in any case have been able to charge many open doors. So it started in a somewhat skeptical environment.

In addition to the ambivalences of this atypical genesis and strategy, the following guiding questions will highlight many added values and successes that have emerged. Despite all the initial controversy, the IBA_Vienna is seen as a valuable process whose closer examination is worthwhile. Because many motivated individuals and institutions perceived and used it as an **opportunity for innovation** and for the further development of the housing system. The expectations that became visible also became more concrete during the IBA period, so that they can now be taken into account in a more targeted manner (see chapter "Impulses for Vienna").



3. How is the chosen topic „New Social Housing“ seen?

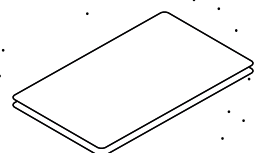
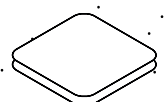
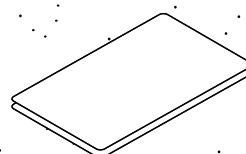
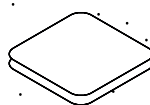
Key messages

The theme “New Social Housing” is seen as specific to Vienna and internationally relevant. However, the undefined problem and only weakly communicated objective at the official start of the IBA_Vienna 2016 is perceived as irritating in the professional scene (>2.). The memorandum published in 2017 receives a positive response, as it identifies worthwhile questions and topics. In the perception of some interviewees, their concrete operationalization in the specific system would have required more intensive and broader preparation as well as a stronger political mandate.

The overarching approach of self-assurance and cultivation of the tradition of social housing on the occasion of global challenges meets with broad approval. The Viennese system, from its historical achievements to its present-day manifestations, is basically held in high esteem. Stronger communication of the internationally remarkable continuity, quantity and quality, both internally and externally, is therefore advocated – but it was initially feared by many that this would be as far as it went.

Based on a strong consensus on the Vienna Model, many topics are named that need further development and updating. Most frequently, more experiments; research and discussions are suggested in the following areas: 1. A necessary change of mindset from care-giving paternalism to more cooperative responsibility, 2. Understanding and operating housing as part of integrated urban development, and therefore establishing more cross-connections to other areas such as economy, culture, landscape architecture, mobility and social issues, 3. To make more significant contributions to climate protection, climate adaptation and quality of life through greening and decarbonization, 4. To focus on the large housing stock with its constructional, typological, technical, social and functional issues and 5. In view of the increasing commercialization on the housing market and social trends, to focus more on affordability and inclusion.

Out of all these issues, the focus on the neighborhood level as one of three guiding themes of the memorandum is named as valuable and essential.



Vienna as a stronghold of social housing – that's our theme!

Managing the legacy is not enough! What does social housing mean tomorrow?

We are the island of the blessed. It's high time that others learn more from us.

Are we just patting ourselves on the back – or are we continuing to develop the lighthouse?

Not all needs are obvious – and the future alone is challenging enough.

What does social housing mean in the face of the climate crisis?

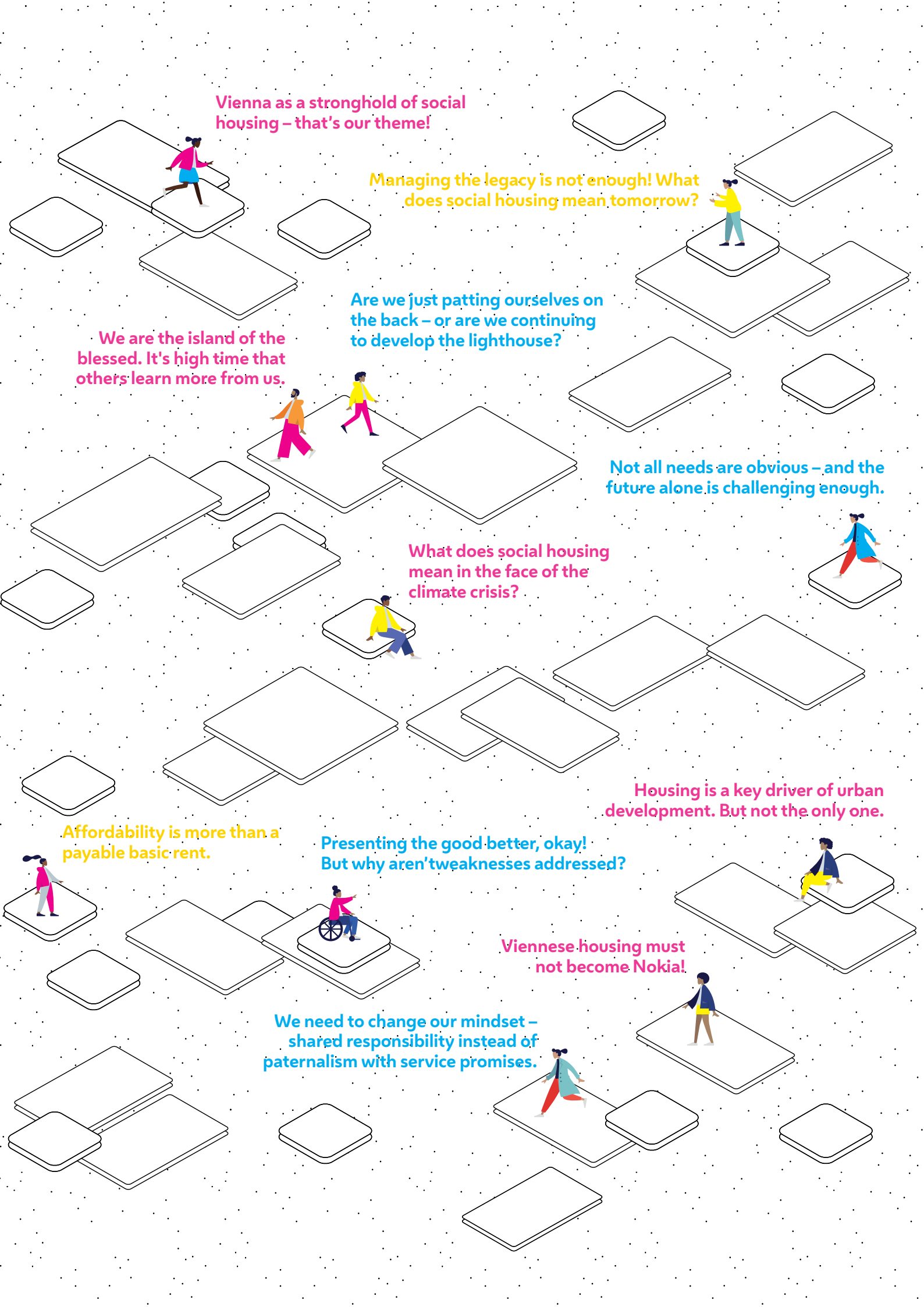
Housing is a key driver of urban development. But not the only one.

Affordability is more than a payable basic rent.

Presenting the good better, okay! But why aren't weaknesses addressed?

Viennese housing must not become Nokia!

We need to change our mindset – shared responsibility instead of paternalism with service promises.



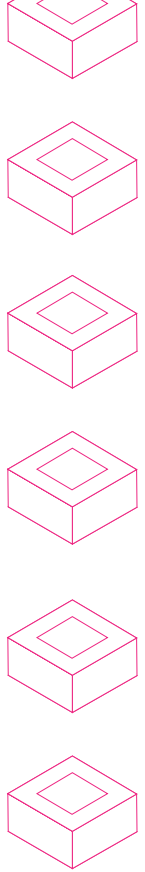
The memorandum and program were published at the beginning of 2017, one year after the operational start of the IBA_Vienna. They represent the specification of the title's content already named in 2016. This guiding question is devoted to the interviewees' view of this definition of content at the time of the memorandum. The procedural and structural dimensions of the genesis of the theme have already been dealt with in guiding question 2.

The **theme** of "New Social Housing" is seen as comprehensive and relevant both locally and internationally – and thus well suited to an IBA. For the interviewees, it builds on specific Viennese competencies, a strong tradition and an existing international reputation as the "world capital of social housing." This is often seen positively and as an obligation on which one should not rest. There is a great desire among many actors for more experimentation and creativity in this already strong thematic field. However, many feared that greater emphasis should be placed on communicating what already exists. Avoiding the inertia of the system that often goes hand in hand with success and adopting a (pro) active attitude in the face of major transformation tasks emerges as a common concern.

The term social housing is too often reduced to affordability. This is important, but only one aspect. The broadening of the topic in the Viennese tradition, to see social housing also for the mainstream of society, as a question of living together and as a quality criterion, is evaluated positively. However, many would have found it helpful to have a more precise definition of which areas of action, objectives and qualities the chosen theme encompasses.

The claim formulated in the memorandum of **ascertaining orientation and maintaining tradition** in times of major transformation tasks and systematic threats to affordable housing is supported throughout. However, because the international visibility and reputation of the Viennese model are perceived as strong, most comments focus on the inside view. The Viennese system of social housing as a thematic starting point is held in high esteem. Both the historical successes and today's instruments are significant and recognized. In addition, ongoing further development is seen, for example with the "fourth pillar" of social sustainability in the developers' competition, through the land use category "subsidized housing" (German: Geförderter Wohnungsbau) or the new quality advisory board (German: Qualitätsbeirat) at the neighborhood level. What is missed, however, is the precise naming of the problems and urgent tasks. Although the initial situation is considered to be comfortable and good, fundamental questions are asked. Some interviewees would have liked to see a broader mandate to thoroughly investigate the existing system and make working beyond the system's boundaries possible. After all, the very real hardships and weaknesses – such as marginalized target groups, rising construction prices and simultaneously increasing quality requirements, dwindling land availability and new construction performance, to name but a few and not even the climate crisis – would require a closer look. New ideas could be just as much a part of this as a return to original approaches.

Against this background, the memorandum is understood as covering an interesting range of topics that is worth working on. Thus, all the thematic complexes on which discussions are stimulated can be located within this spectrum. However, it is seen as a weakness that the title "New Social Housing," which is open to interpretation, has not been defined sharply enough and that the concrete starting points beyond the signifi-



cant but very open questions are missing. The operationalization of what is to be further developed and examined is accordingly missed. The question remains open to what extent this is possible and useful at the start of an IBA.

At this point, five main issues that are frequently mentioned will be addressed:

Firstly, there is often talk about a necessary **change of mindset**, which is understood as a long-wave cultural process. The care mentality, which was established especially in the early days of social housing and continues to be strong, should be further developed in the direction of cooperative commonality. This concerns both the institutions of housing creation, where strong partnerships already exist with limited-profit housing associations, for example. But it also refers to the role of the users, who should turn from the consumption of prefabricated solutions to a continuous co-production of their own living environment. Changing this mindset is considered a general challenge in times of climate crisis, because it emphasizes the responsibilities of public authorities, of the companies involved, but also of civil society and of the people themselves – in the production, but also in the maintenance and use of housing. The great tasks of our time can only be solved together and with the contributions of all. Vienna traditionally has a strong top-down culture in this area, which should be complemented by more bottom-up processes and initiatives. Given the strong and differentiated public system, new initiatives do not always have it easy. Supporting these and thus establishing more counter-current principles from the public and civil society sides is often suggested.

Secondly, there is a lot of talk about **housing as part of integrated urban development**. For some, the next necessary step is not only to think about housing more broadly, but even to think of it more as a cross-sectional task. Housing has traditionally been of such great importance in Vienna that the competences that have been built up are bundled in an independent, strongly equipped department. In this valuable work, however, it is strongly suggested to establish more cross-links to other areas such as economy, culture, landscape architecture, urban planning, mobility and social affairs. Many current topics of urban development such as mixed use, lively ground floors, living together, social infrastructures in the neighborhood and public spaces can only be dealt with in cooperation.

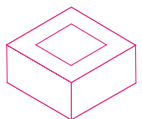
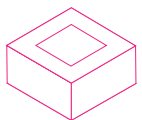
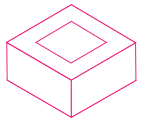
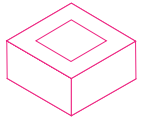
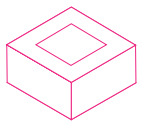
Thirdly, **greening and decarbonization** are named as the greatest tasks of our generation. Here, greater contributions to climate protection, climate adaptation and quality of life are called for. The climate crisis requires rapid and comprehensive responses, to which both new construction and the large building stock still contribute too little. In the new building sector, better processes and solutions as well as a questioning of the requirements for qualities, quantities and financing models are pointed out. Issues of microclimate, heating and cooling, mobility as well as renewable energy supply are topics here. With 220,000 municipally owned apartments and an additional 200,000 limited-profit apartments, the City of Vienna has enormous leverage with its housing stock, which it is often suggested to use for the energy transition and climate adaptation. In addition, more work should be done on new building and housing typologies that are more flexible and allow for more circular materials and construction methods.

Fourthly, the large **housing stock** with its structural, typological, technical, social and functional issues is the topic. Here, in addition to the most difficult challenges, the

greatest levers for successfully shaping the future also become apparent. The strength of the City of Vienna in having built up an incomparably large city-owned and limited-profit housing stock in the unique continuity of the last hundred years is seen as a massive opportunity for contributing to sustainability transformation. Dealing with this heritage in the light of new demands is named as a major task – to which another IBA could easily be dedicated, according to some winking interviewees.

Fifthly, in view of the increasing **commercialization** of the housing market and social trends, **affordability and inclusion** are at risk for many. This is because the ratios of subsidized and privately financed new construction are shifting. While this was still in balance until a few years ago, the ratio has now clearly turned in favor of the privately financed sector. On the one hand, this is a threat to affordability, but also the quality standards are often below those of subsidized or city-owned housing. That commercialization and land availability do not make subsidized housing impossible requires, for many, even more countermeasures. This should be dealt with by means of new development models, changed financing models and organizational forms as well as an adjustment of the instruments. The logic of the system should be reviewed and complementary approaches to action explored. A programmatic and creative orientation towards the weakest target groups is also often brought into play. In addition, the question arises as to the accuracy of fit of the housing offers and the efficiency of the occupancy of housing. Modified procedures such as open competitions and more flexibility in the competition processes for housing associations are named as possible ways of dealing with the challenging framework conditions and economic constraints.

“New Social **Neighborhoods**” as one of three guiding themes of the memorandum (along with “New Social Responsibility” and “New Social Qualities”) is named as essential from all five of the themes listed. For many, all these topics are contained in the idea of neighborhoods and can also be worked on. However, such statements will also partly be a retroactive effect, because the neighborhood has developed curatorially into the red thread of the IBA_Vienna (>5.).



4. How were the working methods of IBA_Vienna perceived?

Key messages

The genesis and structure of the IBA_Vienna gave rise to a number of startup difficulties (>2.). In addition, there were further obstacles within the short term: a. Because the IBA preliminary phase was located within the official term, there was little time for communicating the role of an IBA in the system. Reservations about competition with existing institutions had to be addressed in parallel with the development of the memorandum. b. The Covid 19 pandemic severely limited the communication activities of the last three IBA years and also hampered substantive processes. c. Rising construction prices made it necessary to cut costs in many projects. d. In the IBA neighborhoods An der Schanze and Berresgasse there were significant delays in the procedures due to objections based on nature conservation law.

The framework and mandate are discussed controversially (>2.) – but the professional achievements and personal qualities of the IBA team are unanimously and unambiguously acknowledged as outstanding! In particular, the understanding of topics and processes, the moderation and networking skills, the presentation and communication of contents and projects as well as the recognition and translation of trends into everyday practice are perceived as qualities of the team and especially of Kurt Hofstetter. The team of only six people fulfilled very diverse tasks with a high level of competence, demonstrated a high level of adaptability and integrated itself in a targeted manner into diverse collaborations.

Three linked approaches to action can be seen, which together unfold effects: “Strengthening discourses” was the foremost task, which was fulfilled powerfully, visibly and effectively in the professional public. This enabled topics to be set, perceptions to be changed and learning curves to be accelerated. “Supporting cooperation” in the sense of networking and interface work within the administration, intersectionally, in Vienna as well as internationally received a great deal of attention. The IBA_Vienna was active and appreciated as a moderator and networker, but also as an amorphous expert, contributing its own competences in a way that suited the respective constellation and task. “Accompanying experiments” in the sense of concrete project work received fewer resources and opportunities (>2.), but represents – in a modification – the core of the established IBA understanding (>1.). This approach to action proved to be increasingly important and could be used in selected procedures in cooperation with the responsible institutions. If this was successful within the short term, the progress thus made is considered valuable.

With a lot of commitment and few resources, the IBA team has achieved great things.

The IBA_Vienna brings awareness for progresses and prepares learning.

We need to reinvent less if we learn from each other.

We work like we always do. And we'll also work like this afterwards. After all, we are the reason for this IBA.

The team is great professionally and personally. Nevertheless the focus was always on the subject.

The IBA was a living platform. It did not control but asked what was needed.

Kurt is persistent and empathetic, convincing and frustration-tolerant. The success is also due to his person.

The lab was missing.

Kurt understood us. Suddenly we could have a say.

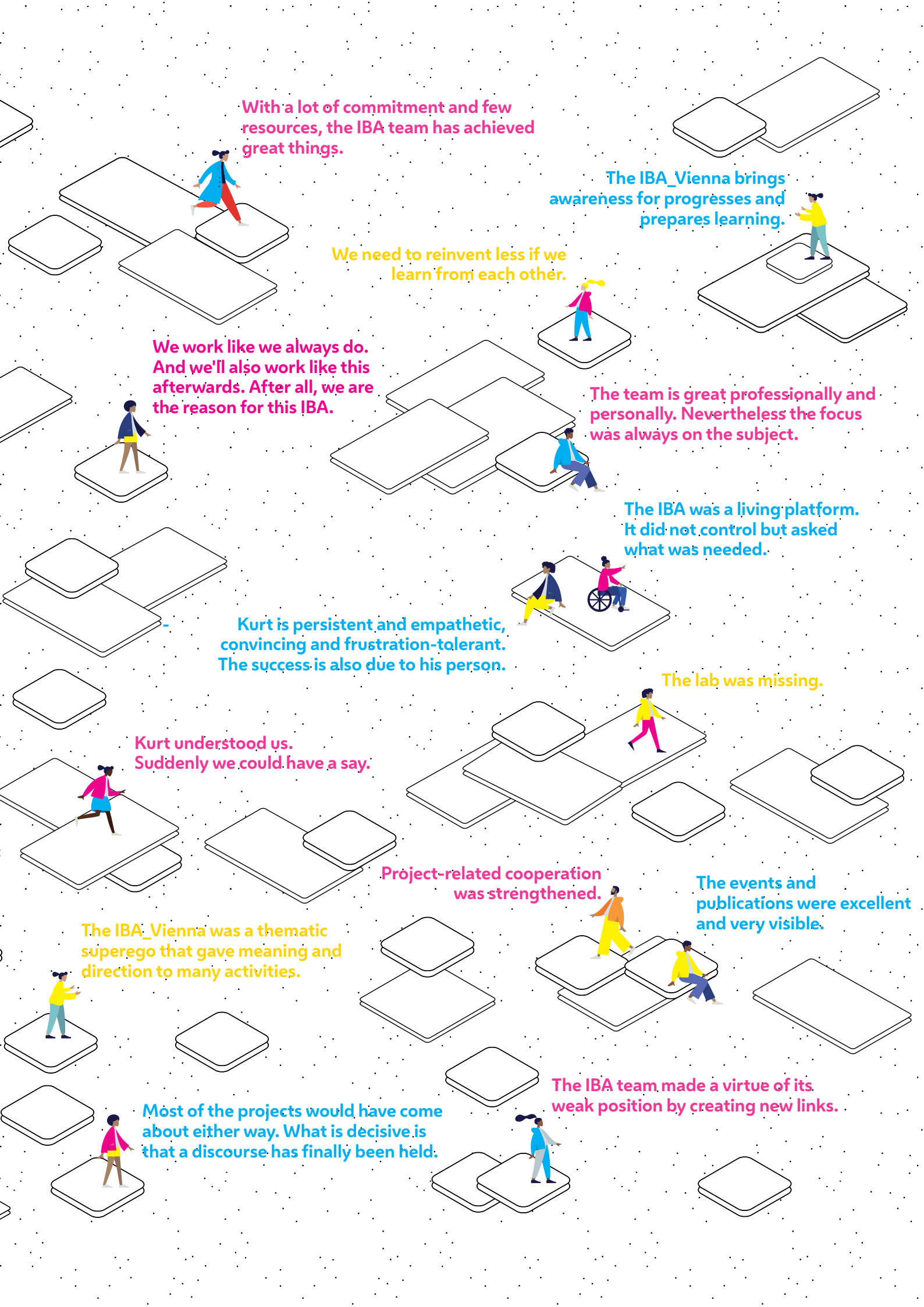
Project-related cooperation was strengthened.

The events and publications were excellent and very visible.

The IBA_Vienna was a thematic superego that gave meaning and direction to many activities.

The IBA team made a virtue of its weak position by creating new links.

Most of the projects would have come about either way. What is decisive is that a discourse has finally been held.



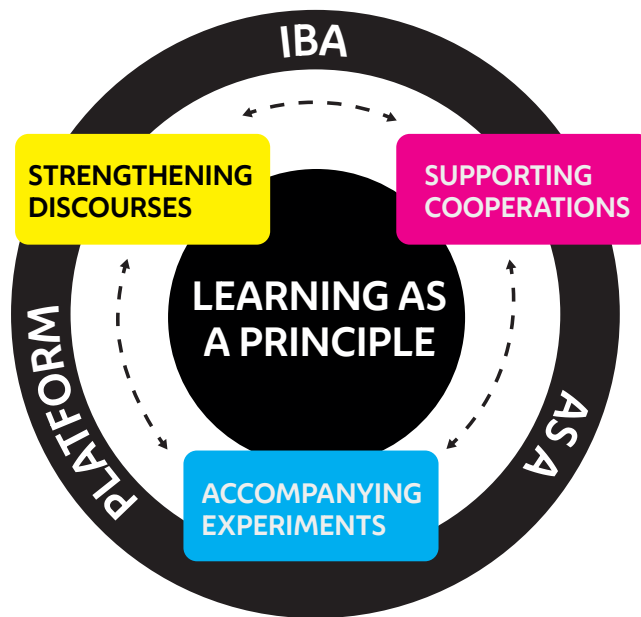
The IBA_Vienna started in 2016 with named challenges and controversies (>2.). The expectations of the professional public, but also within the city of Vienna, were partly very contradictory, and partly very high – after all, Vienna (!) had proclaimed an IBA (!) on housing (!). The background of the mandates and framework conditions of the IBA_Vienna has thus been sufficiently addressed. This guiding question will now be devoted to the perception and assessment of the concrete work of the IBA_Vienna team from 2016 until shortly before the final presentation in 2022.

The team of around six people initially worked under the leadership of the initiator and pioneer Wolfgang Förster. When he retired in 2018, Kurt Hofstetter, who had been involved in the IBA_Vienna as his deputy since 2016, took over. It can be seen that the small team took on many and varied roles. The interviewees each only experienced and observed excerpts of this, which is why the assessment of the statements must always take into account their specific perspective. One statement, however, is unanimous and so abundantly clear that it must stand at the beginning: The professional achievements and personal qualities of the IBA team are acknowledged as outstanding! The commitment, the empathy, the intuition for contents, the mediation competence and the heart and soul are described as essential for the success of the IBA_Vienna.

At the beginning of the work of the office in 2016, however, apparent start-up difficulties are named. At the same time, the small team was immediately in the spotlight of the Viennese and German-speaking professional public. However, the topic was little prepared, especially since the memorandum first had to be drawn up within a year in a broader process. The newly convened advisory board was actively involved in this process. At the same time, it was necessary to involve and activate the actors of the Viennese housing cosmos through initial events. In addition, there were reservations and ambiguities within the various offices of the City of Vienna (>2.), which took time and many discussions to resolve. In this period of closer preparation, for some external people with high expectations on a beginning IBA, apparently little happened.

In addition, there were external developments in the further course of the project, which posed massive challenges in view of the short duration of six years. The pandemic hampered communication activities in the last three IBA years. But content-related processes were also restricted, because the focus of the public sector was strongly challenged with crisis management. In addition, some development prospects were unclear for some time. Finally, construction prices rose sharply, which necessitated savings in many projects and also led to delays in implementation. Neighborhoods such as Berresgasse and An der Schanze, in which the IBA_Vienna team invested a great deal of energy, were delayed for procedural reasons, which is why project progress in the IBA period was less than desired.

The IBA_Vienna remained anchored in the Housing Department even after the move of the City Councilor for Housing and IBA President Michael Ludwig to the Office of Mayor in 2018. In view of the content-related and operational overlaps with other professional and institutional areas, many of the interviewees would have wished, however, that this change could have been used to anchor the IBA_Vienna more strongly across departments.



Approaches

In the concrete work, **three linked approaches** to action emerge, which are differentiated as follows with regard to their activities and contributions. The assessment and descriptions from the interviews follow in each case.

Strengthening discourses was the foremost task of the IBA_Vienna, to which the most resources and possibilities were available. It fulfilled this very strongly and visibly in a professional discourse space. In addition to the exhibition, discussion and reflection of the diversity of local projects, it was also possible to position international experiences and thematic impulses. The events, discussions, exhibitions, web contributions and publications have been very positively highlighted – not only, but especially those in cooperation with the Architekturzentrum Wien (AZW). The response to these activities, which created a unifying framework in terms of content, is pronounced and appreciative. Since its launch, the IBA_Vienna has made a great deal visible, strengthened worthwhile and pioneering aspects and thus contributed to a climate of improvement and cooperation.

It is interesting to note how effective this approach to action is judged to be in terms of supporting innovation processes. For many interviewees, the IBA_Vienna has changed perceptions and perspectives and thus accelerated learning curves and transformation processes, for example in relation to the neighborhood scale or to new energy and mobility concepts. The memorandum and the first activities opened up a content-related space that was then occupied by and with exciting projects and many interested people. In this way, IBA_Vienna has launched, promoted, discussed and disseminated promising approaches. More than producing new solutions, it has thus contributed to their recognition, visibility and dissemination. Some interviewees stress that innovation consists precisely of such a transfer of positively experienced matters into everyday practice.

As a curator, IBA_Vienna has thus inspired mutual learning and motivated ambitious developments by spreading a progressive spirit. It is seen as a major achievement that the discourse was not only strengthened, but also made connectable to various areas of expertise, fields of action and responsibilities. The IBA_Vienna has been very successful in setting themes through many events and exhibitions, disseminating good solutions and reinforcing positive developments such as the turn to the neighborhood. The high level of attention paid to the IBA_Vienna by experts was essential for this. The IBA_Vienna was also able to respond well to the updating of the thematic situation, such as the ongoing increase in the importance of climate issues or the linking of living and working during the pandemic. Some voices, however, would have liked to see even more international contributions as well as more critical positions.

The IBA_Vienna has thus contributed to innovations and transformations in the housing system from a soft role. It is often mentioned that results could be carried from one application to the next (with perhaps other actors) in the sense of a fast learning curve. In this way, IBA_Vienna played an accompanying yet at the same time a productive in terms of content role in the ongoing optimization and evolution of the system. Last but not least, it is often mentioned that the inner image changed and deepened considerably during the IBA years.

The IBA_Vienna had only been able to award most of the IBA projects, but hardly to influence them. The IBA label is perceived as motivating and confirming, but weak in terms of its radiation and assertiveness. The housing associations occasionally describe the label as useful in terms of persuasion within their own institutions regarding new solutions and as positive for external presentation. It has strengthened the ideas and made them more communicable, thus contributing to quality assurance. However, the influence of the label lies more in making the projects visible in the sense of motivation and mutual learning than in a qualification process, as envisaged in the "Memorandum on the Future of the IBA."

The public discussion of the IBA_Vienna is perceived as limited by the pandemic. However, positive accents are recognized in the cooperation with schools. A broad effect is not perceived, whereby an IBA is not seen as the right instrument for this. A stronger overall involvement of politics is mentioned as desirable.

Supporting cooperations in the sense of networking and collaboration both within the administration, intersectionally, in Vienna and internationally has, in the view of the IBA team, developed into the most important approach to action, to which a great deal of attention has been devoted. This went hand in hand with the discourse as well as with the concrete project work, and it was successful in many projects and processes and has thus become visible for actors in the Viennese housing system.

IBA_Vienna was active and valued as a moderator and networker, but also as an amorphous expert. It brought its own competences to bear on the respective constellation and task. In the project cooperations, the IBA team always asked what was needed to fill these roles in the best possible way. This was done from a non-hierarchical, partnership-based attitude, which is seen as promising. Adaptability is seen as a great strength of the IBA team and a quality of the instrument in its Viennese form. However, this would not have

been possible without the extremely high level of commitment of the individuals, not only on the part of the IBA_Vienna itself.

Cooperation took place in workshops and in concrete projects such as the Per-Albin-Hansson-Siedlung, but less visible networking also took place. The role of the IBA_Vienna, for example in the exchange of content among housing associations, was described as very positive. The wohnfonds_wien had also been actively involved in the discourses on the further development of the instruments – as expressed, for example, in the new instrument of the neighborhood-related quality advisory board or in changed procedures for neighborhood development. The IBA_Vienna was able to support these efforts from a neutral role – because it is not an allocating body.

The IBA_Vienna was also seen as a “gateway to the city of Vienna” for committed and interested parties. Various offices in the administration in particular emphasize the added value of networking with the outside world via a central contact. The integration of IBA_Vienna into the administration was helpful for this. Also other active actors such as housing associations regard this interface function as valuable. In this way, “new actors” from civil society increasingly gained access to discourses, processes and projects. The cooperations also included universities, the Architekturzentrum Wien, schools and kindergartens as well as international city partnerships, in which mutually valuable content could be shared.

An annual international summer school with the Vienna University of Technology and the University of Vienna, as well as the city network with Barcelona, Berlin, Dublin, Cologne, Los Angeles, Munich, Stuttgart and Vancouver, enabled international perspectives to be integrated into the Viennese discourse. Academia and practice, as well as established and new players, found the IBA_Vienna to be a useful platform as well as a source of support. For even if this approach was less well funded than “Strengthening discourses,” the IBA_Vienna was able to finance valuable contributions even with small sums. The IBA team used its scope creatively. It thus activated the potential of many motivated people and institutions.

In the perception of the interviewees, much has been achieved in the direction of increased cooperation, even if more would have been possible and good. At the end of the day, therefore, the message is to maintain and expand the networks established and to further strengthen the connections between the actors.

Accompanying experiments in the sense of concrete project work and project support was only envisaged as a subordinate approach in the IBA_Vienna strategy (>2.), but represents – in a modification – the core of the classic IBA understanding (>1.). This approach to action proved to be increasingly important during the term, in the discourses and cooperation discussions. Activities in this regard were perceived rarely, but when very positively. In the eyes of many interviewees, however, they do not correspond to the usual claim of an IBA in terms of the extent and strength of the influence on processes and content.

This is because the IBA label was not associated with any opportunities for control, influence or support that could generate additional energy among project managers. For example, the housing associations did not name the label as an incentive, but only winning the

developers' competition for the plot. The IBA_Vienna's leverage for the further development and improvement of established practices and ongoing processes thus lay, for example, in influencing the tender criteria and planning processes, which succeeded in cooperation with the responsible actors such as wohnfonds_wien or Wien 3420 AG. In the specific cases in which the IBA team itself became involved in ongoing processes, this was described as essential and valuable. Within the short term, however, there were only a few windows of opportunity and favorable constellations for such working situations.

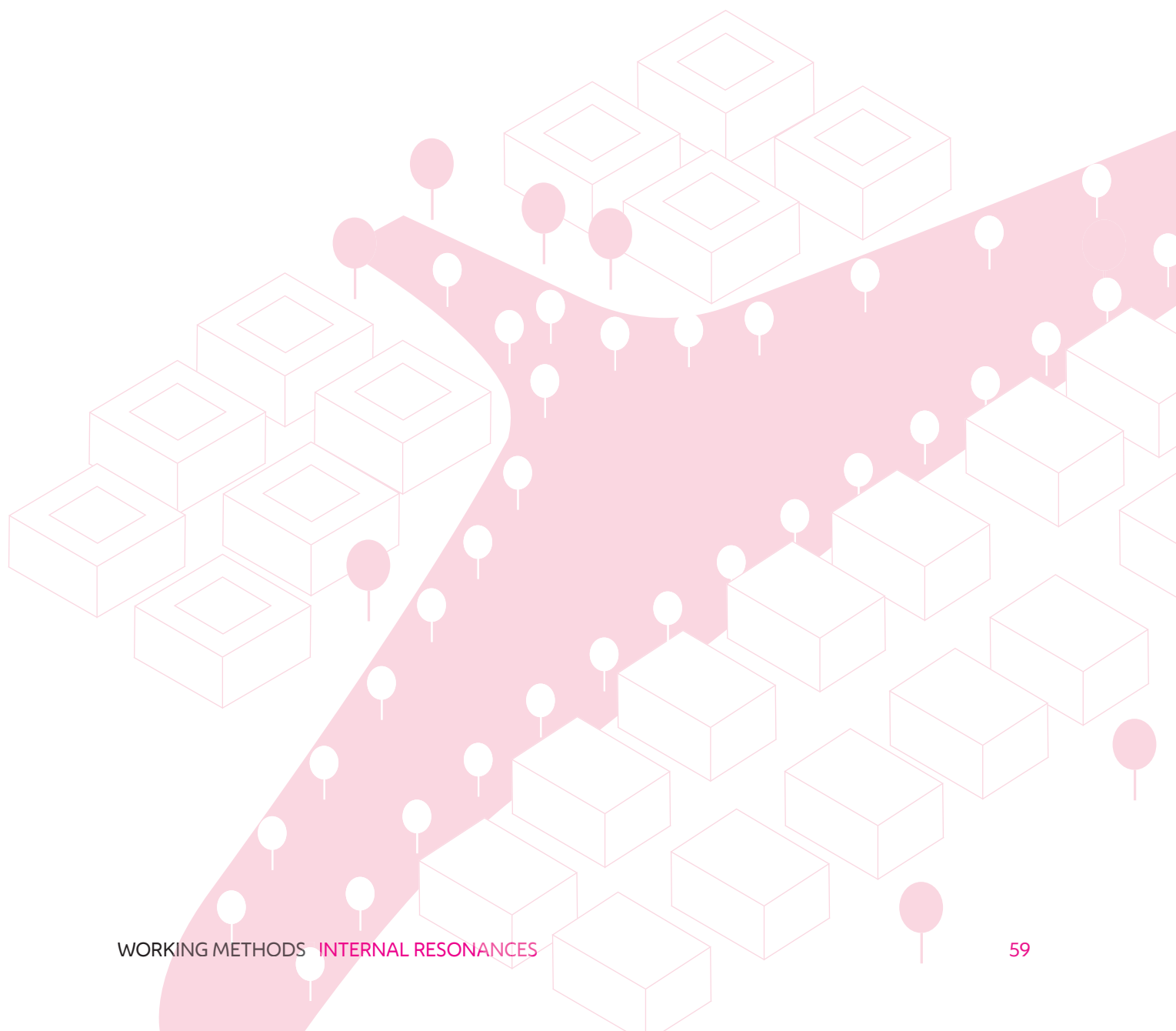
Positive examples of the IBA_Vienna's project work are the neighborhoods Am Seebogen as the third construction phase of Seestadt Aspern, the new building neighborhoods Berresgasse, An der Schanze, and in later process phases also Biotope City. Specific contents as well as especially working methods and process qualities could be strengthened in a targeted manner. In the case of Am Seebogen, for example, this was the integration of the neighborhood approach into the tender documents for the building plots. But the IBA_Vienna team was also a persistent and competent partner in the subsequently necessary networking of housing associations, planners and actors, as well as in quality assurance from planning to implementation. This increased the quality of planning and implementation. The development of small but effective instruments, such as the often-named "neighborhood plan" in Berresgasse, also contributed to the further development of methods and learning from concrete projects. It was precisely these "mini-experiments," the often small shifts, innovations or concentrations that weren't foreseen in the normal process, that were able to trigger positive changes, especially in the perception of the architects, planners and housing associations involved.

The role of the advisory board in the project work is hardly perceived. After the phase of drawing up the memorandum, the IBA team tended to work independently. The activities of the advisory board thus concentrated more on the level of discourse and decreased during the term.

Many interviewees only had direct contact with the IBA_Vienna in the projects or public developers' competitions. It was often necessary to explain what an IBA is and what the aims and tasks of the IBA_Vienna are. Numerous activities and much commitment thus only occurred with latency because the preparatory process had not concretized the direction of the desired change and starting points and the actors were partly not activated (>2.).

The facilitation of small studies or contributions was often experienced as valuable and motivating. In addition, IBA_Vienna has discovered the usually neglected field of evaluations in the sense of critical reflection on developments and projects. This was named as essential, but usually falls by the wayside in regular operations. The IBA_Vienna was thus able to fill some gaps actively. In doing so, it made contributions to the quality of planning and implementation, i.e. to the evolution of approaches in the production and reproduction of social housing.

An insight for the future is that such spaces for further development and targeted experiments in the sense of translating abstract discourse into concrete practice should be established even more strongly, broadly and purposefully. Particularly on the part of the administration, the translation work performed by the IBA team is recognized as a helpful competence and role that goes beyond the core processes. The IBA_Vienna has shown how improvements can be tested and established through persistence plus sensitivity.



5. How are the contents and projects of the IBA_Vienna assessed?

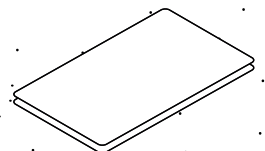
Key messages

One clear message from the interviews is that no clear boundary line can – and should – be drawn around IBA_Vienna's diverse and broad portfolio of content and projects. There is a lot going on in Vienna's housing sector, to which numerous actors from different fields contribute. The larger themes and longer lines of development have become increasingly visible in recent years. Because integrated into these, the IBA_Vienna has supported a learning process via its three approaches to action (>4.), in which various forms of knowledge have been generated, consolidated and disseminated:

With regard to need knowledge, for example, increasingly difficult framework conditions for subsidized housing, challenges with regard to affordability, inclusion, upgrading of existing buildings, climate adaptation and ecological sustainability, as well as an endangered social consensus on settlement development, urban renewal and housing construction are perceived and understood more precisely than before. With regard to action knowledge, the strengths of the system are more widely acknowledged, adjustments already made to the instruments are named and others are suggested. Integrated approaches from the neighborhood to the city as a whole, instruments of quality assurance, the necessary greening and the handling of the existing stock are intensely discussed. With regard to target knowledge, quality awareness is changing on structural and spatial, functional, energetic, ecological and social levels. The advantages of Vienna's initial situation are becoming increasingly clear, as are new potentials.

With regard to the IBA projects, the interviewees express great curiosity shortly before the final presentation. However, they point out that so far they have only seen excerpts and interim results. The recognizable focus on new buildings and developments can be explained by the more mature instruments and the easier presentability, but many would have been more interested in the more difficult task of developing existing buildings and neighborhoods. The extent to which the portfolio meets the standards of an IBA in terms of architecture and concept is the subject of intense debate. However, many innovations at the process and cooperation level are named, which were initiated and/or accompanied by the IBA_Vienna and have already become established. In addition, many essential contents and projects are seen as inseparably connected with the thematic setting (>3.), although they are not part of the exhibition. The neighborhood approach is central – although it cannot be traced back to the IBA_Vienna, which has but purposefully taken up developments and discussions in this regard and strengthened them through all three approaches (>4.). Despite being firmly anchored in planning and implementation, however, many questions about new roles, processes, methods and solutions remain open.

All in all, this very much identifies further learning areas and approaches for the coming years.



The lighthouses are missing.

The focus is on new constructions. The existing stock would have been more interesting.

Many interesting projects and developments are unfortunately not part of the IBA_Vienna.

The essential innovations lie invisible on the process level.

The Seestadt is exceptional in many ways. And in Am Seebogen we have gone one big step further with the IBA_Vienna.

The world turns faster than we can plan. So we are constantly constructing old projects.

Internationally, no differentiation is made whether IBA or not. Most important is Vienna.

We need to think further about the contents, instruments, processes and projects. Financial market, Corona, climate, construction prices, energy ... Our assumptions are no longer valid.

Anchoring the idea of the neighborhood is THE contribution of this IBA.

The projects are interesting. The Vienessea system is more interesting.

The projects do not provide any answers pointing to the future in the sense of an IBA – but they do show the actual spirit. That is an important achievement!

It is good that New Social Housing has been broadly interpreted.

Not everything about the IBA projects is state of the art. You can see the excellent standard, but also the limits of implementation very clearly.

We live in the late baroque with more more more qualities. May it also be less sometimes?

This guiding question does not pursue an overall view or summary of the contents and projects of the IBA_Vienna, which is the task of the final presentation from June to November 2022. The focus is on the perceptions and interpretations of the actors involved in relation to the topics dealt with and the impulses of the IBA_Vienna itself as well as the projects it exhibited.

All interviewees are united in their **curiosity about the results**. Again and again, reference is made to the successful interim presentation in 2020 and to the many discourse formats such as the IBA Talks, through which positive expectations have developed. Reference was also made to the memorandum (>3.), which had opened up a broad field of discourse in the context of the “New Social Housing.” Through the projects and above all through the diverse discursive formats, this field was continuously concretized and reflected on in relation to practical action.

At the outset, the interviewees understandably emphasize that they can only survey part of the many projects and contents and are not always aware of the current status. The small IBA_Vienna team was involved in many projects, but with varying degrees of intensity and at different stages of development. Sometimes in the early phases of programming the development processes, sometimes only in a later phase, when the results of developers' competitions, for example, were already present and it was “only” a matter of providing support in the implementation processes. Many projects were not directly influenced but only exhibited by the IBA_Vienna. Depending on the perspective and the projects or formats experienced, the influence of the IBA_Vienna is assessed highly differently. Moreover, the demarcation between those activities and contents that can be directly attributed to the IBA_Vienna and those that are the responsibility of other actors and institutions in the wider “**housing cosmos**” is often unclear. This alone makes it clear that the IBA_Vienna cannot be seen in isolation.

It is often stated that almost all of the IBA_Vienna projects would have come into being even without its context. Only in selected projects – for example with regard to the neighborhood approach – are design or conceptual impulses perceived. However, most of the interviewees agree on the assessment that the IBA_Vienna has above all accompanied, supported and disseminated many innovations on a procedural, cooperative and methodological level. This fits in with the perception that technical innovations are advancing rapidly in these times and are overtaking the planning and realization processes. However, in the eyes of the interviewees, permanent cooperation, networked discussion and ongoing evaluation in the system are required to implement these innovations in a rapid cycle, to check their long-term usefulness and to take them into account in the framework conditions and processes. IBA_Vienna had contributed to this **reflection and learning** on concrete projects in feedback with the established system on various levels – even if many of the interviewees wished that more time and a specific budget for experimental implementations and additional qualities had been available.

What distinguishes the IBA_Vienna is that it has opened up a **partnership-based and future-oriented learning space** integrated into the broadly defined “housing cosmos” – according to the interviewees. This concerned the diverse discursive formats, the publications and above all about the concrete projects that were included in the IBA_Vienna. Instead of the giant leaps, it is primarily the small changes that are perceived positively on the basis

of the projects – especially at the neighborhood level. The IBA_Vienna provided valuable impulses for further thinking in this case. This also underlines and reinforces the IBA principle of “exhibiting” (>4.) not only in the sense of a final “exhibition of achievements,” but always also as a permanent space for trendsetting discourses.

With regard to the overall view of topics that were also dealt with in the publications, exhibitions and events, it thus becomes apparent that **no clear boundary** can or should be drawn around the **diverse and broad portfolio** of contents and projects of the IBA_Vienna. The IBA_Vienna was in terms of its layout and working methods always connected to the Viennese housing system as a whole – even though different parts of this system were involved to varying degrees. There is a lot of movement in this cosmos, with and without, within and alongside the IBA_Vienna – the dividing line is perceived as irrelevant. What is essential in the sense of the exhibition is a presentation of current solutions and the critical illumination of the status quo, but above all the detection of further development opportunities. It is therefore often desired that the IBA_Vienna should address developments such as the land use category “subsidized housing,” the newly created Quality Advisory Council and other good projects and initiatives – even if they do not bear its label.

The differences in the **internal and external** perception and evaluation of the contents and projects are frequently mentioned. In both dimensions the IBA_Vienna had a different impact, and its contents were also perceived differently. While the **internal view** addresses indisputable successes next to missed opportunities, larger questions and higher demands in the context of the “New Social Housing,” the **external view** noted many interesting and groundbreaking things. Many of the IBA_Vienna projects – and the Viennese system of social housing in itself – are often considered to be of interest to an international audience. However, according to many interviewees, the portfolio only meets the requirements of an IBA as a thematic experimental space in the sense of testing paradigmatically new solutions (>1.) in a few places.

With regard to **concrete projects**, the new neighborhoods Am Seebogen, Berresgasse, An der Schanze and Biotope City as well as the neighborhood houses Sonnwendviertel and the existing Per-Albin-Hansson-Siedlung are highlighted most frequently. Here the IBA_Vienna was able to build on established instruments and processes, which were further developed and sharpened – especially with regard to the neighborhood approach. In any case, according to the interviewees, it was comparatively easier to develop and present new projects than existing ones. The IBA_Vienna is therefore seen as having a strong **focus on new constructions and developments**, whereas the projects in the renovation and renewal are relegated to the background despite the high level of interest in them.

The activities in the **Per-Albin-Hansson-Siedlung** are an exception. At the level of small-scale but effective interventions, the IBA_Vienna succeeded in establishing new models of cooperation between institutional sponsors, other partners and residents. This is seen as a necessary step towards a comprehensive renewal and development of the settlement. However, many questions remain unanswered with regard to the larger tasks of renewal (with a view to the development of open spaces, to strategies and concepts of climate adaptation, to the upcoming energy and mobility transition). Here, the IBA_Vienna seems to have only partially fulfilled the claims expressed in the memorandum. At the same time, it is emphasized that the long-term task of renovating and renewing existing buildings is

one of the central challenges of our time – in the full knowledge that this is incomparably more complex and difficult than that of new construction.

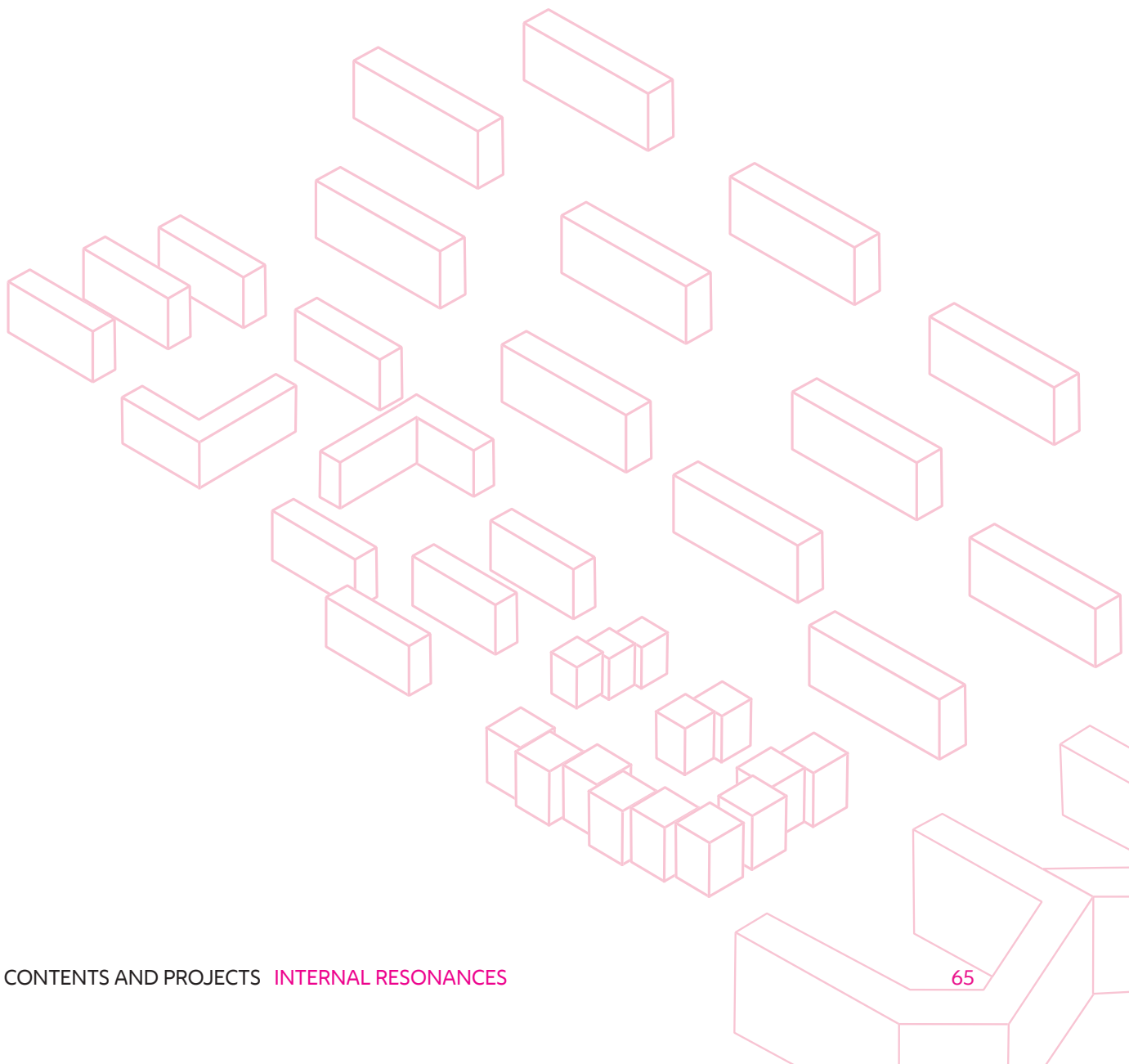
In the **An der Schanze** and **Berresgasse** neighborhoods, many interviewees emphasized the cooperation with `wohnfonds_wien`. In close cooperation with `wohnfonds_wien`, the cooperative aspect of neighborhood development was significantly strengthened. In Berresgasse, for example, a cooperative procedure was initiated prior to the developers' competition, which enabled the conditions for the award to be sharpened in the sense of neighborhood-related concerns. The comprehensive and neighborhood-related ground floor plan is repeatedly emphasized here, and has proved to be an important platform for cross-building site cooperation with regard to the activation of ground floor locations and neighborhood-related open space development. The framework and aspirations of the IBA_Vienna and not least the cooperation between the IBA team, urban planning and `wohnfonds_wien` are evaluated here as important success factors that have qualified and accelerated this process from the building site to the neighborhood level.

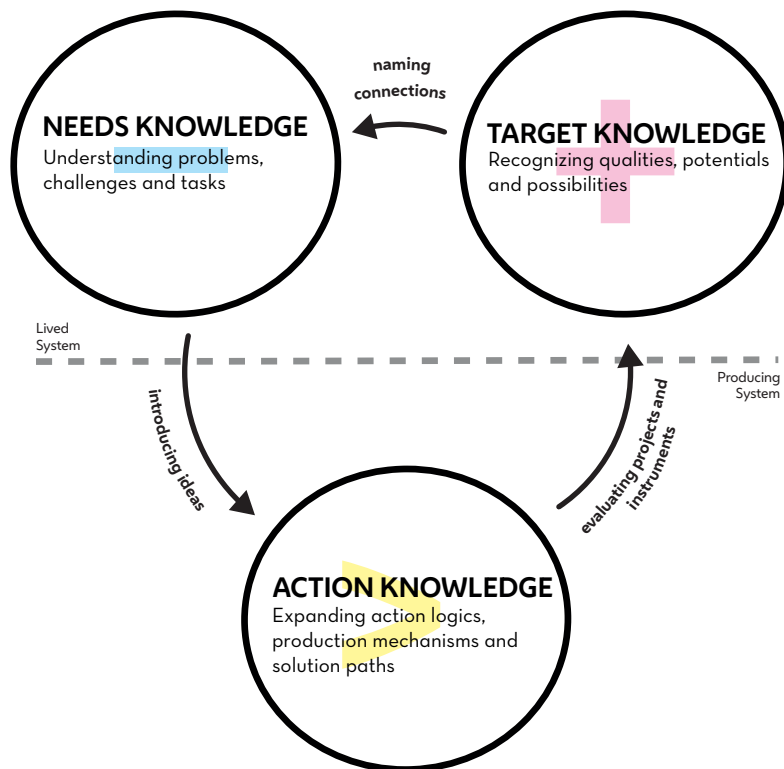
The **neighborhood houses** in the Sonnwendviertel are viewed very positively, although the influence of the IBA_Vienna on these projects is assessed as very low – which is mainly due to the far advanced project status that these projects already had at the start of the IBA_Vienna. Including these projects in the exhibition is seen as an important signal to bring other sponsorship and development models in social housing to the fore. The small-scale mix of uses and the activation of the ground-floor zones with favorable rental conditions, which is seen as highly relevant and exemplary, is emphasized. Critically, however, it is also pointed out that such neighborhood-related aspects cannot be easily transferred to other locations without fundamentally expanding the existing range of instruments – starting with urban development concepts, via developers' or concept competitions and the associated allocation of plots, right through to quality assurance. The necessity of **further development of the range of instruments** in neighborhood development that becomes clear here is described by many interviewees as an important concern and a task for the future. Further observation of the Sonnwendviertel was also suggested, especially with regard to the development of ground floor locations, communal areas and coexistence in the houses. In this sense, the neighborhood houses in the Sonnwendviertel are also seen as a "laboratory" for "New Social Housing" – beyond the duration of the IBA_Vienna.

Perhaps the most successful cooperation between different actors is the IBA neighborhood **Am Seebogen**, the third construction phase of Seestadt Aspern. Building on the comprehensive preliminary conceptual work, but also the extraordinarily intensive process and project management on part of Wien 3420 AG, pioneering and standard-setting steps are seen here. This concerns the integration of non-residential uses and community spaces at the neighborhood level, high demands on open space design and the establishment of the sponge city principle, or, for example, the planning and implementation across building sites with the associated administrative and ownership constructs. In many aspects the IBA neighborhood Am Seebogen takes the already very ambitious aspirations in the development of the Seestadt further and opens up new terrain. The IBA_Vienna as an experimental format has had a strong effect on the motivation of the housing associations and has helped to overcome an original skepticism towards broader claims of a more comprehensive neighborhood development. In concrete terms, the IBA_Vienna was then involved both in the tendering and allocation of building plots as well as the networking

and cooperation in the subsequent detailed planning and implementation, taking on key tasks with a high degree of perseverance and precision. The role of the IBA_Vienna is therefore seen here both as a motivator, critical spirit and also as a “caretaker”, through whom it has been possible to develop and secure the final project qualities throughout the various planning phases.

The **Biotope City** approach, namely to actively combine a high building density with flora and fauna and thus create an appealing living space not only for people, is attractive to many respondents. In Vienna, this has now been applied to an entire neighborhood for the first time. The concept can be traced back to Helga Fassbinder, who was able to win over other partners as well as planners and housing associations in addition to the architect Harry Glück. The IBA_Vienna was only involved in the project development at a late stage, but in the perception of those involved it was able to support the cooperation of the housing associations that had already begun and to contribute to the further mediation of the project. Thus, although it had only little influence on the project on the surface, it was able to do important work in the background in terms of networking, communication and quality assurance. The media coverage of this project is seen as very extensive.





Forms of Knowledge

The **overarching interpretation** of the interviews comes to the conclusion that the IBA_Vienna as a platform with three approaches to action (>4.) has supported different forms of knowledge gain (see chapter “Methodology”). **Need knowledge, action knowledge and target knowledge** are increasingly better and more broadly understood in an iterative process. Thus, for example, actions are also continuously adapted in dependence on needs and targets and within the framework of possibilities – and conversely, the perception of needs and possible targets changes in dependence on practical possibilities. The three categories thus mutually and constantly perpetuate each other through the introduction of ideas into discourses and projects, the evaluation of projects and instruments, and the detection of connections in the system. All knowledge is not only produced – for example, through research and new concepts – but also consolidated in policy and practice and disseminated, for example, through events or publications.

Need knowledge (-) means understanding the problems, challenges and tasks increasingly more deeply and acknowledging them more broadly. This concerns the requirements of different target groups as well as the differentiated consideration of the existing situation in view of changing quality expectations and the ongoing need for maintenance and renewal. The category is related to both the present and the future, in that both current weaknesses and future challenges, trends and risks are assessed. For example, it identifies the need for action on global issues such as climate change, resource scarcity, migration and commercialization, and deepens understanding of their impact on the local situation. And finally, the system boundaries are also discussed, for example by naming target groups such as the homeless or higher-level goals such as climate protection, which have not played a direct role in the previous course of action.

Thus, there is also a negotiation about what and to what extent is to be understood as tasks of the system.

A number of increasingly difficult **framework conditions** for subsidized housing are discussed here, such as the increasing commercialization of land and housing since the financial crisis of 2008, dwindling land availability and rising construction prices. This is expressed, among other things, in an increase in privately financed projects and intensifies debates about affordability and inclusion. The instruments are under pressure here. The land use category “subsidized housing” is described as internationally groundbreaking in terms of land policy. It combines the urban development instruments with the housing instruments, in which the land prices are capped at the maximum amount of the subsidy model. The lease-purchase model, on the other hand, is seen as a counter-tendency to social housing, because it leads to privatization and thus weakens the continuity of housing policy and the development of the stock.

The limits of **affordability** are seen as having been reached for many groups. Furthermore, the term is understood more and more broadly. The life cycle costs and the “second lease” in the sense of extended costs for mobility, energy, care work, and further usage options for the tenants are seen as part of it. Linked to this is the question of what quality of life, neighborhood support structures, microclimate and amenities tenants receive in return. Affordability is thus becoming increasingly comprehensive.

Demands for the inclusion of marginalized groups such as refugees, the homeless and low-income earners in Vienna and Europe are being articulated more loudly. Local and European initiatives such as Housing for All and Housing First could have gained more attention and visibility during the IBA period. Housing for All as a European initiative starts from Vienna – and shows gaps internationally, but also locally: for refugees, homeless people, those with low income and social cohesion. These issues will remain and grow larger.

The connection between the topics of **affordability and climate protection** – for example, that an affordable apartment should function without air conditioning – is also of interest to some people, who would like to see further work on this issue. After Fridays for Future has given more attention to the ecological concerns and tasks of climate protection, climate adaptation and the circular economy in the discourses and goals, this has not yet been sufficiently “radically” incorporated in the implementation. This is seen as a challenge for affordability and quality of life.

Furthermore, a declining **social consensus** also on settlement development could become a potential danger for further housing construction, settlement development and urban renewal. Developments in both new and existing buildings could increasingly come to a standstill because no agreement can be reached and positions harden. However, social housing cannot be taken for granted and needs political and social backing, but also formats for democratic negotiation and overcoming opposing positions.

Action knowledge (>) means to better understand and continuously expand the logics of action, production mechanisms and solution paths. In the process, an awareness of the strengths in the sense of good existing instruments is developed, but also their mode of

action is critically scrutinized. Processes, roles, division of tasks, cooperations and methods are iteratively adapted in this process. For example, the role of property managers is changing, and they are taking on more aspects of social work and the management of shared spaces, mobility and mixed use – often in cooperation with the residents. The new land use category “subsidized housing” is mentioned as a pioneering adaptation in the instruments that responds to the above-mentioned challenges.

New answers are constantly being found for comprehensive **greening and decarbonization**, but questions are also being generated. What does the Biotope City concept mean for the whole of Vienna, for example? Progress is constantly being made in green and blue infrastructures, biodiversity and microclimate, climate adaptation and energy production, heating and cooling, building services and architecture, open spaces and greenery. And the task of developing existing buildings is also increasingly becoming the focus of attention for ecological, social, technical and spatial reasons.

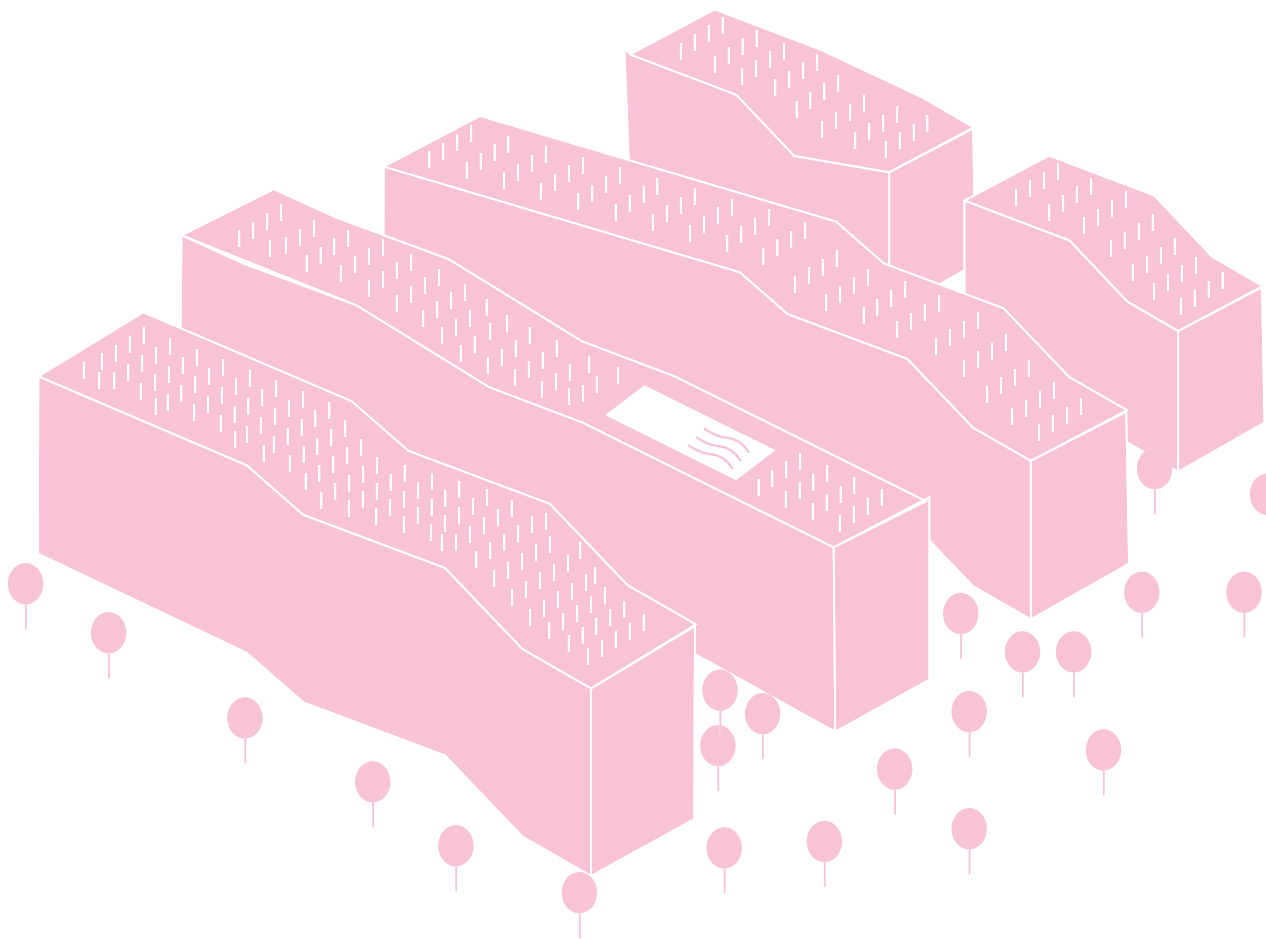
There is much discussion about the development and safeguarding of **qualities**. For example, the spiral of quality that has arisen due to strong competition among housing associations for land triggers questions about the expediency and future viability of projects as well as quality requirements. From the point of view of rising construction prices, dwindling material availability, but also increasing sustainability requirements, the prioritizations must be questioned because the existing models are reaching their limits. In addition, increased quality assurance is necessary because the high planned qualities must also be maintained during implementation. This also applies to the freely financed sector, which is growing in both absolute and relative terms and in which no comparable instruments of superordinate quality assurance are applied. Here, the newly established quality advisory board and the stronger role of the municipal directorate are seen as good ways forward. The IBA_Vienna has taken on quality assurance in the implementation and evaluation of projects on a small scale, but successfully.

The need for **integrated approaches** from the neighborhood to the city as a whole is emphasized with regard to many topics: circular economy and life cycle considerations, ecology and energy, ground floor zones and mixed use, work and production, education and culture, communal spaces and living together, mobility and public space, existing development, new forms and typologies of housing, new support models, climate adaptation and climate protection, ... There is a lot to do! It is a common concern to develop the city in an integrated way and not just individual topics. This calls for a stronger integration of topics and responsibilities in the project work.

The **neighborhood level of action** gained importance during the IBA years in various phases of development, but also in usage. It can be seen in many projects and processes and is evaluated very positively – but this is seen as an ongoing process. Neighborhoods and cross-building site concepts as a guiding theme of the memorandum have become the brand essence of the IBA_Vienna. Here it had skillfully used ongoing developments such as Neu Leopoldau, Berresgasse and Am Seebogen, so that the idea of neighborhoods had become established. This involved more effort at the beginning, but it eventually paid off. Establishing and supporting the necessary cooperation and processes is an essential task that IBA_Vienna has taken on. Sometimes this had previously been done by committed housing associations and planners for individual topics, but it had not yet been institution-

alized to a greater extent. In the meantime, thinking and acting in the neighborhood has become common sense, from which there is no turning back. However, questions such as adjustments to the framework conditions are still open. For example, the limited-profit law only allows housing associations to charge costs related to the building site.

Target knowledge (+) means to better recognize the qualities, potentials and possibilities. This category is also related to the present and the future. For example, the current strengths of the housing system have been better communicated and are more highly valued and supported. The fact that about 60% of Viennese people live in municipal or subsidized housing is not a matter of course. However, possible new qualities and potentials are also mentioned, for example the abolition of homelessness, better integration of marginalized groups or the use of the large housing stock as a lever for comprehensive decarbonization and thus sustainability transformation. The fact that housing can make many social contributions that go beyond the basic provision of a “roof over one’s head” is expressed, for example, in a changed quality awareness of the role of the neighborhood or in changed ideas of the city and living together.



6. What was the IBA_Vienna able to contribute?

Key messages

In the eyes of the interviewees, the IBA_Vienna was a valuable process, but it did not fulfil the expectations of the IBA format (>1.). This would have been associated with a more experimental approach, a more independent way of working and the identification of fundamentally new approaches and should have already been laid out in the strategic orientation of IBA_Vienna (>2.). However, the IBA team has very actively fulfilled and lived up to its concrete mandates beyond its possibilities. It has supported valuable learning processes by addressing important developments and good social housing projects (>5.) via three action approaches (>4.). The IBA label was helpful here because it generated internal and international attention and brought with it a useful set of tools. In addition, the team demonstrated a high degree of adaptability by reacting to changing thematic situations and taking on emerging tasks. All in all, a systemic evolution was supported and accompanied – efficiently and surprisingly effectively.

Despite all the justified criticism of the Viennese interpretation of an IBA and its equipment (>2.), the examination of its collective logic is interesting both locally and internationally: the success of the IBA_Vienna is not only measured by the direct influence on its projects and their quality, but above all by the contribution to collective learning and development processes. The internal perspective was changed, deepened and sharpened in Vienna more than the external perspective. In cooperation with the actors in the housing system, the IBA_Vienna was able

– often invisibly – to further develop existing methods, instruments, contents, projects and processes both directly and indirectly. From the point of view of the interviewees, it did not provide all-encompassing and sole contributions, but within the scope of its possibilities it made clear contributions to positively assessed developments. Learning from the IBA_Vienna in the sense of continuation and expansion of its approaches (>4.) in the housing system and on other topics, in Vienna and elsewhere, therefore seems promising and, in view of existing challenges, also necessary.

The IBA_Vienna thus contributed something to the ability to act and adapt, i.e. to the resilience, future viability and innovative strength of the city of Vienna; and at the same time makes the interesting Viennese experiences and solutions accessible to a broad local and international audience. In the end, however, there is the clear statement that the mandate to make contributions to the innovation of the social housing system has been fulfilled, but that this mandate has above all become more precise and larger. For in addition to the appreciative retrospective, the outlook on major challenges and tasks is above all the subject of the interviews. Against this background, the IBA_Vienna is interpreted more as a prelude than an intensive phase of an upcoming transformation process to be shaped.

The IBA_Vienna is an international commitment to high-quality social housing.

The IBA_Vienna has little to do with the historical models. But it was a valuable process.

My expectations of an IBA have not been met.

Many small innovations do not form a revolution, but an evolution.

The criticism from within is probably greater than that from without.

An exhibition was commissioned. It became a learning process.

The IBA was my postgraduate training program. All of us as trainees in exchange.

IBA_Vienna was able to reinforce essential themes. That is valuable, but less than would have been possible.

IBA have always created friction. Not in Vienna.

The maximum was achieved within the scope of possibilities.

The idea was questionable at first, but it has turned out well.

What happened was very positive. More of it is needed now!

The external image is good before and after. The essential contribution lies in the deepening and change of the inner image.

It's a good inventory and internationally presentable. But for me it does not matter.

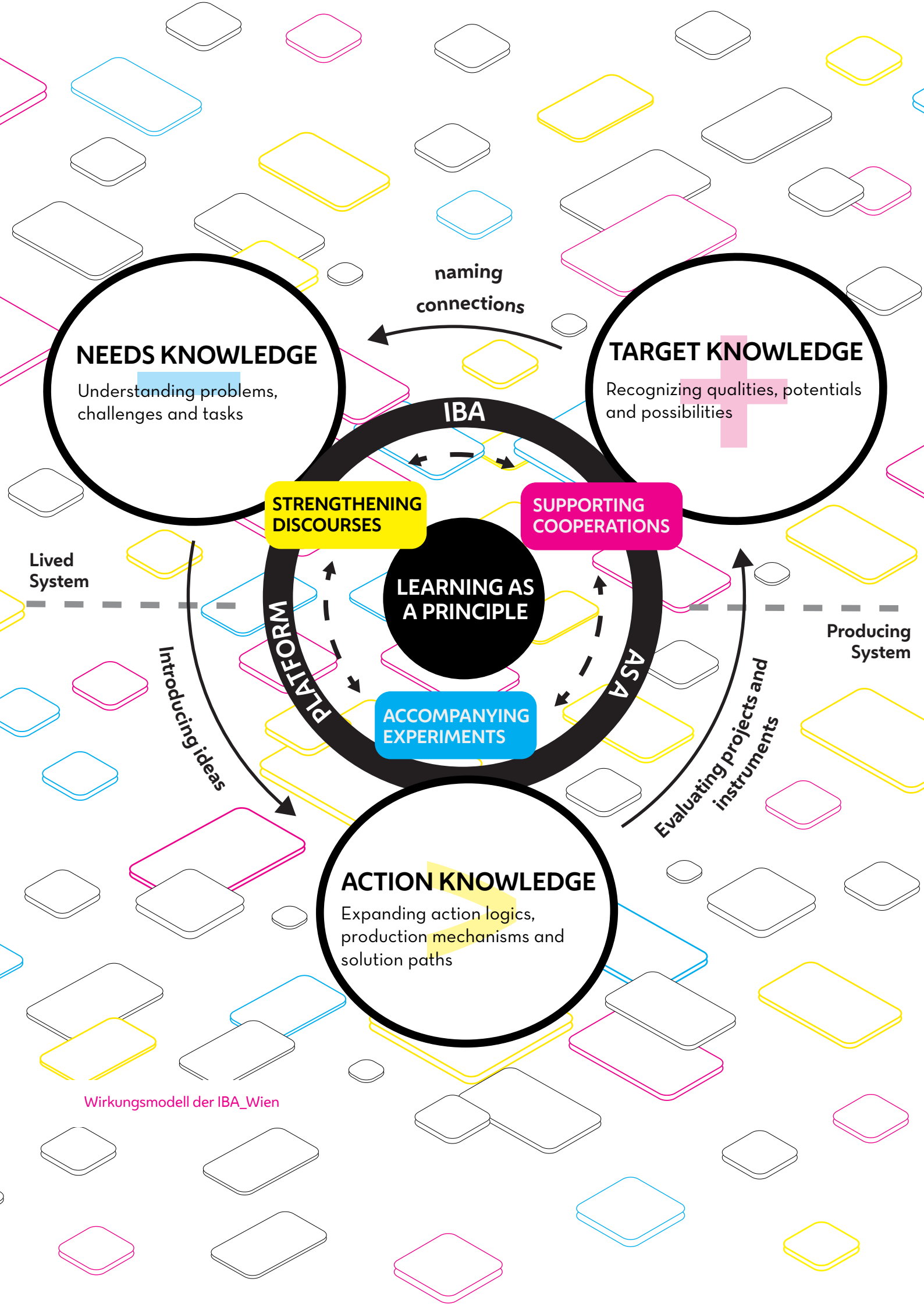
The reflection and interpretation of the IBA_Vienna requires a sensitive presentation that differentiates between the critical and the valuable. For on the one hand, it would be easy to say – rather from the inside: This is no IBA! Hardly an experiment, little friction, no paradigm shift. So don't mind? On the other hand, it would be easy to say – more from the outside: What an IBA! Interesting projects, relevant themes, outstanding housing system. So just get on with it? Both would be quick fixes that fail to recognize the value of the processes that have taken place. This guiding question therefore aims to understand the contributions of the IBA_Vienna as a temporary actor in the Viennese housing system and to valorize and prepare them for learning.

Housing production and management in Vienna take place in a in terms of traditions rich, elaborate, differentiated system – which in turn is embedded in other economic, social, political and ecological systems. The output, in this case housing and neighborhoods, is not produced by individual persons or institutions, but in the **interaction** of diverse actors and institutions of this system over longer periods of time and different phases. Improvements in outputs and outcomes can only be produced through improved connections, processes and patterns. Each next project and undertaking can be seen – in terms of the next best work piece of the system – as an opportunity for an iterative learning process. However, no clear cause-effect relationship can be assigned to such changes in complex systems. What is possible is an review of the IBA_Vienna's contribution to perceived changes and an assessment as well as reflection of its achievements from the perspective of the actors involved. (cf. Lowe 2021; see chapter "Methodology")

Through its three approaches to action (>4.), IBA_Vienna reinforced and supported a **learning process** in which various forms of knowledge were produced, consolidated and disseminated (>5.). The IBA_Vienna was a platform not for all, but for many topics, actors and projects. Thus, in the eyes of the interviewees, it did not make all-encompassing and sole contributions, but within the scope of its possibilities it made clear contributions to positively assessed developments and an evolution of the system. The IBA label was helpful in this respect because it brought the necessary attention both internally and internationally and a useful set of instruments.

The **assessment benchmark** for this IBA should not be solely the comparison with historical models and the expectations on the instrument (>1.), even if a classification in this respect is necessary (see chapter "Reflections on a different IBA"). The memorandum also had the function of opening up a field of discourses rather than defining concrete tasks, the (non-) fulfilment of which can now be measured (>3.). Rather, the question is whether and how the IBA_Vienna fulfilled its mandate to proactively promote social innovations and a sustainability transformation in Viennese housing.

The political initiator Michael Ludwig, then City Councilor for Housing and now Mayor, writes about this in the foreword to the memorandum: *"So if we want to secure Vienna's extraordinarily high qualities in social housing and even expand them further, then new paths must be taken. It is necessary to subject present practice to a profound analysis with regard to its future applicability and viability. The social principle of providing broad sections of the population with access to affordable and quality housing will fully form the foundation on which all future measures will also be built. However, it is important to review policies, methods and procedures with this in mind, as well as to develop innovative solutions for the*



NEEDS KNOWLEDGE

Understanding problems, challenges and tasks

TARGET KNOWLEDGE

Recognizing qualities, potentials and possibilities

LEARNING AS A PRINCIPLE

STRENGTHENING DISCOURSES

SUPPORTING COOPERATIONS

ACCOMPANYING EXPERIMENTS

PLATFORM

ASA

ACTION KNOWLEDGE

Expanding action logics, production mechanisms and solution paths

naming connections

Introducing ideas

Evaluating projects and instruments

Lived System

Producing System

social housing of the future. Our ambition is to develop resilient strategies and models for the coming decades at an early stage.” (IBA_Vienna 2017: 5, English translation)

In the evaluation, the first thing that stands out is that all the suggestions, criticisms and encouragement heard in the interviews are based on the **consensus** that this Viennese system has achieved a great deal and must be valued not least as the political merit of a century. In addition to the international also more local appreciation of it is desired. However, the interviewees identify not only strengths and risks (the official argumentation on the IBA_Vienna) but also weaknesses and opportunities (the supposedly unpleasant topics). From the strong tradition with its wealth of experiences and possibilities for action, high ambitions are derived with regard to future tasks and clear concerns are formulated in the direction of housing policy (see chapter “Impulses for Vienna”). This shows that the IBA_Vienna cannot be understood as a completed process in the sense of the above-mentioned mission – but that this mission continues to exist. On the basis of the interviews, the lines quoted above still seem relevant.

The IBA_Vienna can be read as a courageous project, because a basically successful system was subjected to an open **process of reflection**. Many had already wished for this process to be carried out in greater depth during the preparation of the IBA_Vienna (>2.) – after the IBA years, however, this is all the more possible because the major lines of development became visible (>5.) and a good overview of the current situation was created. The Viennese system, with its strengths but also its weaknesses, has become more visible and tangible for the experts. During the IBA period, expectations were raised that found expression in an intensive expert discourse – from the intensively discussed start to the individual projects and formats to this resonance study. This discussion process must be continued beyond 2022.

All in all, the **discourse** at this IBA was at least as important as the project work. However, this remained mainly within the specialist scene. There was little success in involving the population – but the extent to which this is possible with this instrument is being discussed. In addition, the Covid 19 pandemic was an immense obstacle to communication. However, impulses such as school cooperations or the opening of scientific discourses via the “International Summerschool New Social Housing” are named as good starting points and strong impulses. Greater involvement of politics are also seen as worthwhile in terms of a broader discourse. However, some excursions with leading politicians, for example, have been successful, from which a higher visibility of some topics and projects is expected.

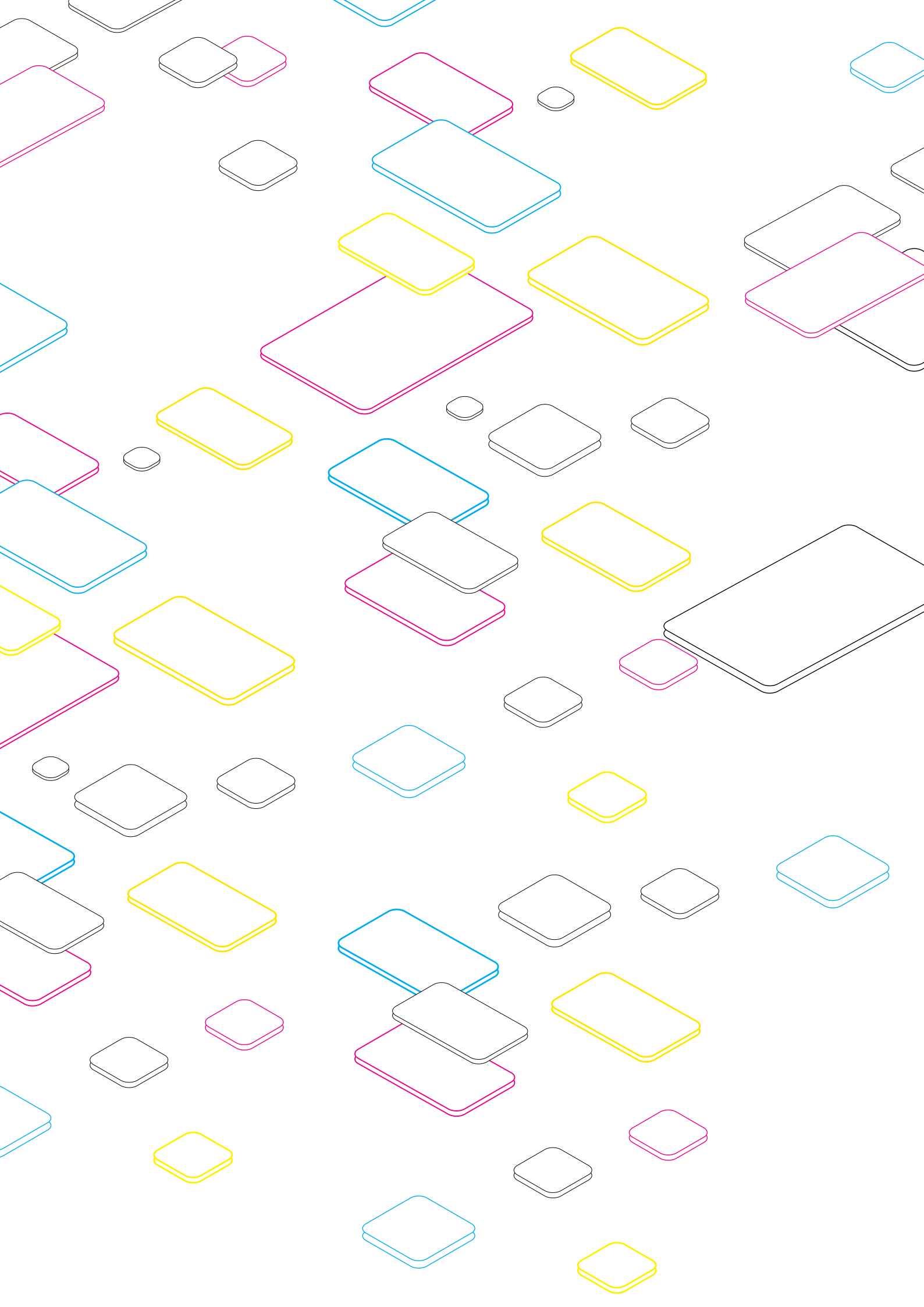
The IBA_Vienna was an **amorphous actor** that stimulated innovations and provided operational support on a situation-specific basis and thus did not correspond so much to the Viennese system of established responsibilities (>4.). To fit into respective constellations in a targeted way and to support on the basis of the task as well as the possibilities and the needs of the stakeholders remained a valuable ability in a dynamic environment. However, being an **intermediary supporter** of a social innovation process was also an important role. The learning mechanisms and patterns of innovation identified did not take place only within the framework of the IBA_Vienna – but it had specifically produced and reinforced them. It made valuable processes and contents visible – and thus prepared opportunities for learning. In this sense, the processes during the term are interpreted as more important for Vienna itself than the interim and final presenta-

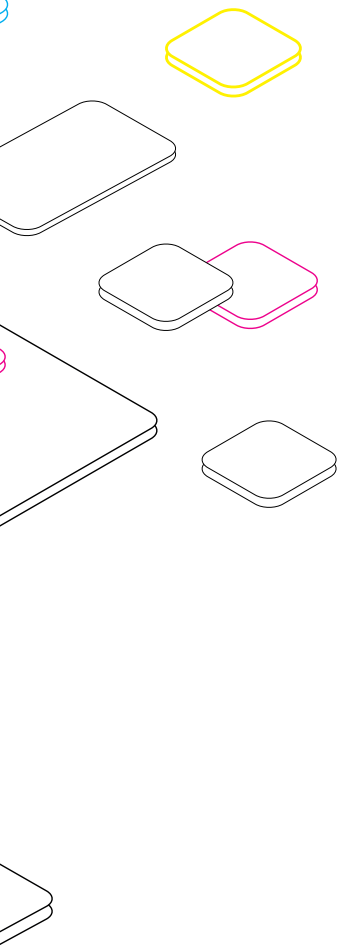
tions, which are nevertheless essential elements in terms of external impact and overall dramaturgy.

The IBA_Vienna has mainly worked within the social housing system. It is wished that it would have had a wider range, i.e. that it would have involved other departments and also the privately financed housing sector more strongly. However, the IBA_Vienna was able to establish some connections between these strong players – from a weak position.

The IBA_Vienna is not seen as exceptional in terms of resources invested (>2.). For some it never gained the desired substance. However, the overwhelming assessment is that the IBA_Vienna was able to make active contributions to the evolution and knowledge gains in the system – within its possibilities – and was therefore a very **valuable and rewarding process**. Much praise is expressed for what the IBA team in particular was able to achieve and move within limited framework conditions. However, the expectation of an IBA to be an autonomous “game changer” and to actively initiate a paradigm shift or a transformation of the system (>1.), which existed due to the historical models, had not been included or intended in its mandate. The political statement at the beginning of the IBA_Vienna had, however, opened up an important space for discourse, activities and new topics and created a useful innovation narrative – even if it was associated with few resources and opportunities. In this way, IBA_Vienna was able to reinforce positive developments in terms of content, good cooperation and both new and established players – as well as revealing many approaches for further work. On the basis of this collective logic, it is now necessary to expand the possibilities for further experimental developments and critical discussions (see chapter “Impulses for Vienna”). It has become apparent that it would be worthwhile to stabilize not the organization, but the working methods of the IBA_Vienna.

The success of the IBA_Vienna is thus documented less in the projects built than in the minds of the actors involved. They continued to develop their roles, methods and contents in dialogue and with the support of the IBA_Vienna platform. However, this learning process is neither complete nor finished – it is ongoing. Supporting it was and is of great value in view of the massive global challenges. The interviewees therefore see it as exciting to examine the initiated processes and structures for their possibilities of continuation and stabilization. Not by extending the IBA_Vienna itself, but by taking on the valuable roles in the system and working on the issues raised. The final exhibition is seen as essential to convey this and to generate **progressive energies**.





EXTERNAL RESONANCES

Uli Hellweg, Brigitte Scholz, Klaus Selle

Uli Hellweg



Uli Hellweg takes the perspective of the IBA designer. Among other things, he was involved in the IBA Berlin 1984/87 and led the IBA Hamburg 2013. Today he works as a freelance consultant, moderator and author.

The wise spirits that were called

What is IBA today?

Today's International Building Exhibitions differ in many respects from their historical predecessors in Darmstadt 1901 (Mathildenhöhe), Stuttgart 1927 (Weißenhofsiedlung) or the post-war IBA Interbau Berlin 1957, IBA Berlin 1984/87 or IBA Emscherpark 1999. The outstanding feature of the current IBA is its increasing process orientation. It is no longer primarily about outstanding, possibly style-forming buildings – as it was still the case with the new-building IBA Berlin 1984/87 – but about the promotion and coordination of building-cultural processes that manifest themselves not or not only in buildings, but also in administrative, social or environmental strategies and concepts (at the IBA Hamburg 2013, for example, the Education Offensive or Renewable Wilhelmsburg). The fact that these concepts are then followed by innovative and exemplary buildings is “merely” a logical consequence of their successful implementation and a special quality of building exhibitions. Another characteristic of process orientation is that the projects created in this way extend far beyond the actual IBA period (e.g. conversion of the Emscher by 2030, realization of Renewable Wilhelmsburg by 2040).

A peculiarity of current IBA is the increasing loss of project development responsibility. Whereas the IBA Emscherpark or the IBA Hamburg were able to distinguish themselves with projects such as the Zeche Zollverein or the Duisburg Landscape Park or the Energy Bunker and the Model Houses in Wilhelmsburg Mitte, the IBA of recent years have tended to work “hidden”. This leads to a loss of perception among the general public. At the same time, the curatorial (and in some cases also institutional) independence of IBA is declining – as was recently the case with IBA Basel. Experts criticize that this results in the loss of some of IBA's “frictional energy.” The willingness to engage in conflicts does not always have to be as pronounced as with the IBA Berlin 1984/87, which pushed through gentle urban renewal with the support of squatters against official Senate policy. It was also only thanks to its curatorial independence that IBA Hamburg was able to make a Hamburg “taboo topic” of the time, namely the effects of climate change on the Elbe island of Wilhelmsburg, which had been hit by the flood of 1962, the leading theme of “City in Climate Change.” The Senate was against it – the IBA did it anyway.

The curatorial strength of IBA may be greatest when they are intended to resolve conflicts where the entrenched administrative and political structures are at their wit's end – as with the “conflict IBA” in Kreuzberg, the northern Ruhr region or the “Hamburg Bronx” (Der Spiegel). Most of the current IBA, however, have not arisen out of pressing sufferings, but out of specific strengths of the cities. They are not primarily intended to resolve conflicts, but to exploit opportunities: the chance of the urban potentials of the knowledge society (IBA Heidelberg 2022), the prospects of cross-border cooperation (IBA Basel 2020) or regional cooperation (IBA Stuttgart 2027), or the further optimization of an already strong system of social housing (IBA_Vienna).

Curatorial conflicts are rare today – although they would be necessary. For example, the core problem of current urban development, namely the land issue, is hardly addressed by any IBA – the IBA_Vienna is a laudable exception here. In most of the current IBA one rather finds conflict avoidance strategies, which is also reflected in a paradigm shift from the project development IBA to the “enabling” IBA. This means that IBA largely refrain from developing and implementing their own model projects within the framework of their guiding themes. Instead, they concentrate on supporting, qualifying and communicating external projects and processes, often generated by project calls or brought to them politically. In most cases, their financial resources do not allow them to develop their own projects, or their supervisory bodies do not even want to take the risk of the rhetorically so often invoked real world laboratory.

However, there are also clearly positive developments in the new IBA:

- IBA have become increasingly greener and more landscaped in recent decades. The programmatic titles IBA Emscher Park, IBA See, IBA park stad or IBA StadtLand speak for themselves. Indeed, the symbiosis of urban development and landscape architecture is in the IBA gene. Already at Darmstadt's Mathildenhöhe, the plane tree grove with the artists' house and wedding tower was the pivotal point of the entire urban and spatial concept. The Interbau Berlin 1957 was initiated by the landscape architect Walter Rossow, who had already called for a building exhibition for Berlin in a memorandum in 1950. It was also Rossow who ensured that international landscape architects played a decisive and, above all, equal role at Interbau. In Hamburg, an International Garden Show and an International Building Exhibition were realized for the first time in 2013 in close institutional and conceptual integration. Particularly in times of climate change, this combination of urban development and landscape planning plays a central role for climate-friendly urban redevelopment and certainly also for future IBA.

- The “landscapeification” is not the only development that has changed IBA. From a format of German building culture, IBA is on its way to establishing itself as an urban planning event on a European scale. Vienna, Basel and the Limburg region in the Netherlands are hosting or have recently hosted IBA. The Grand Paris region is discussing an IBA, as is the Luxembourg Chamber of Architects.

A side effect of the growing attractiveness of IBA is its dense festival calendar. Whereas building exhibitions used to take place at ten to fifteen-year intervals, we now have six building exhibitions (Basel 2021, Heidelberg 2022, Park Stad Limburg 2022, Vienna 2022, Thuringia 2023, Stuttgart 2027) taking place simultaneously. Others (e.g. Munich, Berlin) could be added in the next few years. However, this is not certain, as the burdens from the

Corona crisis and the war in Ukraine will drastically shrink the financial scope of the municipalities in the coming years.

It is no wonder that criticism arises in view of the current multiplicity and simultaneity of IBA. There is talk of “IBA inflation.” The Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs had already set up the IBA Expert Council in 2009 out of concern for the format, which attempts to set quality standards (e.g. through the Memorandum on the Future of International Building Exhibitions) and advises the current IBA. Given the informality of the IBA format, which no one certifies and which everyone can make use of, the efforts of the Expert Council must remain ambivalent – especially if the format becomes internationalized and thus withdraws from “federal sovereignty.”

The obvious problem for many IBA is to meet the standards of quality, innovation and experimentation that they have set themselves and that are set by the “big IBA” under their specific working conditions. There is no lack of challenges in the city and the countryside, nor of good ideas and approaches to solutions – and certainly not of committed colleagues. The problem is a different one: a successful IBA depends (unfortunately) not only on the professional qualifications and motivation of the IBA organisers, but also on a certain “historical” constellation of forces and resources, in which leaders from politics, administration and the professional scene make a personal commitment to an IBA. Imagine, for example, the IBA Berlin 1984/87 without Harry Ristock, the Senate Building Director Hans-Christian Müller, Hardt-Waltherr “Gustav” Hämer and Josef Paul Kleihues, or the IBA Emscherpark without the triumvirate of Rau, Zöpel and Ganser. These IBA would never have existed. The IBA Hamburg was only made possible by the professional and personal passion of the Chief Building Director Jörn Walter and the committed Building Senator Michael Freitag. In Vienna the IBA sprang from a similar constellation of an IBA-enthusiastic politician, namely the then City Councilor for Housing and now Mayor Michael Ludwig, and the head of housing research Wolfgang Förster.

However, the paternalistic act of creating IBA is not without risk – at least as long as an IBA is exclusively dependent on its patrons and cannot anchor itself in the respective urban society and the relevant civil society institutions. In Hamburg, for example, the political change following the 2011 elections almost led to a drastic curtailment, if not dissolution, of the IBA if not only the Chief Building Director and the partners of the IBA network, the Harburg district and the residents of the Elbe islands, had spoken out clearly against it. The transformation of the IBA company into a development agency after the conclusion of IBA Hamburg in 2013 had to be pushed through by the then First Mayor Olaf Scholz – who has since undergone a Damascene conversion – against sections of politics and the Mitte district, which would have preferred to get rid of the annoying “troublemaker” IBA.

The classical top-down approach is a problem of IBA today, if it is not prepared by a professional and urban-social discussion. Karl Ganser and his team had to experience for the first time in the dispute with the “bottom-up IBA” in the 1990s that IBA no longer work only according to the classic top-down method. Today, an intensive pre-IBA phase is needed – not only to sharpen the themes, but also to establish a broad political consensus on this major event in building culture. The IBA_Vienna lacked this early anchoring in urban society, which may have been at the expense of its public resonance on the one hand, and left conceptual ambiguity and disappointed political expectations on the other. Thus it has remained unclear

to this day what is actually supposed to be “new” about the “New Social Housing,” and whether the focus of the IBA_Vienna is on the “New Social Housing” (the title of the IBA!) or on the more differentiated and neighborhood-oriented models of the memorandum.

However, not only the pre-IBA phase is crucial for an IBA, but also the actual IBA (learning) process. An IBA must be able to develop its curatorial concept on its own responsibility in the countercurrent between top-down and bottom-up. Only in this way can it sail against any wind – no matter which direction it comes from. This requires not only a great deal of strength and endurance on the part of the IBA makers, but also the trusting respect of their institutional and political sponsors. Occasionally, however, one has the impression that the IBA is left alone in the fight against bureaucratic moles, financing difficulties and changing political majorities. It is not enough for the IBA fathers and mothers to decorate themselves with the three letters, which can be cheaply purchased, and otherwise proceed according to the motto “Let me have my cake and eat it, too!”

Every IBA is something special – especially the IBA_Vienna.

The following thoughts do not represent a scientific evaluation or analysis of the IBA_Vienna. Rather, subjective impressions that arose in the course of this resonance study (see chapter “Methodology”) are reflected against the background of my own experiences.

IBA_Vienna is different from other IBA:

- The IBA_Vienna was launched top-down from a very short pre-IBA phase (2015-2017), largely without urban policy discussion, and had hardly any curatorial discovery phase (“cold start”). Moreover, it has to present its results already after five years (two of them under Covid19 conditions).
- The IBA_Vienna does not have a fixed demonstration area, but is active in various parts of the city.
- IBA_Vienna is not a public project developer with its own demonstration projects. However, this also applies to most other current IBA.
- The IBA_Vienna is more of a workshop than a laboratory, i.e. its focus is on innovation and optimization of the existing system of Viennese social housing and less on experimentation and invention.
- The IBA_Vienna is not an independent legally constituted institution (e.g. limited liability company), but part of the (municipal) administration of the City of Vienna, and here also “only” assigned to one department.
- The IBA_Vienna has an extremely modest budget of its own – not only in comparison to other IBA, but also to the budget and staffing of Viennese subsidized housing – and has an extremely low staffing level for the tasks and expectations.

However, there are also similarities with other IBA:

- Starting from a general memorandum, the IBA_Vienna developed processually as a learning process and thus sharpened its curatorial concept,
- the IBA_Vienna developed a similar system of criteria and certification for IBA candidates and projects as other IBA,
- the IBA_Vienna – like all IBA – had no formal authority, but all the greater professional and human authority,
- the commitment of the employees and their personal involvement are exceptionally high,
- the IBA_Vienna pursues the IBA-typical exhibition dramaturgy with interim and final presentations as well as intensive accompanying research and publication activities,
- the IBA succession problem remains unresolved to the end.

Like every IBA, the IBA_Vienna had to fight for its place and its possibilities for action – albeit under considerably more difficult conditions than is usually the case. For Vienna's social housing is not a problem case waiting for an IBA, but a highly professional political-administrative "cosmos" with strong and well-networked actors (including *wohnfonds_wien*, *Wiener Wohnen*, *Wohnservice* and their respective sub-organizations). Probably in no other city has the system of social housing been developed to such a high and sophisticated level as in Vienna. However, this system is also characterized by a strong internal differentiation, which does not always make cooperation between the participants easy. In addition, the IBA_Vienna with its departmentalization in "Housing Research" within the Municipal Department 50 is in a rather subordinate position in the organizational structure of the Viennese Municipality. Numerous other municipal departments in the Viennese administration are responsible for essential tasks of a holistic IBA approach, such as that pursued by IBA_Vienna with its neighborhood orientation.

Basically, every IBA has to deal with complex administrative structures whose boundaries and responsibilities it seeks to overcome through its own interdisciplinarity and life-world cross-sectional orientation. In doing so, it performs politically and institutionally more or less secure coordination and control functions. These tasks were made rather more difficult by the integration of the IBA_Vienna into the linear structure of the magistrate's administration, although there were also advantages to be gained from the collegial partnership or personal cooperation experience ("people know each other," "short distances"). The change of IBA initiator and then City Councilor for Housing Michael Ludwig to the Office of Mayor of the City of Vienna would have provided an opportunity to strengthen the institutional position within the administration as well (e.g. as staff to the Mayor). This would not only have increased the visibility of IBA_Vienna considerably, but also its political and professional weight. "The IBA_Vienna will ultimately only be visible if it implements concrete projects, building on its political, scientific and communicative activities," states the memorandum on the IBA_Vienna of 2017. This would certainly have been possible under the patronage of the Mayor. Why it did not happen eludes the outside observer.

Only the IBA_Vienna made the IBA_Vienna an IBA.

According to the memorandum, the IBA_Vienna had – in summary – the task of making proposals for the further optimization and safeguarding of the future of the Viennese social housing system, which is already a world leader. Proposals were to be made for “new partner, sponsor, financing and property models” as well as “collaborative” and “inclusive neighborhood developments.” In addition, new participation and self-management models were to be tested. Moreover, as a think tank, the IBA_Vienna was to become a counterpart to the neoliberal think tanks “that see subsidized housing as distorting competition” (IBA_Vienna 2017: 23, English translation).

The IBA_Vienna has developed its mandate into an ambitious curatorial concept with six core themes (neighborhood development, process development, mixed use, climate adaptation & environmental sustainability, affordability & new forms of housing, stock development) in a pronounced scientific and professional discourse. It has implemented this curatorial concept consistently and unspectacularly. From the commentator’s point of view, the practical approach of the IBA_Vienna can be condensed to the following strategies for action:

- IBA as an impulse generator, communicator, catalyst, moderator and networker in the cosmos of Viennese social housing; e.g. impulses for the establishment of a quality advisory board, creation of new communication structures between the actors of the Viennese housing cosmos;
- IBA as caretaker, troubleshooter and “cleaner” of deficits of the formally responsible institutions of the Viennese housing supply apparatus; e.g. in the Per-Albin-Hansson-Siedlung, Quartiersmanagement Berresgasse;
- IBA as enabler by promoting self-initiative of building groups and other communal and socio-cultural forms of housing; e.g. single parents, shared spaces across building sites, flexible floor plans;
- IBA as quasi-administrative amplifier, innovator; e.g. modification of developers’ competitions, qualification of concept tenders, realization of mixed projects “living and working” with innovative concepts, “company apartments” in the Atelierhaus and support of building communities and neighborhood houses in the Sonnenwendviertel, qualification of tenders for developers’ competitions e.g. in the Am Seebogen neighborhood;
- IBA as a housing policy think tank and partner of science and research; e.g. IBA Talks, town twinning, focus talks, resonance study.

Although the IBA_Vienna has thus implemented its mandate according to the memorandum, there may remain unsatisfied expectations, which are revealed in an inconspicuous but not entirely unimportant contradiction. While IBA_Vienna inventor Michael Ludwig stressed at the presentation of the IBA 2016 that the “IBA_Vienna is the first international building exhibition to focus on ‘socially sustainable housing in the 21st century’” and gave the IBA the motto “New Social Housing,” the memorandum addresses the guiding themes of the IBA_Vienna in a much more complex way, namely as “New Social Neighborhoods,” “New Social Qualities” and “New Social Responsibility.”

The holistic neighborhood concept of the memorandum, as practiced by IBA_Vienna in its new construction and existing projects, corresponds much more to the methodological approach and self-image of the IBA than the sectoral policy issue of social housing, which is more a funding and social policy issue than an urban issue. The fact that social housing estates are not automatically functioning social neighborhoods does not need to be explained further here since the experiences with the large housing estates of Neue Heimat and other large housing associations. This distinction between “social housing” and “social neighborhoods” is particularly explosive in view of the current housing shortage, not only in Vienna, which has led to renewed calls from politicians and interested lobby groups in the construction industry for new “social housing estates” that can be built quickly, cheaply and easily.

The IBA_Vienna also developed differentiated strategies in the guiding themes of “New Social Qualities” and “New Social Responsibility,” which go far beyond the understanding and practice of previous social housing – not only in Vienna:

- In this way, it was able to anchor the neighborhood orientation in the developers’ competitions and projects.
- In the developers’ competitions, the IBA_Vienna was able to make decisive contributions to process design in neighborhood development and quality assurance, which ultimately led to the introduction of a quality advisory board responsible for many new developments.
- Significant impulses could also be set in other essential fields of action of a new neighborhood orientation, e.g. with the neighborhood houses, new mixed structures in the neighborhoods and even houses or the anchoring of building groups as an important community-oriented “new” investor group.

In order to implement these new governance practices, the IBA_Vienna had to “hand over” innovative ideas to established players in the Viennese housing industry and remain somewhat invisible itself. Despite statements to the contrary in the memorandum (see above), it did not come into play as an independent investor anyway. On the one hand, this self-withdrawal was necessary in order to push through or at least qualify the projects in the experienced system of Viennese social housing; on the other hand, this tactic of success was at the expense of urban political, national and international visibility.

But it was precisely this PR effect, both internally and externally, that was possibly a political expectation not to be underestimated. For as Michael Ludwig put it, the IBA_Vienna was not only to be conceived “with the broad involvement of the Viennese population” in the “theme of social housing,” but it was also to put “major Viennese new construction and refurbishment projects specifically in the international spotlight” (Stadt Wien 2015, English translation).

This double-bind between the expectations of a housing policy performance show on the one hand and a game-change in the governance system on the other hand led to a plural coding of the IBA term: the IBA_Vienna had to adequately communicate the globally recognized successes, i.e. the “A” and “I” of this IBA had to be understood in the sense of a national and international communication with high public impact. In addition, the “I” also had to stand for a qualified “I”nput into the Viennese housing cosmos and the

“i”nternal discussion about the further development of the Viennese model. And the “A” for a future “A”genda – in a sense the legacy of IBA_Vienna.

Does Viennese social housing need an innovation engine?

As with every IBA, the question arises: What comes afterwards? What lessons are to be learned? Is the IBA task complete or who will carry it forward? It is the crux – not to say the frustration – of all process IBA that with the scheduling of the exhibition or presentation year, the driver for the innovations initiated is more or less arbitrarily removed from the ongoing processes. This creates the absurd situation of desperately searching for what has just been entombed under the label “IBA.” It looks as if this tragedy is also taking place at IBA_Vienna.

The question therefore arises as to whether there is not a need for a legacy process that documents the practical experiences, analyses and research results both in the project work and in the governance structure and makes proposals as to how the previous roles of the IBA_Vienna as innovator, catalyst and networker can be continued after its term, and how the productive relationship between housing research and science could be further exploited.

Should it not be in the interest of the City of Vienna and the institutions of the Viennese housing cosmos to continue to use the competence and commitment of the IBA makers and the scientific IBA think tank in order to consolidate the unique system of social housing as a pioneer and trailblazer on a global scale in the future and to make it fit for the upcoming major challenges, in particular social neighborhood development and climate-friendly urban redevelopment?

Brigitte Scholz



Brigitte Scholz represents the perspective from the (administrative) practice of a major European city. She is head of the Cologne Office for Urban Development and thus a partner in the IBA_Vienna city network. Through her many years as project coordinator for the IBA Fürst-Pückler-Land 2010, she also knows IBA from her own work.

From practice, for practice

In 2022, the IBA_Vienna has reached its finale. In just six years of operational work, the small IBA team had the task to nudge innovations in housing construction under the title “New Social Housing.” The long tradition of Viennese municipal housing served as the basis for driving further developments.

The city of Cologne is one correspondence site for the IBA_Vienna. In an online symposium in 2020, the various positions and approaches were exchanged. Since then, the exchange of experiences has continued in various online formats due to corona and has now been expanded to my resonance on the IBA_Vienna.

The Cologne experiences, combined with a visit to Vienna in autumn 2021, serve as my resonance floor. The trip offered the opportunity to explore the Sonnwendviertel, Am Seebogen and Per-Albin-Hansson-Siedlung neighborhoods together with the IBA team and the other commentators. In addition, the future.lab research team gave a first insight into the interim results of the resonance study, which could be reflected on together with the chairman of the scientific advisory board.

Accordingly, this commentary concentrates on the experience of these neighborhoods and highlights elements that are noteworthy from a Cologne perspective.

Housing as a municipal task

Vienna's stringent approach to housing as part of the provision of public services is impressive. Almost 50 % of the housing stock is owned by the municipality of Vienna or by limited-profit housing associations and, in the case of subsidies, there is a permanent earmarking and price control ("eternity period"). In comparison, over 90 % of the apartments in Cologne are freely financed. Rents increased by 4% per year from 2012 to 2019, the purchase price for houses by 8%, and there is an upwards trend.

In addition, Vienna pursues a consistent land policy. The wohnfonds_wien can purchase land and allocate it in concept procedures. This is associated with qualification procedures that go beyond obligations under planning law, so that far-reaching agreements can be reached with housing associations.

This identifies two central points for the control of housing construction: municipal land ownership and a permanent rent control of subsidized stock. With the land policy and financial management instruments, the City of Vienna has a considerable influence on the housing market in addition to planning law.

In Germany, there are now various models for the implementation of subsidized and affordable housing. In Cologne, a quota of 30 % of subsidized housing is mandatory via the cooperative building land model with the creation of planning law. A model for price-subsidized housing is under discussion. In particular, financial issues play a role here, both on the part of the municipality and on the part of the investors.

In addition, in March 2022 the City of Cologne passed a resolution in principle to give priority to ground leases on municipal land. In the first step, this regulation will be applied to multi-storey residential construction, with a term of 80 years and – in conjunction with a reduced ground rent in the first years – the obligation to provide at least 30 % subsidized and 20 % price-reduced housing. In this respect, elements of the Vienna model are transferred into a model of its own in order to gain stronger influence on the housing market as a city.

Learning from Vienna therefore means developing your own solutions and examining how this affects the housing market. In this respect Vienna's actions are an important model for other municipalities. And the IBA finale should take the opportunity to honor the self-evident with its expenditures and effects. The model of Viennese housing with its hundred-year tradition remains relevant.

Neighborhood as a level of action

Like the much-praised “Veedel” in Cologne, the “Grätzel” in Vienna are at the heart of urban coexistence. The neighborhood as a planning level makes it possible to think systemically, to organize cooperation and to anchor civil engagement. Ultimately, it is the old theme of neighborhoods that help and support each other. Or even the idea of village life together as an economic and solidarity community. It sounds a little outdated and yet it is modern.

Three themes – in addition to affordable housing – take center stage in the IBA_Vienna neighborhoods: climate protection with the use of renewable energies, the idea of the sponge city for climate change adaptation, and new mobility concepts. The importance of the interplay between these three aspects becomes apparent at the neighborhood level: New mobility solutions create space – literally – for people and greenery. The mobility hubs can be used as energy centers and the houses can be integrated into the energy production. In this way, the two main CO₂ emitters, buildings and transport, can be developed in a climate-neutral way.

Public space is regaining its original meaning as a place of encounter and exchange and must take on new functions in terms of climate change adaptation. From my point of view, it is all the more important that this topic is presented offensively. This is why the high-quality but stony character in the Sonnwendviertel, which at first glance lacks the transformation to a sponge city with its green-blue infrastructure, is surprising. At the Seebogen, on the other hand, there is impressive transformation, right down to adapted vegetation and large underground rainwater storage basins.

In the large housing estates of the 1950-70s, such as the Per-Albin-Hanson-Siedlung in Vienna or Chorweiler in Cologne, there are generous green and open spaces that offer great potential in the sense of a structured and dispersed city – potential in the sense of appropriation by and activation of the residents, as with a showcase neighborhood newspaper or a community garden in the Viennese example. But green spaces are also a real treasure in terms of climate change adaptation, as vegetation can already fulfil its buffering function here.

In Cologne, the square program “Lebenswertes Chorweiler” (Livability in Chorweiler), funded under the federal program “National Urban Development Projects,” is the impetus for a lively and attractive center of the large housing estate. The project shows once again how important attractive open space design is, especially in these areas. And it also shows how powerful such an impulse has to be in order to have an effect. The conversion and further development of the large housing estates as neighborhoods would be worthy of its own IBA.

Actively shaping the mix

Mixed neighborhoods do not emerge on their own; they need to be managed. This begins with the housing mix. Who builds for whom has a significant influence on the later character of a neighborhood. The instruments required for this have already been mentioned. Another question is how the desired revitalization of the ground floor zones with public facilities can be achieved.

In Seestadt Aspern, the principle of curated ground floor zones is being implemented, for which a shopping street company was set up specifically. In the Sonnwendviertel, small-scale parceling and concept allocations allow for an impressive mix of different public uses. As a new type, neighborhood houses that offer living “plus” have been implemented: Offers for the neighborhood, the vicinity and the district, e.g. in the form of children’s and youth facilities.

These principles are an important stimulus and can now also be observed and evaluated in operation through 1:1 models – an interesting building block for the municipal transfer of experience. It would be important to continue to create a suitable platform for this and to support the learning processes in the sense of an evolutionary development and enable active exchange.

For social cohesion, Vienna has a district management as a service institution of the city, which comprehensively advises tenants and homeowners and supports neighborly cooperation. In new neighborhoods with more than 1,000 apartments, a district management is established. One of its main tasks is to provide information about the development of the area and to promote coalescence with the neighboring neighborhoods.

In Cologne, we regard area management as a task for neighborhoods with a need for support and rely on neighborly commitment or the activities of the housing associations in new construction. At the same time, the demands on the neighborhood are growing, as it has to cope with many social challenges today. In this respect, district management for mixed new neighborhoods is an important and obvious suggestion. After all, housing is about creating a lively and sustainable coexistence, and that doesn’t thrive on its own.

IBA_Vienna as a provider of innovation

The six-member IBA_Vienna team is extremely committed, ambitious and very well networked – within the Vienna City Council itself, with the various institutions in Vienna and with academia. Previous activities in the Magistrate's Office, such as urban development, area support or the Wohnservice Wien, contribute to the networking. Its temporary existence enables it to act as a "speedboat" between the long-term players, so that IBA_Vienna can be perceived as a supporter and driver in a positive sense.

The roles of the IBA team are manifold: mediation, qualification, caring, but also fill-in, stage and platform for the exchange of experience. The partners of the IBA_Vienna, such as wohnfonds_wien for the awarding of plots of land and developers' competitions or the area management, are highly professional. They have financial and human resources, knowledge and implement the projects independently. But they have weak links with each other. The IBA_Vienna closes this gap, networks the partners and forges new alliances. The stage effect of an IBA is of great importance. It offers the incentive to exhibit projects and thus to put them up for discussion. And at the same time, the stage is a platform for competing and exchanging ideas with other projects.

For the IBA_Vienna, formal instruments seem to play less of a role in qualification than the power of persuasion, perseverance and clever tactics to address and consolidate issues with partners across borders. An example of this is the constant further development of the allocation of land according to concept quality as the key to neighborhood development. In other words, the formal instruments already exist and the IBA_Vienna provides additional quality impulses.

In the sense of the already diverse existing instruments for housing in Vienna, the IBA_Vienna is concerned with evolutionary development – not revolution. In the internal resonances, some miss the friction, wish for more innovation, more impulses, more provocation. In my view, an IBA that is deployed from within the system can hardly achieve this. Or to put it more sharply: Innovations come from outside the system, challenge routines and override habitual ways of doing things. Examples of these innovation-generating IBA were the Weißenhofsiedlung Stuttgart 1927, with its radically new construction methods in architecture and materials, and the IBA Emscher Park 1999, which redefined industrial culture in the Ruhr region and transformed it through innovative conversion.

Innovation must be considered in context: Things that are routine in one place can be new elsewhere. This leads back to the long tradition of Viennese municipal housing and state care for housing. The IBA_Vienna starts at a high level and – correctly in my view – focuses on evolutionary development. This does not make it less innovative, but innovative in a different way.

For the effects of the IBA_Vienna, this can mean that the innovative impulses are integrated into the system and improve it without calling it into question. As a result of the IBA_Vienna, there could be innovation projects of the magistrate that are financially supported, scientifically accompanied and supported by the actors of the housing industry. In other words, the classic real world laboratories, which are repeatedly called for to further develop practice and are carried out with state support, as is the case in Germany within the framework of the National Urban Development Policy.

What happens after the IBA_Vienna?

The most important points for me are:

- The IBA_Vienna has made it possible to shed light on the Viennese model, to make it comprehensible and to develop it further in concrete projects.
- The neighborhood as a level of action in old and new buildings has taken on the prominent role it deserves.
- New social housing encompasses the topics of climate protection, climate change adaptation and mobility transformation and has thus experienced an important broadening of horizons.

The IBA_Vienna gives courage. Encouragement that it is possible to build sustainable neighborhoods in the truest sense of the word. In Cologne, for example, we are using the exchange of experience with Vienna to develop a new density compass for compact and livable neighborhoods. This so-called Cologne Catalogue translates the target densities of the Cologne Perspectives 2030+ urban strategy into urban development floor space figures and specifies the strategies required to achieve them.

And at the same time, the IBA_Vienna is an incentive to actively use and further develop control models such as the cooperative building land model or concept awards. The correspondent cities show a broad spectrum of different possibilities, and the time of the IBA_Vienna was too short to develop a comprehensive understanding of this. All the more important that the IBA_Vienna provided the impetus. Now it is up to the correspondence cities to take up the impulses and implement them.

Klaus Selle



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Higher level. Approaching a special IBA

The impact and effects of an International Building Exhibition can be viewed from many perspectives: Here, these are above all planning-theoretical ones. Two adjectives that are closely connected with the recent discussion about International Building Exhibitions are in the foreground: “innovative” and “intermediary.” But what do they want to tell us: In what way can an IBA be innovative? How does its intermediary function shape working methods and chances of success?

Looking from theory to Viennese practice, another question of perspective is relevant: this commentary is, after all, a view from afar. When it comes to Vienna and urban development, this view is not free of (positive) prejudices. Which gives rise to astonishing questions: Why does a city that is a model for many others need an International Building Exhibition? For which problems should it find solutions? What can, what should it achieve? And how?

If one pursues this, the picture that emerges is of an evolutionary type of innovation in a city that holds special challenges for the argumentation and development of an IBA.

1. Innovative? Or: On progress and the search for “newness”

Innovation is an iridescent term. It oscillates between economic categories and marketing jargon. That alone could be reason enough to avoid it. If it were not for a discussion that arose – hardly by chance – after the IBA Emscher Park 1999 and Expo 2000, in which the attempt was made to make this dazzling term usable for the fields of action in urban and regional development.

Even then, this was the cause for some question marks. For example: What kind of “innovation” was being talked about? Is it about inventions like the light bulb – and which ones would that be for city and country? Is it about technical solutions or spectacular buildings? Or is it not primarily products that are in demand, but above all processes and structures – perhaps the testing of previously avoided cooperation, the struggle for insight into previously suppressed problems, the joint search for solutions beyond the sight of one’s own steep? Do we possibly mean new thinking, changed attitudes – and the way to get there?

Oh yes, and what does “new” even mean? For whom? And where? What seems “new” and unusual here may be an old hat elsewhere. What appears to be a revolutionary change to some may be the revival of something old and familiar. So can a project be considered an “innovation” even if its components are already tried and tested? Last but not least: How does the new relate to the old, tradition to progress, the future to its origins?

In order to bring order to this confusion, a few definitions are necessary. They mark in particular the specifics of innovations in urban and regional development and thus also the limits of analogies to the economic conceptual world:

Process and/as product

Even the early economic concept of innovation is not only about the invention and distribution of things. It is also always about processes. This must apply even more clearly to urban and regional development. Here it is first and foremost about processes. Architectural-spatial products are then rather evidence of their prehistory.

This becomes clear at many International Building Exhibitions: the buildings in Kreuzberg that were renovated on the occasion of the Berlin IBA (1984/87) were not the actual exhibits. Rather, they formed the visible part of complex processes. These in turn resulted from a different attitude towards the existing buildings. Both – attitude and process – were the actual innovations at the time.

It is very similar with the Tetrahedron, the Gasometer, the Zeche Zollverein and the many other projects of the IBA Emscher Park (1999), some of which are spectacular. They are all visible signs of a radically new way of thinking in dealing with old industrial regions. In order to be able to set these signs, adventurous processes were sometimes required at the time, which broke with the usual in many respects. Here too: attitude and process.

The list of such examples can be extended: for example, to the IBA Hamburg (2013), where – to name just one example – the “Gateway to the World” was the built expression of an educational offensive with a neighborhood focus. And beyond that – all the way to Vienna.

Places of the new

Schumpeter had markets in mind that await expansion and conquest. Urban and regional development, however, is about (living) spaces and their futures. If innovations are needed, then they are needed in this region, for this city.

The building exhibitions we are talking about here may have the word “international” in their names. But the action is local. Because the problems that had to be solved, and still have to be solved, are mostly on the doorstep. In the Emscher region, for example, there were the many desolate areas left behind by 100 years of coal mining and steel production. What remained was a region of perplexity: the strategies practiced to date were out of all proportion to the nature and size of the task ahead. Companies, local authorities, the region and the state were at a loss. This also means that action is taken not only in a specific area, but also between and with the actors there. It is their perplexity which – as Karl

Ganser noted in his time as Managing Director of the IBA Emscher Park in 1999 – promotes the willingness to engage in the search for new solutions.

The space and its actors simultaneously bring in the history and the culture of the city and the region – which often hinders the search for something new, but can also promote it. Either way, future and origin are closely connected here. Which makes it clear that the development of new solutions in an IBA (must) have a high degree of local connection.

This also has consequences for the claim to have an international impact through local action: The (problem) perception on site may well differ considerably from the perception from afar. And: Many elements of the processes and their results cannot be exported in detail, because they are bound to the specifics of the location (and the framework conditions acting there). But they illustrate the feasibility of new paths and encourage people to take a similar approach in their search elsewhere.

Disruption! Transformation! Tradition? Evolution...?

Clayton M. Christensen introduced the term “disruptive innovation” with his book “The Innovator’s Dilemma,” first published in 1997. It was actually about the role of new, initially small, companies that turn a market upside down with groundbreaking innovations and make life difficult for established large corporations. Since then, the word has taken on a life of its own. “Disruption” now stands for all forms of development leaps – for example, in the sense of a motto coined by Mark Zuckerberg: “Move fast and break things.”

Disruption has a counterpart: transformation. Here, too, it’s about leaving previous paths, about new orientations in thinking and acting. Here, too, the speed of change cannot be great enough. However, it is not markets that are meant, but society, the environment, space... This transformation is aimed at overcoming epochal crises such as migration and climate change – whereby cities, i.e. the “urban transformation,” are accorded particular importance.

With the emphasis on giant leaps, hard breaks and necessary accelerations, it seems to be forgotten that innovations can also come along evolutionarily and in small steps.

This refers both to the process of their emergence and to that of their impact: for many reasons, not least due to the fact that in democratic societies change is usually only incremental, progress in small steps can be necessary and sensible. But even if a radical break is necessary and successful, it can only be seen as a beginning. Afterwards, it must become clear whether the change is really sustainable, i.e. what it is capable of achieving in the medium and long term.

Of course, this is especially true where it is not just a matter of technological innovation, but where innovation finds expression in attitude and behavior, processes and structures. It is not enough to simply manage them. They must be kept alive – and further developed. If this does not succeed, they wither, lose their original content and possibly disappear into insignificance. Historically, many examples of such developments can be found. The fate of many reform movements before and at the beginning of the 20th century also bears witness to this. The development of the public (housing) sector in Germany is particularly drastic.

2. Intermediary? Or: On the improbability of success

In his writings on “Sociological Enlightenment,” Niklas Luhmann examined communication – from the perspective of the improbability of its success. This is a stimulating intellectual figure. It seems most suitable for taking a closer look at the work of the “innovation agencies” (as the IBA planning teams are sometimes called):

Intermediary functions, ...

Luhmann’s considerations are directly applicable because IBA processes are also primarily about communication. The aim is to establish connections between actors who otherwise act separately and according to different logics, to break down blockades, to identify and promote forces that can be mobilized, to try out new forms of interaction and cooperation and, above all, to drive learning processes forward. This is an “intermediary” role, located in intermediate spaces. And it is almost inevitably associated with conflict and friction.

After all, it is not the case that many of the actors are waiting to be involved in communication processes in this way. On the contrary, they often perceive this as interference by an organization that is not authorized to do so. Moreover, engaging in this kind of cooperation means extra work. For it involves leaving routines in which one has established oneself. And it is not only occasionally that the new approaches expressly contradict previously dominant interests or habits of thought and action.

This can have far-reaching consequences, which Karl Ganser once expressed with his typical clarity: Anyone who wants to implement innovations must prevent “the old elites from calling the shots again.”

Usually, the established actors can only tolerate such impositions because they are told it is about experiments, about a state of exception. And this is limited in time. And with it the activities of the IBA planning teams. So they are not only intermediary, but also temporary.

... positions and ...

Generally speaking, the greatest possible degree of independence in terms of organization and content is of central importance for the effectiveness of IBA organizations. For this reason, they generally not only have intermediary functions, but are also located “intermediately” – i.e. outside the large-scale administrative structures, for example as an independent planning company, with its own budget, staff and so on. This means that they are usually not subject to direct instruction and may or must prove their legitimacy through their own work – but they also have no authority over third parties. On the contrary, they have to win them over to participate.

In order to bring this about, push and pull factors are important: problem pressure among central actors is usually an important push factor. The more pronounced the lack of advice and helplessness, the greater the willingness to participate. However, the reverse is also true: the less clear the pressure to act and the more abstract the objective, the more skeptical the attitude.

But there must also be other reasons for potential partners to get involved in collaborations – even if ideas and projects initially seem unusual or even alien. One of the most effective pull factors in this sense is financial – for example, privileged access to funding. But the (political) power of the IBA sponsorship and the advisory competence and publicity effect of the planning association can also develop “pull” power.

In sum, this means that the lower the organizational independence of the innovation agencies and the effectiveness of the push and pull factors, the lower the chances of success. And that is not all. There are...

... further improbabilities of success

From an open-ended list of structural overloads that characterize the activities of all IBA teams to a greater or lesser extent, here are just a few key points:

- Their work is limited in time (usually ten years, in Vienna six years) but is intended to have a lasting effect.
- The “state of exception” argument used to legitimize their activities (see above) not only stands in the way of sustainability in terms of content, but in many cases also blocks attempts to form follow-up organizations.
- They are supposed to test innovations in “protected spaces,” i.e. without interference from outside. At the same time, however, “presentable results” are expected from them very soon. However, significant results are only “presentable” to a limited extent, since (see above) they are primarily to be found in the processes.
- A broad public is to be reached and, if possible, enthused. At the same time, it is important to develop international appeal, to satisfy the critical expert public and to keep politicians happy. But also to be uncomfortable in the right places, possibly to hurt...

In short, it is simply impossible for an IBA to do justice to everyone and everything. To which one could reply: it shouldn't – otherwise it wouldn't be an IBA. Wherewith Luhmannian improbability is pinned down in the form of systematic overload ... and it's time to look to Vienna. Kurzum: Es ist schlicht unmöglich, mit einer IBA allen und allem gerecht zu werden. Darauf könnte man antworten: Soll sie ja auch nicht – sonst wäre sie keine IBA. Womit die Luhmann'sche Unwahrscheinlichkeit in Form systematischer Überforderung auf den Punkt gebracht wäre ... und es Zeit wird, nach Wien zu blicken.

3 An IBA for Vienna. Or: A future with a past

Vienna's land, housing and urban renewal policy, in short: urban development policy, has a unique reputation among experts outside of Austria, one could even say worldwide. This reputation is consistently positive. Because what has been developed in Vienna over the course of a century is so far above the level of other metropolises that one can only marvel at it from afar.

This immediately raises the question: What is the point of an IBA? Which gaps need to be filled? What is there to be discovered anew? If perplexity is a push factor for IBA, then this can only be the kind of not-knowing-anymore that the physicist Enrico Fermi put in the sentence that he was “still confused, but on a higher level.”

Higher Level

Vienna's special reputation in many central fields of action in urban development is no coincidence. This should be recalled with a few key words:

- The system of social housing developed over 100 years enables more than 60 % of today's population to live undisturbed by the mechanisms of the market (through permanent social binding). Community housing, which accounts for one fifth of the housing stock, plays an important role in this.
- A land policy that has been consistently pursued since 1984 with the “Vienna Land Provision and Urban Renewal Fund” (today: wohnfonds_wien) secures the city's creative power in central tasks of urban development.
- The technical, ecological and social qualities of new residential construction have been and are being continuously developed – for example, through concept procedures and developers' competitions. The Vienna Housing Prize, which is awarded on a regular basis, is a testimony to the merits of this concept far beyond the city's borders.
- With its gentle urban renewal, Vienna was already a European pioneer in the late 1970s of a stock-oriented redevelopment that made the social concerns of the residents (and their payment capability) essential criteria, took participation seriously and looked beyond the apartments and buildings to the neighborhood.
- In addition to numerous municipal enterprises and departments, the limited-profit housing associations, which were founded in the past as cooperatives, also play an important role in shaping local housing policy.

This all goes way back. Continues. And is perpetuated by more recent developments, such as:

- the involvement of housing groups and other alternative actors as housing developers, which was initially bumpy but has now gained momentum,
- the internationally acclaimed urban expansion in the Seestadt Aspern and last but not least
- the “subsidized housing” land use category introduced in 2018, which discourages land speculation by de facto capping land prices.

What is decisive here is the sum of all this. And the time. And the perseverance. More precisely, the incredible story of an innovation – back then revolutionary in the literal sense of the word – that began with Red Vienna 100 years ago. An innovation that was not overthrown by political counter-movements or withered away in its own success – as was the case in many other places. Instead, it was continued and further developed.

Just one example: Vienna never seems to have given a single thought to selling off the municipal housing stock – whereas this happened in many places in the neo-liberal exuberance.

What is astonishing, then, is the – despite many “skinnings and conversions” as Anh-Linh Ngo writes in the magazine arch+ – “continuity of the political insight of the Viennese municipality that housing is a social task and must not be left to the market alone.”

Origins as a resources: the evolution of innovation

One would think that it would be idle to list Vienna’s unique selling points in a publication dedicated to the IBA in Vienna. But this is precisely where the question marks begin. It is striking that what is special about Vienna (from a distance) seems to play only a subordinate role in the self-portrayal of the IBA_Vienna 2022: if you look at the first pages of the memorandum on the IBA_Vienna 2022, for example, you hardly notice that there is talk of the Vienna that seems so exemplary to others. Apart from the details, this could be the prelude to an IBA in any Western European metropolis under pressure to grow... And the many correct and important questions that follow could also be asked anywhere. But aren’t they being asked differently in Vienna than everywhere else?

The guiding motif “New Social Housing” is also confusing at first. It immediately raises the question: What is – in Vienna! – bad about the “old”? Why and to whom does the question of the “new” arise in the “capital of social housing”?

As mentioned above, this question is certainly posed differently on the ground than from a distance. However, both perspectives should have in common the insight that one must not rest on one’s laurels. That innovation also requires (further) evolution.

But does this progress lead to “newness”? Is that even a meaningful attribution in this case – the outsider asks. And points out that what is being apostrophized as “new,” “innovative” and worthy of exhibition often already exists.

Where? In Vienna, of course.

One example: The “innovative building group projects” in the Sonnwendviertel have their predecessors. They, too, were committed to community orientation and created astonishingly creative spaces. In the Sonnwendviertel one can now see – with admiration – the next step in development: A large number of building groups, an even wider spectrum of exciting structural solutions, special attention to the ground floors and a strengthening of the neighborhood’s connection.

But again, all of this has antecedents – in Vienna.

And if neighborhood thinking, including neighborhood management, is now taking hold in the housing stock of the 1950s and 1960s, then this too has already been tried and tested in Vienna’s urban renewal.

And so on and so forth...

In short: quite a few of the “new” projects are further developments, result from internal learning processes (to which the IBA_Vienna contributed significantly) and form culmination points of various lines of development in and from Vienna. It is a matter of continuing steps, of further developing what already exists. In many cases, it is possible to draw on the large reservoir of earlier experiments and experiences.

Origins are resources here.

That this also applies in a much broader sense, going beyond projects and individual topics, was described by one of the IBA initiators, the current Mayor Michael Ludwig, as follows: “The centenary of municipal building in Red Vienna, which will be celebrated in 2019, teaches us [...] that the success of this tradition consists not in adhering to details, but to principles.” These principles and the continuity with which they have been adhered to express an attitude that is both a basis and a resource. But what is the point of an IBA? Ludwig also comments on this: “The processes and the forms of implementation must always be adapted to current developments and requirements. Only in this way has it been possible so far to maintain the standard of living in Vienna at a high level and to constantly expand it further...”

“Adapting forms and processes” could therefore be seen as a kind of general task of the IBA in Vienna.

At the same time, however, this marks a significant difference from the tasks that other IBA set themselves. There it was a question of breaking with the familiar, leaving old paths, filling in the blanks. There, new principles had to be fought for; here in Vienna they can be adhered to.

It is possible that the IBA format as a whole is based on an understanding of innovation as a premise that does not really fit the Viennese situation. The organizational circumstances and requirements here also differ from the ideal-typical IBA understanding. Which brings us back to the initial concepts – innovation and intermediacy – to note that something special was created in Vienna.

4. Shoulders of giants. Or: Remaining capable of development at a high level

“A dwarf standing on the shoulders of giants can see further than the giant himself.” This sentence has appeared in various variants throughout European intellectual history since the 12th century. But the core message is always clear: Whoever builds on knowledge, on experience and insights, whoever joins in a continuity that reaches beyond individual occasions and stages, creates the conditions for far-sightedness. And progress on a level that is denied to those who do not have giants at their disposal.

The image of the giant and the dwarf is often used in contexts of scientific theory, but it also fits the Viennese situation perfectly. The role of the IBA there is located at the same high level that is offered by 100 years of housing policy, 50 years of urban renewal experience and much more.

And it takes on a special function. It can look further ahead, also sees tasks that are yet to come, thus thinks “proactively.” One can assume that – to use the metaphor of the giant once again – the one squatting on his shoulders whispers one or two things into the ear of “his” giant and probably also pesters him. So that he moves on. In the right direction.

Which brings us back to innovations, especially those that are evolutionarily sustainable. They can only acquire this special quality if they are understood as a process. One that is driven forward, that continues to develop, in large or small steps. This requires impetus. And an IBA can provide this. Even if it is small and a priori has little creative power. Because, as recent transformation research teaches us, important impulses often come from niches, from small, weak players on the fringes of a field (or on the shoulder of a giant).

However, dealing with giants is not always easy. They appreciate peace and quiet. Do not like to be kept busy constantly. And have their own view of things.

Innovations also lead to consolidation. Structures, organizational units, responsibilities, procedural rules, and individual logics emerge. This is initially proof of their effect and, in this respect, a sign of success.

But there is always a need for impulses in order to avoid torpor and the loss of the formerly motivating spirit.

In relation to the Vienna model with its numerous fields of action, one can imagine the precipitation of a hundred years of evolution as a huge track field (cf. graphic “Mother Vienna” on page 20/21), on which the various actors travel back and forth next to each other. In this context, the attempt to create cooperation (and to avoid collisions), at least on a project-related basis, represents a major challenge.

This picture alone illustrates the difficulty of the task. It becomes even greater if it goes beyond projects, possibly suggests the installation of new switches or is even directed towards the further development of the entire system.

It seems to become completely unsolvable when one considers the position from which the IBA team in Vienna had to operate. IBA societies generally have – see above – “intermediary” functions and positions. They sit between different chairs, which are often reluctantly moved far enough apart. But at least they usually have the freedom of the “stranger” or “outsider” who, moreover, deals with issues that are not already being dealt with by many others. Not so the IBA team in Vienna. It is in the middle of things. It is part of an authority. It is supposed to achieve something from within. And in doing so, it acts in fields of action for which many feel responsible.

Actually, it's an absurdity.

Especially when personnel, time and other resources are less than those of most of its predecessors.

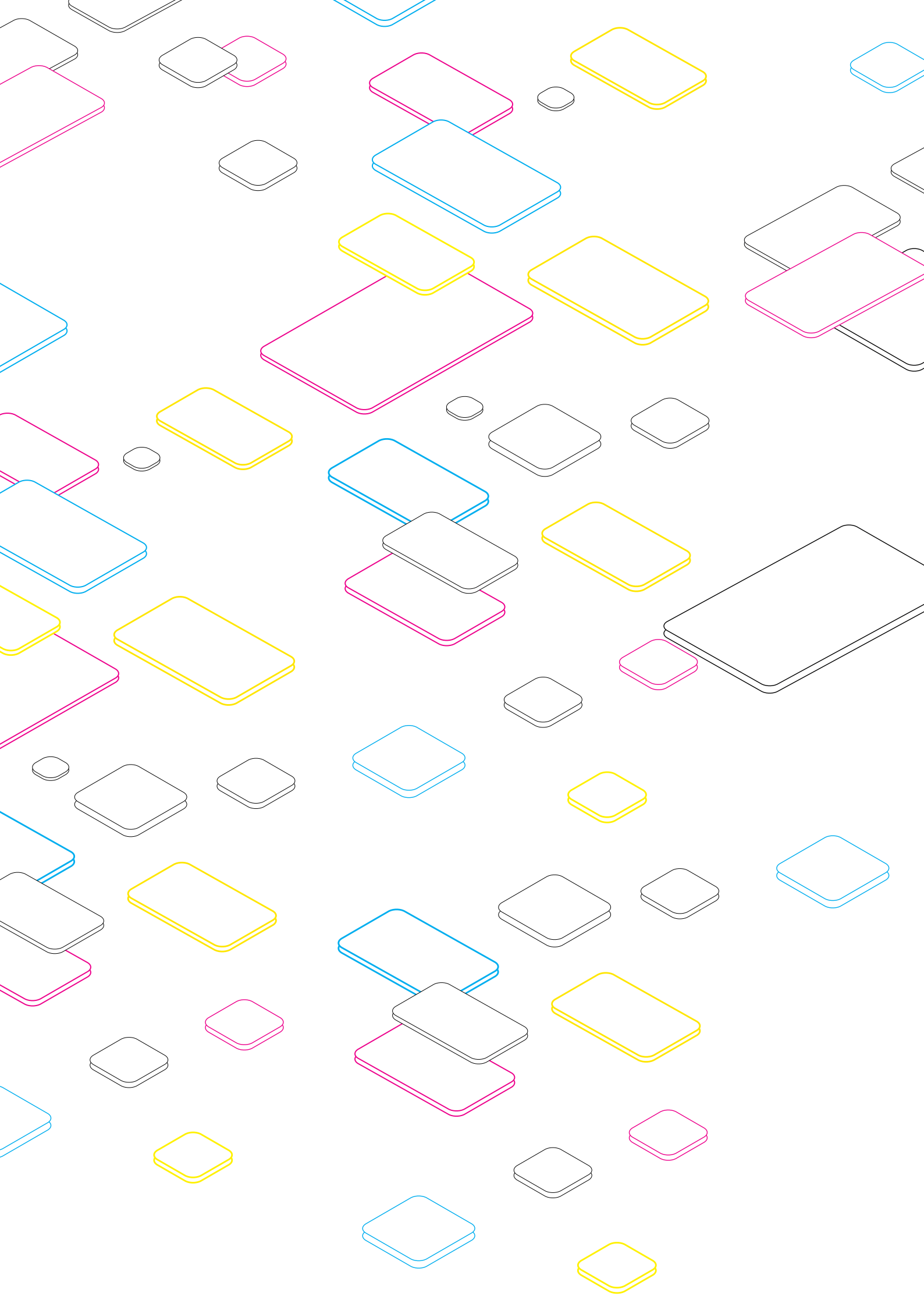
And there seems to be a lack of essential push factors (e.g. local helplessness, pressure to act) as well as pull factors (e.g. privileged promotion of projects).

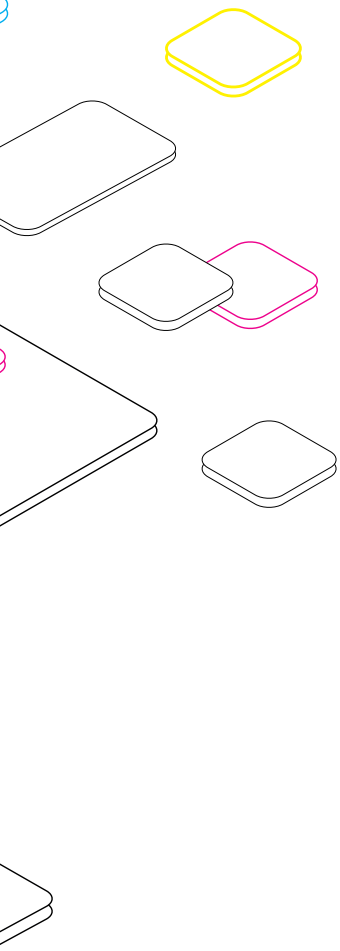
And – last but not least – the problem of invisibility is amplified here: At its core, the IBA_Vienna is a process IBA to a much greater extent than any before it. This is not visible to the projects – especially from a distance – and cannot be exhibited. Consequently, many of their achievements remain “invisible” to outsiders.

In addition, the effort to make something good even better, to continue to develop innovations, to remain willing and able to learn is particularly significant. These are the notorious last 10 %, which cost a lot of energy. Only insiders are in a position to judge this. This performance cannot be exhibited either.

All of this brings to mind a phrase by Herbert Achternbusch from the 1970s, which enjoyed great popularity in parts of the youth movement of the time: “You don’t have a chance – so take it.”

The IBA_Vienna 2022 has taken it.





REFLECTING DISCUSSION

Kurt Hofstetter, Andreas Bernögger, Rudolf Scheuven, Judith M. Lehner

Kurt Hofstetter was Wolfgang Förster's deputy from 2016, who was in charge of preparing the IBA_Vienna and initiated it together with the then City Councilor for Housing and now Mayor Michael Ludwig. Upon Wolfgang Förster's retirement in 2018, Kurt Hofstetter took over the role of coordinator. This reflection meeting was held in March 2022 based on the internal resonances. The questions were asked by Rudolf Scheuven, Judith M. Lehner and Andreas Bernögger from the future.lab of TU Wien.

Andreas Bernögger: You co-designed and experienced the IBA_Vienna for six years. We would like to reflect on this journey with you, but also on some impressions from the interviews in this resonance study. Let's start at the beginning: What were your first points of contact with IBA?

Kurt Hofstetter: My first contact was through the IBA Emscher Park in 1992. Its director Karl Ganser was a member of the Vienna Urban Development Advisory Board, and I was allowed to get to know him as a young employee. But the topic of structural change in industrial landscapes was also very present during my studies at BOKU. Then during the IBA Hamburg, I was too busy with the Seestadt Aspern to follow it intensively.

Andreas Bernögger: In which phases did you participate there?

Kurt Hofstetter: I was involved in the project from 2003 as an administrative employee, and from 2012-2015 in Wien 3420 AG. I first formed a coordinative interface of management and project management from the municipal side and then from the company. In 2012 there were big difficulties and time delays in the open space, in the coordination between planning and implementation. I slipped into new roles, accompanied construction implementations, coordinated orders, acquired funds, in an EU project on top of that – and was under massive stress. It was a terribly chaotic initial period until I was able to bring order to things. I could hardly lift my eyes for IBA.

Andreas Bernögger: Going back to the historical model of IBA Emscher Park 1999, what resonates for you?

Kurt Hofstetter: The forward-looking spirit was important. Opportunities were seen and seized. For the landscape planning guild, which I had studied, it was a tremendous upgrade. Suddenly there were not only subordinate, but formative roles.

Andreas Bernögger: What were your first contacts with IBA_Vienna?

Kurt Hofstetter: I read in the newspaper in 2013 that Vienna was going to have an IBA and that the Seestadt was going to be part of it. After that, nothing more. In 2015 I considered staying on at Wien 3420 AG or going back into administration. Shortly before I was about to communicate my decision, I still remember the scene clearly, I received a call from Michael Ludwig: He would like me to join the IBA_Vienna. It was immediately clear to me that I would do it. I then first met Wolfgang Förster, which was followed by talks in the administrative group. Wolfgang Förster was to be in charge and I was to have an external presence. We had a good connection and were able to settle into these roles well. Before the change, however, I first took a three-month sabbatical.

Rudolf Scheuven: In many conversations we heard the reservation, that this IBA was in the beginning purely a marketing program. How did you perceive the events?

Kurt Hofstetter: It is true that stronger communication of existing projects as well as housing policy was an important concern. In view of neoliberal counter-tendencies and often a lack of understanding for the value of the system that has been built, I understand that well. I therefore saw the chosen theme as ideal. We seemed to have everything, which is why the exhibition was originally planned for 2020. Internally, the alternative of hosting a Viennese exhibition on social housing was discussed. However, the decision was consciously made in favor of the IBA as an instrument, because it was associated with greater radiance and attention and offered the opportunity for real further development.

Rudolf Scheuven: Other IBA had different logics. The IBA Emscher Park 1999, for example, was preceded by decades of failure, and it was used top-down to work radically differently. In the Viennese context, the Mayor is hardly likely to say that things should be shaken up. In this respect, IBA_Vienna also had to develop its own logic.

Andreas Bernögger: The world is changing, IBA are changing. Do you see the instrument continuing to be relevant?

Kurt Hofstetter: I don't see the instrument per se at the center. But the fact that there are some IBA that get something going and – because they are IBA – develop forces, I think that is very important. That was also the case in Vienna: The first invitation was accepted by 400 interested people. That's when I realized that it could become something larger. Because I was surprised by the huge expectations. There seemed to be a congestion. If we hadn't advertised an IBA, that wouldn't have come to light. What was exciting for me was the great desire to participate and have a say. It was a pity that the expectations could not be fulfilled immediately because there was still too little behind it. We had to build that up first. The first year was our actual preparatory year, in which the IBA Talks, for example, were very well received. There we looked bottom-up for committed people and topics. This preparation culminated in the memorandum – after which the IBA_Vienna should have been proclaimed. An initial misjudgment was that with the close-knit network of know-how there was no need to build up structures. In other situations it would have been more obvious that this could not be true. In Vienna it was true in the sense of the institutions, but not in the sense of the content and methodological orientation of an IBA. We therefore had to catch up.

Andreas Bernögger: The memorandum on the future of the IBA emphasizes the importance of the preparatory process. Not only the administration, but all actors with knowledge and relevance for the topic should be involved in order to determine the upcoming tasks and possible answers in a participatory manner. The interviews show that the chosen topic with emphasis on the new without precise explanation was partly interpreted as an attack on existing competences. How did this affect your work?

Kurt Hofstetter: When it comes to innovations, no one should be irritated by the “new” in the title. Because it's actually redundant. At the same time, of course, it doesn't mean that the old is bad. Direct communication and critical debate were challenging in any case – and took time. In itself, the line that it takes great effort to stay good has stood the test of

time. But it is a challenge in itself to determine the need for change and adaptation even when everyone is aware of the situation. For example, our focus groups in protected settings were good for this. Such formats were much appreciated and would continue to be good. That should remain, no matter who is responsible for it. Openness and self-evidence in the discussion are valuable. To be able to establish that, it was important that we had some freedom. That way we could add some flavor.

Andreas Bernögger: How did the theme of “New Social Housing” bear out?

Kurt Hofstetter: Good in my eyes. The orientation towards neighborhood development as one of the three guiding themes of the memorandum (note: New Social Responsibility, New Social Qualities, New Social Neighborhoods) has emerged from 2018. That’s when we generally undertook a realignment: reassembled the team; looked for an external office location that enabled us to do concentrated teamwork; and also formulated the core themes more clearly so that we could better cluster the projects and make them easier to understand. In the process, we realized that neighborhood development is the key to many energies and issues as well as to pursue many other objectives. The neighborhood has thus emerged as a central theme. At the beginning, we had assessed this differently.

Andreas Bernögger: The three main themes are on different methodological levels. In this respect, it seems logical to me that a curatorial and communicative focus was undertaken in which the other dimensions resonate.

Kurt Hofstetter: Working on the other two guiding themes has already been successful, but was less in the spotlight. Because responsibility meant, for example, the integration of new players. That was possible through neighborhood development. It is the same with the concept of affordability. And finally, the pandemic has also helped to increase the general understanding of the essential qualities of living: neighborly structures, short distances, meeting places and qualities for staying in the open space... So that I can find everything I need for a good life in my proximity.

Andreas Bernögger: What do you see as the main lines of development in recent years?

Kurt Hofstetter: For me, one sentence of our Mayor Michael Ludwig is important: If we want to develop further, we have to remember the traditions in the sense of the attitude, not the methods. In other words, preserve the attitude and adapt the methods. And there has been a lot of change. For example, the land use category “subsidized housing” is internationally groundbreaking and was developed during the IBA_Vienna period. At the same time, the Wolfganggasse competition for housing associations reminded me very much of Red Vienna in the sense of focusing on what people really need. That is the common thread for me. At the same time, I know that everything hangs by a thin thread, to stay with this image. Because there are always political voices that want to abolish social housing. And so even today there are some blossoms of neoliberalization, such as rent-to-own, which brings about a creeping privatization. But fortunately not everything was done that the slogan “more private, less government” had in mind.

Judith M. Lehner: How have your expectations shifted over the years?

Kurt Hofstetter: Looking back, I am glad that we were forced to do some things. Of course we were guided by the memorandum on the future of the IBA, and knew that we were missing two points there: an independent form of society and an open experimental space. In retrospect, I see that we were able to seize the opportunity with a great deal of effort. Quite deliberately, I would like to say that the topic of new social housing cannot be about making every project the flagship. It has been possible to make the synopsis the flagship and thus to put neighborhood development in the foreground. This is a very different approach, one I think is very contemporary, appropriate to the theme and authentic. Throughout my working life in the public sector I have taken the attitude that what I do must have a positive effect for people. The results of the IBA_Vienna must also have an impact and not serve themselves. I don't care if something shines. Not everything that is gold has to shine. A different theme would have required a different approach. But in this IBA, putting the emphasis on interaction and the added value of cooperation, has paid off. Investing energy in this collective is certainly worthwhile for other IBA. But there are also many valuable architectural contributions, for example in the development of typologies. The focus on single parents, for example, has pushed floor plan designs a lot, but changing requirements for living and working have also led to good new solutions. These are not icons that are causing a worldwide sensation. But they work well and you can learn from them.

Andreas Bernögger: To what extent did the history and the network of the IBA play a role in the actual work?

Kurt Hofstetter: The term helped us because many wanted to support or saw an opportunity. And we were also approached by less established players, such as building groups or people who came to us with special ideas. So more and different people could be brought on board. And there were always good reasons not to fall back into old patterns, but to take the next step. I strived very hard for these freedoms, and we were able to implement some things.

Rudolf Scheuvens: It is precisely this ambivalence that concerns me: on the one hand, this IBA could have been more, different, freer, more experimental, more international – on the other hand, the processes and discussions have brought us a great deal further. What remains of it now? What do you see – apart from the concrete learning from projects – as sustainable effects?

Kurt Hofstetter: Today it is more natural to integrate other people. The housing associations, for example, have recognized the added value. On the other hand, these people have built up know-how and now know about the needs of the housing associations. So knowledge and relationships have been built. In addition, the concept of the neighborhood has been anchored – to which you, Rudi, have made a tremendous contribution. And also the quality advisory board was indirectly triggered, because we often discussed formative roles of the housing fund. Gregor Puscher (note: Managing Director of wohnfonds_wien) carried this claim with him, but I think the discussions supported it. Some things from our cooperation in Berresgasse were also taken over into regular operation.

Andreas Bernögger: For me, as described in the chapter "Internal resonances," three approaches stood out: opening up and curating the discourse and learning space;

accompanying experiments in approaches in the sense of cooperative participation in concrete projects and processes; and forming and supporting cooperations. I find it interesting that you focus so clearly on the latter. In this respect, I would like to invite you to talk about your working methods and their development.

Kurt Hofstetter: Wanting innovation and thus change is understandably a danger from the point of view of those responsible for a system running well. Accordingly, the initial focus was on involving the city's own institutions. We introduced the slogan "IBA is everyone who is actively involved in it." Not because it is so good, but because it was intended to foster understanding. The IBA_Vienna is not a regulating institution, but more like a dance floor. We make others visible and then dissolve again. But the Dancing Stars remain. These were long discussions, but they led to a lot of understanding. Wiener Wohnen, for example, now has a larger team for the implementation of its IBA projects than the IBA team itself. But finding contact with the architectural scene was not easy either. This was then achieved through the very good cooperation with the Architekturzentrum Wien (AZW).

Rudolf Scheuven: As a curator, Angelika Fitz very much shapes this attitude in my perception. She is not exclusively concerned with architecture per se, but with leading and advancing discourses. AZW was therefore a congenial partner for you. But I'm still stuck on the image of the Dancing Stars. On the one hand, there is the visibility that has to be created. On the other hand, there is the question of the drive, the music, so to speak. What problem has to be solved? This discussion is too rarely held for me.

Kurt Hofstetter: When I look at all those involved in the IBA_Vienna with their motivation and activities, I see a great declaration of love for the city and its people. Because many people achieve an incredible amount. I would like to give that back to the partners: You have done much more than would have been necessary for "the job" itself.

Rudolf Scheuven: In fact, much of what you describe depends on people. We could draw up a long list of people from various fields without whom nothing would have happened. At the end of the IBA Emscher Park, ambassadors were appointed to communicate about the IBA and its projects. That triggered a movement. These people also exist here. How can they be nudged to carry on their part, but above all to get the recognition they deserve? Because the success of this IBA depends on many people who are often not in the spotlight.

Kurt Hofstetter: We had planned something along these lines, but unfortunately our capacities are at the limit. I regret that my team, which is passionate about the topic and works excellently, often had to go beyond its own limits, especially in the final phase.

Rudolf Scheuven: That is also seen. The team and their willingness to sacrifice are very much highlighted and madly appreciated in all interviews!

Kurt Hofstetter: I'm glad, but it shouldn't be necessary.

Judith M. Lehner: What is the international perspective on learning processes? Who has learned something from Vienna? And has it changed?

Kurt Hofstetter: Learning from Vienna was and is constantly the case. But yes, in my perception it has led to even more, because IBA_Vienna is very strongly perceived externally. Los Angeles, for example, is coming to IBA_Vienna in September with a large delegation for a week. They want to see a lot and then build a system to get a better grip on homelessness. But to me, it's more important that we look outward ourselves rather than focusing on what someone might learn from Vienna. After all, there is a lot that Vienna can learn from our correspondent cities Vancouver, Barcelona, Berlin, Munich, Stuttgart, Dublin, Los Angeles and Cologne. The development of this city network has been a great success in recent years.

Judith M. Lehner: What can be taken away for further mediation?

Kurt Hofstetter: For me, it's always important to consider the system people come from. We should work more specifically on what our guests need. And what impressed me, for example at the Summer School, was how quickly many people can put their finger on the wound. How visible the gaps are should wake us up.

Andreas Bernögger: What are these in your perception?

Kurt Hofstetter: For example, access to housing. Because housing for people with low incomes is seen as a task of the social affairs department. That's why we wanted to link these two departments more closely. 80% of our work is bringing people together and communicating. Because departmental thinking is strong. In this respect, setting up an IBA in an area with many strengths is also challenging – because the boards to be drilled are all there. This topic will challenge us even more with regard to the climate crisis and the development of existing buildings – although I have the impression that the city as a whole is now acting in a much more agile and open manner.

Judith M. Lehner: So on the one hand the formats in the sense of events should be carried forward, but also the support and process formats?

Kurt Hofstetter: Exactly. Because small measures often have a big impact. For example in Berresgasse, where we specifically addressed the obstacles in the translation of visions into plans. Before the developers' competition was announced, we held a joint series of workshops with urban planning and the wohnfonds_wien in order to bring the ideas of urban planning into the call for proposals. Initially there was no joy, but in the end it was a success. Such approaches should be taken along. Because there are so many details that can only be known when people talk to each other. So the plan improves because it becomes implementable and avoids mistakes.

Andreas Bernögger: Now this fine-tuning in ongoing processes was not your initial mandate. In these cases, you were dependent on the willingness to cooperate of those actors with power to act and responsibility – who had to recognize the added value of cooperation in each case.

Kurt Hofstetter: These tasks have set themselves. We just decided to take them on. It took a lot of convincing. But the learning was by no means one-sided. Because we also had to understand why there are reservations and what the reasons are for existing structures.

My respect for the housing associations, for example, grew enormously during this time. If you observe the constraints under which they work, then your understanding for some loudly voiced criticism shrinks. This is often based on ignorance. That is why exchange is so important. Talking brings so much added value because it generates knowledge.

Andreas Bernögger: I find it interesting how you describe your roles. From a strong knowledge of the system, you and your team have driven processes from within and made new things possible in a cooperative way. The decisive cooperation is always built on a great appreciation and a growing understanding for other expertise and roles.

Kurt Hofstetter: When you see that the players are not just doing their job, then something is succeeding. You have to be happy about the successes of others and about successful processes.

Andreas Bernögger: In my view, this describes a special working principle of an IBA. It's not so much about building groundbreaking ideas by great masters, but about a differentiated and functioning system with many different areas of expertise that engage in learning processes, and in dialogues they together work out what the next best steps are.

Kurt Hofstetter: I wouldn't want to miss the paths that Walter Gropius or Le Corbusier opened up. That's another level, that of people with visions and the power for new development. But it also requires those who do something with it in terms of implementation. It needs both.

Andreas Bernögger: What would you like to pass on to a beginning IBA?

Kurt Hofstetter: Don't get that started. [laughs] No, I would give that to the IBA team, not to the IBA. But our colleagues from Basel already told us that, and fortunately we ignored it.

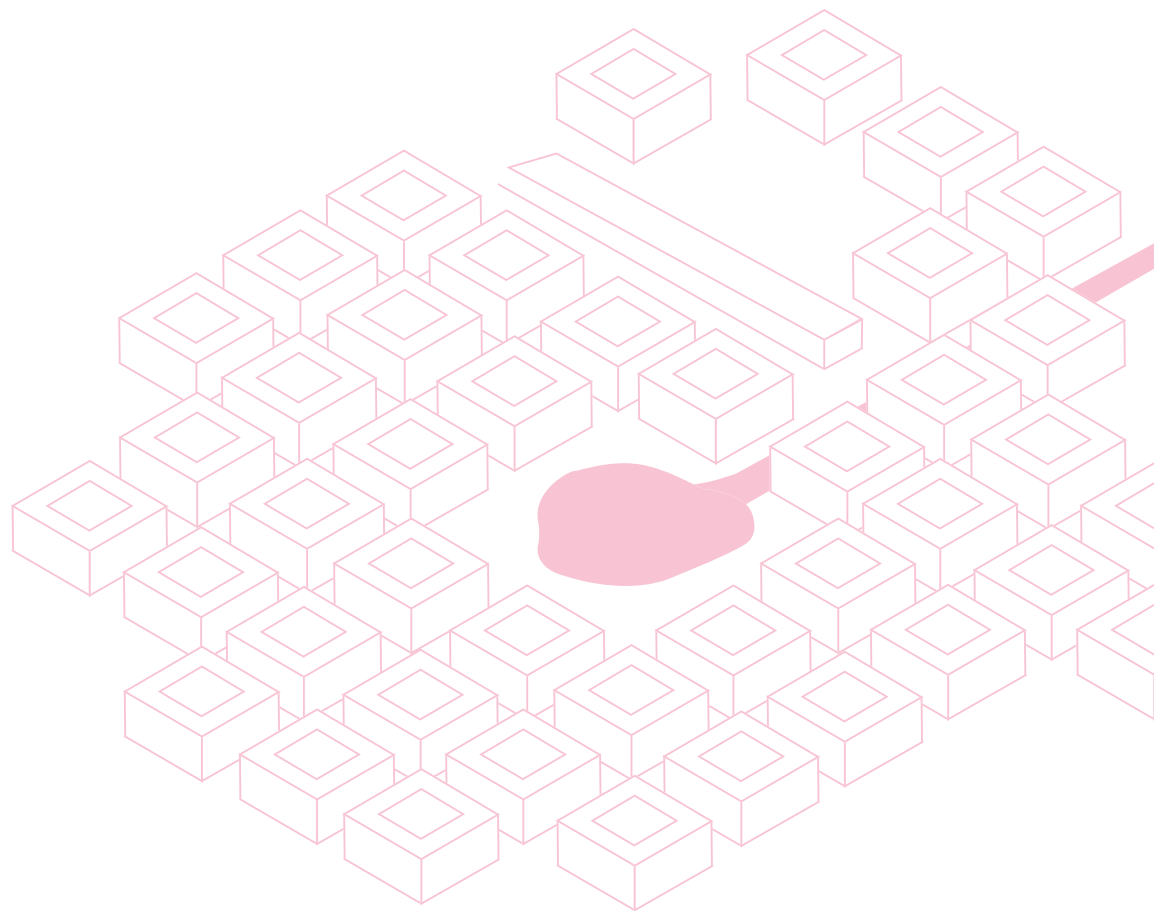
Judith M. Lehner: So there were no learning effects. [all laugh]

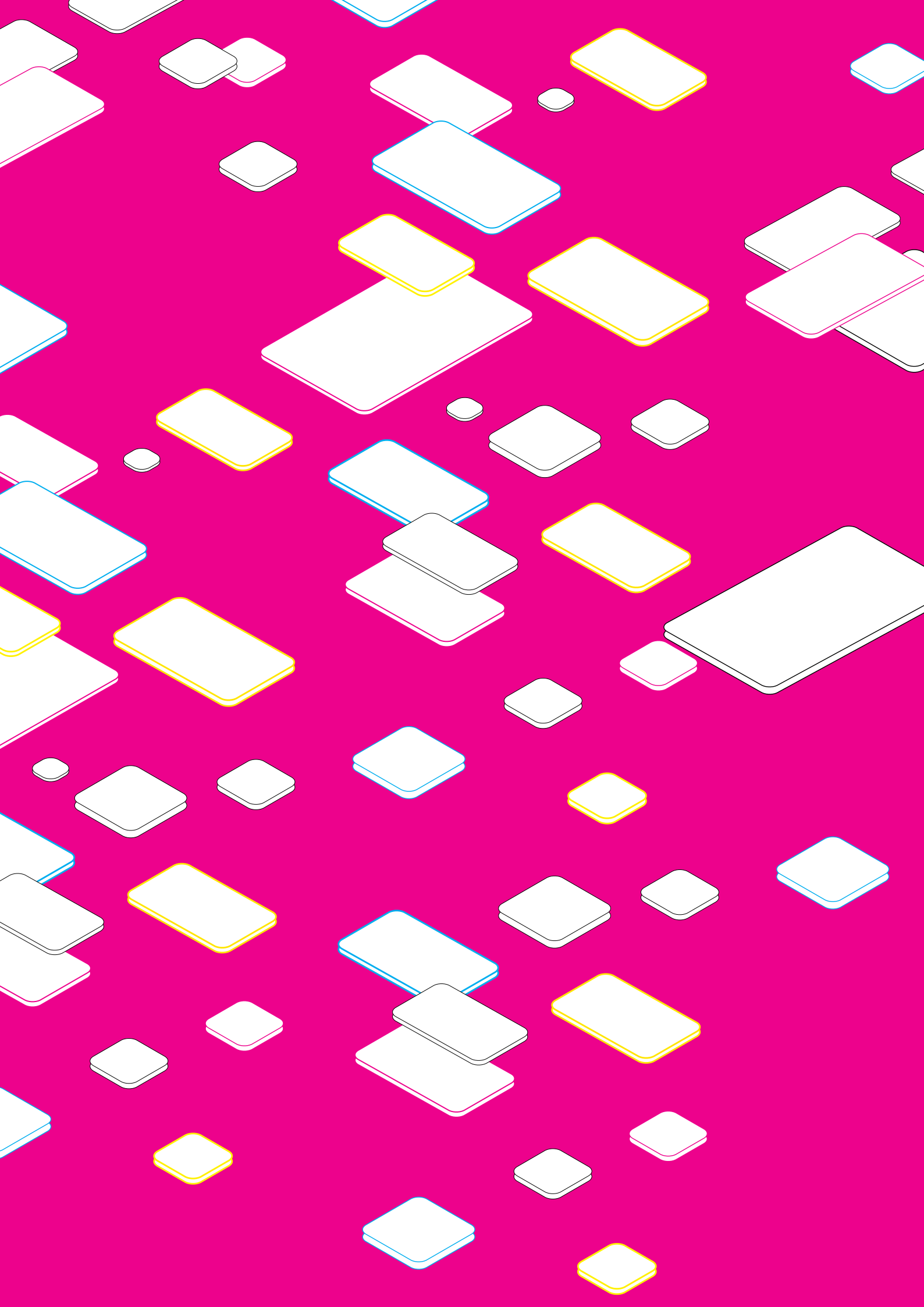
Kurt Hofstetter: Every IBA should think carefully about where it can be strong itself and what contributions it can make to pressing implementation issues. And not to be dictated to as to how an IBA should be. Because that would limit the possibilities and reduce the results.

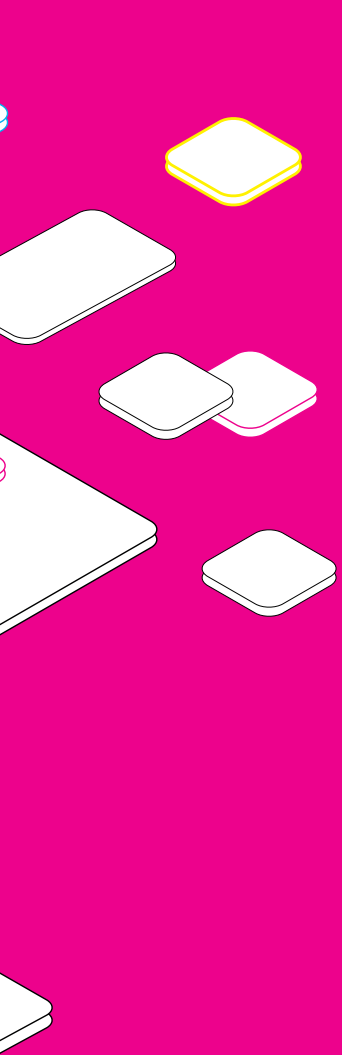
Judith M. Lehner: What structures are now needed in Vienna?

Kurt Hofstetter: Many of our developments are only just beginning and will have an impact beyond 2022. If we succeed in ensuring that the formats remain and the processes live on, then it's fine with me if people forget about the IBA_Vienna. This label was sometimes helpful, but sometimes also a hindrance. On the one hand it will be up to the people, wherever they are, to carry on the good and meaningful in their projects and structures. But after six years of IBA_Vienna I am convinced that looking after and supporting this movement is a valuable and necessary task. And one that is a joy.

Rudolf Scheuven: We can see that the mission of IBA_Vienna remains. It will also need catalysts in the future. Because the learning process will and should continue, even when the exhibition ends.







IMPULSES FOR VIENNA

Andreas Bernögger, Rudolf Scheuvs

The IBA_Vienna was a temporary actor working in the complex system of Viennese housing from 2016 to 2022. At the end of this resonance study, which critically reflects on the contributions of the IBA_Vienna, successful approaches and key findings from these seven years are condensed into seven impulses for Vienna's housing and urban development policy. Because even when the IBA_Vienna ends, its mandate for innovation and transformation continues in times of significant challenges.

The seven impulses are intended as suggestions for those responsible in politics and administration, but also as contributions to a professional and political debate. They were drafted on the basis of the statements in the 55 interviews and further developed in a workshop with some of the interviewees.

In addition to the main interest – critical reflection on the work and contributions of the IBA_Vienna – the interviews in the context of the resonance study led to an exciting side effect: a great need for discussion and debate around the IBA theme of “New Social Housing” was revealed among all actors, regardless of their institutional involvement. The interviewees' willingness to reflect, their openness and curiosity made a valuable contribution to defining positions and directions. It becomes clear that some of the discourses strengthened by the IBA_Vienna as well as processed topics and assumed tasks are to be continued.

Based on a strong commitment to the Viennese model of social housing and a self-confident attitude, ambitious thoughts for the future are formulated. The IBA_Vienna has made these visible.





HARNESSING THE TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL!

Vienna's strong and internationally recognized social housing tradition grows out of many determinations at the respective time, which always developed innovative power. The productive system built up over a hundred years in unparalleled continuity is supported by the knowledge and commitment of many people and institutions inside and outside the city administration. The developed capital is in buildings, infrastructures, properties, regulations, processes, instruments – and in many heads. They are all needed when – as two sides of the same coin – traditions are cultivated and innovations are developed. It is through interaction that the transformative power required for the further development of a system emerges. Political impulses should therefore focus on supporting the various actors in their joint and future-oriented action.

The IBA_Vienna is a commitment to high-quality social housing and an international signal for its innovative capacity. Understanding housing as a public task and actively pursuing it is in itself an innovation that could not be more topical. It must be nurtured, but also disseminated – in Vienna, Austria, Europe and the world. For in addition to major tasks and difficult framework conditions, there are also counteractive efforts. Societal conviction and political will remain essential foundations of social and subsidized housing.

The IBA_Vienna has made collective learning processes visible and supported them. Today we are learning for tomorrow how valuable these are and how they can be shaped even better. They need the active participation and constant curiosity of the people and institutions in the system who are continuously learning and developing their competences and roles. They need policy mandates to guide professional discussions. And they need responsibilities and opportunities for active care of good processes.

What is essential here is an understanding of innovation that does not worship the new per se and celebrates every trend. It is precisely the reduction to the essentials, the search for economical, intelligent and robust solutions and the orientation towards basic human needs that should be the driving force. Such an attitude is groundbreaking, especially in times of significant changes and challenges.



RECOGNIZING THE NEXT TASKS!

The high continuity of housing policy is invaluable. It is expressed, for example, in socially responsible land policy and land management, in subsidy conditions and rent protection, and is the basis of an incomparably good starting position. But our world is in motion and constantly challenges us anew.

Difficult financial conditions, the commercialization of land and housing, rising building costs and more and more crises endanger the affordability not only of housing but of a good life. At the same time, social inequalities are increasing. The IBA_Vienna invites us to understand affordability more comprehensively, from housing itself to mobility, complementary uses, energy, microclimate, neighborhood support and nutrition. Numerous initiatives provide valuable impulses to further improve the accessibility of the housing system for vulnerable target groups such as the homeless, low-income earners or refugees. Vienna can anchor the basic right to housing for all. The commercialized housing market is already contrasted by an efficient public sector that develops not only affordable housing but also livable neighborhoods.

While climate change is already being felt by the most vulnerable groups, ecologization and decarbonization are the biggest challenges of our generation. Vienna, with its large housing stock in public and limited-profit ownership, can show together with its residents how the sustainability transformation can be achieved. We need to switch to recyclable materials, construction methods and typologies. This includes the urban, energetic and functional renovation of existing stock as well as the new development of biodiverse, climate-resilient and climate-neutral neighborhoods.

Vienna's good starting situation has been created by trend-setting decisions in housing and land policy that have had an impact over decades. "On the shoulders of giants" the next tasks and potentials can now be identified. Social housing in the 21st century must mean bringing together environmental and social sustainability. Vienna can demonstrate how global responsibility and local care work together by making the climate-neutral, climate-adapted and sustainable city for all from a vision to a reality. This transformation needs the same reliability and continuity as the last hundred years of housing policy. Today we need to set the course.



THINKING AND ACTING IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD!

The neighborhood approach as the central message of IBA_Vienna is to be carried forward and developed further. This means shifting the level of consideration and conceptual focus from the construction of affordable housing to the development of livable, functional and sustainable neighborhoods. These emerge as a result of creative thinking and integrated action across thematic fields and project phases, responsibilities and levels of scale.

The relationship between apartments, buildings and neighborhoods must be further explored. This is because the critical mass and scale of the solutions are important for their affordability, organization and functioning. In the course of this, the processes of conception and production as well as the roles in financing and organizing are also changing and developing.

The issues of energy and mobility, open and public spaces, microclimate and greening, mixed use and ground floors, participation and coexistence, community infrastructures and sharing, as well as many others, must be addressed and managed across building sites – in new constructions and increasingly in existing buildings. This does not require rigid checklists, but a common attitude, openness to creative solutions and structured processes. This applies, for example, to the competition for housing associations, which translates the requirements at the neighborhood level into specific demands on the building sites. This requires a stronger interweaving of different levels and phases of the planning and development processes as well as continuous quality management.

The IBA_Vienna makes these topics tangible and workable. It provides actor-related, content-related and spatial approaches and experiences as well as open questions.

IV.

DISCOVERING THE FUTURE IN THE STOCK!

98% of the city of tomorrow has been built. It is a necessity, an opportunity and a challenge at the same time to focus attention on this existing stock with its constructional, typological, technical, energetic, social, design and functional issues. In doing so, existing qualities must be secured and new requirements must be taken into account.

Two out of three Viennese live in a municipal or subsidized apartment. This is more than a guarantee for affordable housing, it is the greatest lever for shaping the future. Some good projects already show how the energy and mobility transition can succeed. But new offers for residents, mixed uses and complementary functions, the greening of public spaces and buildings and the activation of open spaces are also comprehensive tasks. In existing buildings it can be demonstrated how the sustainability transformation can succeed in a democratic, affordable and livable way.

With a passion for repair, a new era of gentle urban renewal is to be initiated. 50 years after the Gründerzeit city, the post-war neighborhoods are entering the redevelopment cycle – with some challenging structures. The City of Vienna, which is both the largest owner and the policy maker, has a decisive role to play here and can be both a role model and a driver of sustainable development.

The upcoming tasks of sustainability transformation, climate adaptation and climate neutrality will lead to significant changes in existing structures. This will involve the definition of new qualities and changed standards, which must be done cooperatively with the users and the institutions involved. Building up an integrated project development and management competence analogous to urban expansion also appears valuable for the existing city.

V LIVING RESPONSIBILITY AND A CULTURE OF COOPERATION!

Social housing is not self-evident, but a public task that requires a respectful and coherent interaction of many actors. The public sector, symbolized in 1927 by the image of the Red Man, is increasingly acting not only as a comprehensive provider, but also cooperatively and in the networking of differentiated institutions. However, the strong bodies in and near the administration are in part only weakly connected. IBA_Vienna has built bridges in some concrete projects. And it has once again shown that a partnership-based ecosystem of municipal offices, diverse support structures, experts, companies and cooperation partners has long since emerged. This ecosystem functions because coordination and control tasks are named and carried out. Many responsibilities, roles and competences have been established, but in view of necessary changes, they have to be continuously thought through, renegotiated and supplemented.

The strong instruments of social housing should cooperate more with other municipal fields of action. Understanding and operating housing as part of integrated urban development, and therefore building up more cross-connections with other areas such as economy, culture, open space design, mobility and social affairs, is an excellent opportunity for more capacity to act, better results, but also a more efficient use of resources. In addition, the growing free-funded sector and the large housing stock should be more involved.

Thinking and acting on the neighborhood level also requires more cooperation among developers and expanded support structures. The IBA_Vienna has shown how, in addition to a competition of ideas, the principle of cooperation can be further developed in good processes. Users should also be more involved in decision-making and management processes in order to transform them from customers to partners. Last but not least, the IBA_Vienna has proven to be a valuable intermediary structure that has integrated and actively supported new actors from business and civil society.

The leading role of the public sector has been clear since the first municipal buildings. This commitment deserves appreciation, but constructive criticism must also be given space. After all, more networking and integrated action mean cultivating a cooperative culture of innovation and discussion, of making mistakes and learning. After all, it is not least a matter of reconnecting questions of urban development and housing in the face of increasing differences of opinion and societal conflicts of objectives. For only with democratic and professional consensus can the tasks in existing and new buildings be solved in such a way that building culture is created for all.

VI ● ACTIVELY SHAPING JOINT LEARNING PROCESSES!

The IBA_Vienna has made clear the value of supporting collective learning processes in urban development – and how they can succeed. Questions of housing, neighborhood and urban development should therefore continue to be made the subject of an ongoing professional public debate. This resonance study reveals a great appreciation of the discursive and reflexive activities of the IBA_Vienna – and shows that the need for discussion will remain great!

The creative energy of the entire city must be harnessed: Experts inside and outside the administration, research and civil society, politics and institutions. One of the city's own tasks, however, is to open up and institutionally anchor spaces for thoughts and discourses about the transformation processes in specific fields of action. In this sense, the spirit of the IBA_Vienna could be carried forward through a curiosity about the future and a responsibility for the future. For in view of global challenges, the continuous reflection and evaluation of practice in conjunction with an international discourse must be strengthened. Technological, ecological and social developments happen faster than projects are realized. Beyond individual projects and procedures, it is therefore important to weave threads of content and accelerate learning curves.

IBA_Vienna has shown how integrated cooperation in the sense of learning with and from each other can work even better. Some of the formats – such as exhibitions, events, public and confidential discussion panels, research and evaluation, international impulses and networks – should be continued in a curated connection, in different places and in cooperation with proven partners.

But even beyond the professional community, new target groups could be reached, for example through school partnerships, which can encourage the search for further educational formats. Together with the professional debates, this can strengthen important social discourses, make opportunities and challenges visible, set new topics and keep an eye on the future.



VII. **CONSTANTLY DEVELOPING THE INSTRUMENTS!**

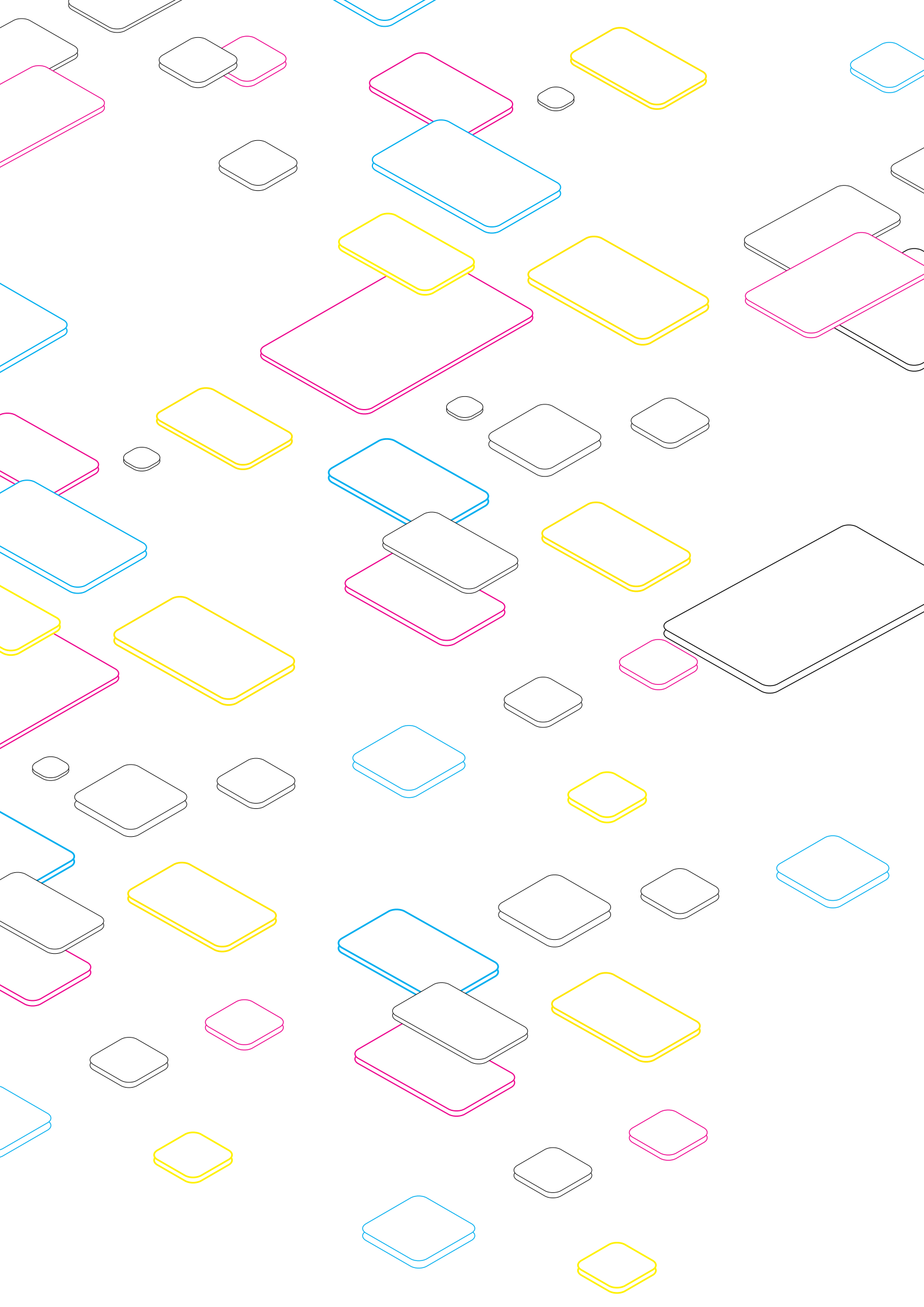
Despite Vienna's good starting position, there is no shortage of challenges and tasks: Climate protection, climate adaptation and circular economy, inclusion and affordability, ground floor zones and mixed use, open spaces and public spaces, ... An insane amount has to be done in a short time in order to meet a local as well as a global responsibility. At the same time, however, construction prices are becoming higher, the requirements more numerous, the financial margins smaller, the land scarcer and the energy more expensive. All this requires reflection and further development of the instruments.

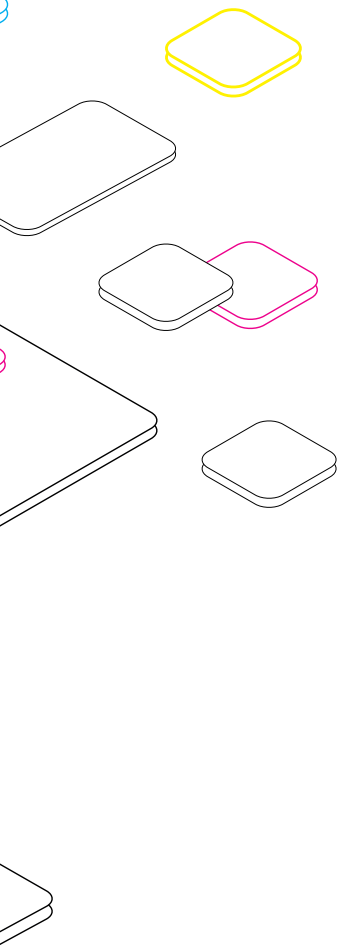
Fundamental questions are raised about the qualities of the city and the standards for projects. What do which projects have to achieve? Where can and should adjustments be made? Where can there be "less"? And how can the planned qualities be implemented? These questions without simple answers require close

attention and constant negotiation between all parties involved, from financing and production to use and management of housing. For example, the requirements for the sustainability of projects make lifecycle models necessary to refinance initial additional investments. New solutions are usually accompanied by new sponsors, financing models and organizational forms. The target systems, calculation bases and quality requirements must therefore be further developed.

There is a need for openness to more experimental approaches that, integrated in cooperative and reflexive processes, can give new impulses to the complex and highly institutionalized housing system. In this understanding, learning from projects becomes the driving force for continuous learning processes and further development of the existing instruments. What is needed is an innovation management system that creates the necessary interfaces to practice, politics and administration. Necessary system adaptations or changes are thus initiated, reflected upon and implemented cooperatively.

There are enough ideas and approaches. From integrated conception to participatory implementation and evaluation, from impulses to reflection and feedback into the next processes – innovations need active support and a broad discussion in the professional community, in politics and in society. The activities of IBA_Vienna have covered a small part of this broad field of work. More of this is needed now.





REFLECTIONS ON A DIFFERENT IBA

Andreas Bernögger, Rudolf Scheuven

Building on the preceding chapters, a superordinate reflection about the use of the instrument IBA in the Viennese context is undertaken. The following thoughts are intended as impulses for the professional discourse and the IBA network.

A (different) voice in the network

"The large number of parallel IBA leads to overlapping themes, a lack of international relevance and a structural shortage of resources – attention, expertise and money – for each IBA. Measured against the qualities of the historical models, each ongoing IBA therefore appears to be deficient. The standard of the large, singular IBA from the "heroic" early days has not only become unrealistic, it also leads to neglecting the innovative potential of a system of heterogeneous initiatives. What is needed is a change of perspective away from the individual IBA to IBA as a network of innovation initiatives." (IBA Expert Council 2020: 1, English translation)

Quotations such as this express – in addition to the conclusion of the perspective change – the often-articulated unease that the many IBA after the millennial turn do not live up to the few IBA before them in terms of their content-related radiance and ambition. In 2009, the first "Memorandum on the Future of the IBA" was written in an effort to maintain the tradition and secure the future, which was followed by further quality offensives and efforts by the responsible federal ministry, including the aforementioned Expert Council and the IBA network.

No formal obligations result from the use of the unprotected IBA brand – but an interest in a closer reflection on the use and effects of this prominent sonder instrument of urban and regional development. This raises the question of whether an IBA is committed to the tradition of the instrument? Probably to a certain extent, since a historical title is deliberately chosen, which is still expected to attract a great deal of attention and create a big momentum. But actually an IBA is committed to current discourses with an open view to the future.

IBA_Vienna can be understood as a locally anchored, internationally radiating innovation initiative that has made use of the historical significance, reputation, working methods and attention of IBA. This, however, quite free in interpretation and thus by no means ideal-typical. In doing so – and partly as a result of this – a valuable process could be initiated, which, however, only fulfils the expectations of an IBA to a limited extent (see chapter "Internal resonances – Contributions"). For in Vienna, too, the "shortage of the resources attention, expertise and money" cited above can be observed, but this is due to the specific context and the specific genesis, not because of other IBA taking place at the same time (see chapter "Internal resonances – Genesis and reasons").

The fact that this IBA_Vienna is different (or special, see comments by Klaus Selle and Uli Hellweg) has often been emphasized and also justified. Thus it supposedly fits the city, which has counted the slogan "Vienna is different" as part of its identity at the latest since its use by city marketing.

IBA_Vienna operates in a spatial, political and administrative context that is characterized by a different kind of problem or action pressure than is seen as typical for IBA. It was initiated

from a position of strength, and has thus developed its own logic. There is no doubt that it has achieved something of its own and set things in motion – although much more would have been possible, according to many interviewees who would have liked to see IBA_Vienna “differently different.”

The difference must therefore be explored further, even if there is “no binding convention on what constitutes an IBA” (IBA Expert Council 2017: 5, English translation). However, there are recommendations and guidelines based on the experiences with the instrument (among others, *ibid.*), which will be referred to in the following.

State of exception?

Interviewees from the sciences emphasize (see chapter “Internal resonances – Instrument IBA”) that IBA have changed and developed considerably in their history. Among other things, the processual dimension compared to the built result has been increasingly recognized as essential, and attention has shifted from the final presentation to the “temporal state of exception” (cf. *ibid.*: 7, English translation). In Vienna, too, it is evident that the processual character of IBA, the curated period with many, even small, steps and changes in dialogue and cooperation with the actors of the system, has taken on decisive importance. The IBA team has shaped this process sensitively, actively and appreciatively. However, this period cannot be regarded as a state of exception – such a was simply not intended, not even on a temporary basis..

“There was great astonishment and in many places also skepticism when the Housing Department ... announced the [IBA_Vienna], as the most recent [IBA] had mainly focused on compensating for major deficits. ... Is the IBA_Vienna in danger of not finding a new program, of not setting itself a new task, but of celebrating the status quo? Especially at a time when the “Viennese model” is attracting a great deal of interest internationally, local forces of inertia could increase. But perhaps the IBA_Vienna is also a symptom of a new kind of International Building Exhibition of the 21st century, which primarily attempts to proactively meet future challenges. This is no longer done in the spirit of modernism ... when people set out to reinvent the future of housing. In contrast to such an attitude, the currently ongoing IBA Heidelberg describes itself as “post-heroic”: the IBA Vienna, too, neither reacts to huge deficits of the past nor reinvents the future. Rather, it is repairing the future.” (Fitz in IBA_Vienna 2022 & future.lab (eds.) 2020: 288, English translation)

One of the differences can be found in the **content-related task**, which does not name a problem or deficit for which fundamentally new ways are to be found, but rather the better communication and further development of an established and internationally recognized strength in subsidized housing. Both aspects – communication and further development – are considered justified, worthwhile and relevant for an IBA by the interviewees in this study – especially because they contribute to “future issues of social change” (IBA Expert Council 2017: 6, English translation). But only if they work together. The in the start time perceived overemphasis on communicating what already exists compared to a more far-reaching claim to innovation evokes criticism, which is primarily attributed to the resources and structures (not) provided and the only subordinate examination of the status quo.

The **structural differences** of the IBA_Vienna are based on the dedicated resources of money (very few staff, low budget without investment funds, initially no own premises) and time (six years duration, hardly any preparation and no follow-up – ten years plus preparation and follow-up are usual) as well as the organizational structure (no independent organization with possibilities for action, but subordinate administrative unit). Due to the excellent equipment of the system in question, all this was very tightly calculated (cf. IBA_Vienna 2017: 40 and chapter “Internal Resonances – Genesis and reasons”).

Wanting to achieve a lot with as little effort as possible, i.e. to be efficient in the sense of a favorable ratio of input to output, is initially nothing to object to. This is particularly true of the IBA_Vienna: The contributions made, which admittedly cannot be measured quantitatively, are in a very favorable ratio to the resources invested (see chapters “Internal resonances – Contributions” and “External resonances”).

However, four questions remain open: Could more have been achieved with more input (time, money, opportunities for action, attention)? Would achieving more also be necessary in view of the global and profound challenges and crises? Could more groundbreaking answers have been found? Would this have been able to fully meet the claim of an IBA? On the basis of this study: four times yes. However, this conclusion should not and must not divert attention from what the IBA_Vienna was able to set in motion.

In retrospect, it is not so much the strategic orientation and the structural conditions (top-down) that appear to be elementary for the success of the IBA_Vienna. Critical are the **expectations, motivations and energies released** by the IBA label (bottom-up). Both the commitment of the small IBA team and the numerous stakeholders involved – who, as Kurt Hofstetter says in the reflecting discussion, did more than their job – led to the success. A collective bottom-up logic as a key driver stands in remarkable contrast to the traditional top-down logic of the IBA instrument. However, initiating this format (top-down) added the necessary elements of attention, self-commitment (see chapter “Reflecting discussion”) and an innovation narrative (see chapter “Internal resonances – Contributions”) that were able to give support and hold to progressive energies and create a positive dynamic.

What has been created during the IBA period and through the collaboration of the IBA team is considered to be of high value for the discourse on “New Social Housing.” However, it does not go as far as the claim to the IBA as an instrument would suggest. This is mainly due to the next difference, namely the only weak opening of a **space for experimentation**. Instead, the IBA_Vienna focused on an evolutionary further development of the existing system. Instead of daring novelties the dialogue and cooperation of many actors stood in the centre, which was initiated, supported and accompanied by the IBA_Vienna. The working methods (see chapter “Internal resonances – Working methods”) were based less on hard instruments and strategies (awarding a label with additional finances or opportunities) than rather on soft instruments and strategies (own working power, dialogue and persuasion, content-related impulses and motivation, discourse and exhibition formats). Conversely, this also means that the IBA_Vienna has always been dependent on the willingness of institutions capable of acting to cooperate and develop. However, this supposedly weak role is also evaluated positively in parts, namely with regard to the necessary networking effect and the strengthening of intrinsic and collective motivation, learning and development processes.

The factor of time

More **time** before, during and after would have been good for IBA_Vienna. There was a short “before”, and this only within the administration, which caused apparent operational and communicative difficulties. The also shorter “during” lost time and energy due to the need to catch up on preparations and then external challenges such as the Covid 19 pandemic. Many actors could not be reached immediately and some interviewees stressed that the learning processes of individuals as well as institutions also needed more time and also favorable windows of opportunity. In any case, essential steps were taken during the period itself, such as contextualizing and operationalizing the IBA instrument and specifying the questions, which then did not have much time to be worked on, but now require follow-up and continuation in the eyes of many interviewees. The latter is a frequently and clearly formulated suggestion in the direction of housing and urban development policy (see chapter “Impulses for Vienna”).

The difference in the preparatory process is impressively demonstrated by a comparison with the IBA Metropolitan Region Munich, which is currently in preparation. Both processes were significantly inspired by the IBA Hamburg 2013. In Munich, after deliberations in the city council and administration, the official preparatory process began with a feasibility study from 2017-2019. Building on a participatory process, the memorandum was published in the metropolitan region in 2021 – this inter-municipal orientation alone requires longer preparation. According to the plan, the ten-year IBA period is to begin in autumn 2022, once an independent IBA company has been established. In the case of the IBA_Vienna, which is already coming to an end by then, the memorandum was published one year after the start of the only six-year period 2016-2022, which explained the set theme (cf. IBA_Vienna 2017). This approach is clearly different from a “textbook IBA” – but apart from the weaknesses mentioned above, it has the advantage that much can already be learned from the activities of the IBA_Vienna, which have been described as valuable (see chapter “Impulses for Vienna”).

“The difficulties of everyday planning today are systemic. IBA as ‘temporary states of exception’ are usually well-intentioned, and in isolated cases they do achieve something – sometimes with immense effort. But they threaten to exhaust themselves more and more in the systemic dependencies.” (Baus 2019, English translation)

On the basis of the discussions held in this study, we would prefer to speak less of exhaustion and more of necessary efforts on the ground that the work of an IBA must seek in order to be successful. For as could be derived both theoretically and shown empirically, the (re) production of housing in Vienna must be read and understood as a complex system, the further development of which is elementarily dependent on learning processes among the actors involved and the methods and approaches they employ. Critical and precise looks at the status quo of practice therefore appear essential before, during and at the end of each IBA in order to be able to stimulate and support learning processes.

The question is now whether the relevant system and its actors need to be placed in a (temporary) state of exception to stimulate them to learn. Looking at the multiple crises of the present, which raise huge questions for the design of settlement and landscape structures, the conclusion suggests itself that there are enough states of exception. There is – in the words of Angelika Fitz – enough “future to repair.” What is needed, therefore, are rather consistent reflections and appropriate reactions to existing tasks and questions. A defined exhibition date can, however, become a motivator for finding and subsequently communicating answers to complex societal goals such as climate neutrality in the near future or the urban sustainability transformation.

Are such Herculean tasks incentive enough for a “post-heroic” IBA?

The permanent task of transformation

“There is no need to further demonstrate the urgent need for fundamental changes in the way societies interact with the biophysical environment. However, what constitutes a fundamental change, and how this comes about, is the topic of research and debate in the social sciences and beyond. What does change in a transformational process entail? How deep, how radical does change need to be to be transformational? In other words, when is it transformation?” (Feola 2015: 387)

In what way could the instrument IBA contribute to the overarching social goal of sustainability transformation? Or: What contributions to a contemporary IBA concept as a driver of innovation towards the sustainable development goals can be drawn based on this resonance study?

The expansion of scales and increasing heterogeneity of IBA is accompanied by significant instrumental implications: the projects become more diverse, the locations more fragmented, the contents more varied, the methods more interdisciplinary, the processes more complex, the actors more diverse, the framework conditions more complex, the forms of presentation more multimedia-based and the implementation periods longer. This circumstance demands a precise reasoning and explanation from each IBA and inevitably leads to a wide range and diversity, and thus also to the different nature of various IBA approaches (in the network). In any case, the instrument retains a strong appeal, as shown by the large number of ongoing and prepared IBA.

But how long will IBA continue to be recognizable as such? And is this necessary? When do IBA go from being something special to commonplace? What would be good about this in terms of an expansion of everyday practice? Or does this lead to arbitrariness, and the distinctive special format is needed? If so, for what? How can building-cultural windows into the future look and be created? And what role do IBA societies have as catalysts in such processes? Until when is the IBA label important, and when do the instruments become permanent municipal and regional tasks?

Today – especially when viewed from a historical perspective – transformation is taking place continuously and at high speed. Societies and their habitats are changing at high speed. Alone for the reason that changed and further changing framework conditions

such as the energy system based primarily on fossil energies and accelerated technological, ecological and geopolitical developments provoke this per se (cf. Sieferle 1997). Thereby fundamental changes do not only want to be produced. Even the adaptation to changes that are already taking place requires a great deal of attention. In connection with this, the multitude of recent crises and their concatenation illustrates more and more how unpredictable the future has become. Constant trade-offs between different horizons of action, i.e. short-, medium- and long-term measures and goals, are necessary and the exact direction of the desired change cannot be determined in advance.

"This open future results from the fact that both the overall system and the essential subsystems are complex systems that do not permit targeted control of current and, above all, future developments/processes in the sense of comprehensive control of development. Learning and a critical and reflective approach to failures must in any case also be part of shaping the future." (Kromp-Kolb/Stötter 2022: 126, English translation)

Against this background of the omnipresent pressure to adapt and change on essential producing and reproducing systems – such as the social housing system in this case – the long-term accompaniment and shaping of this profound change appears to be an essential task for society as a whole. This concerns politics, stakeholders and institutions, civil society and users alike. But how this change can be promoted, supported and facilitated in the sense of a learning process among all actors and in the system – the work of the IBA_Vienna does not provide comprehensive and conclusive insights, but at least some interesting ones.

Supporting learning

In the example of the IBA_Vienna, the **interplay** of the three approaches of **discourse – cooperation – experiment** is shown to be fruitful, but has by no means exhausted its theoretical possibilities. This way of working was not ideal-typical, but nevertheless oriented towards the way an IBA works:

I > International and cooperative: In addition to the inspiration provided by international know-how and the international stage as a presentation arena as well as an incentive for Viennese solutions, the most relevant aspect of the IBA_Vienna in terms of actors was the stimulation and support of internal cooperations. Pooling the relevant forces for the tasks of the future, integrating new players and also reflecting on the responsibilities and roles in the system in dialogue was an essential – and according to Kurt Hofstetter the essential – field of work for the IBA team. In addition to this intermediary networking and moderation, however, it also brought in its own competencies at some points in line with the respective constellation and task, which can be understood as temporary support for an innovation process with knowledge, competencies, but also resources.

B > Building and experimenting: In addition to the exhibition of good Viennese projects, experiments in approaches in the sense of incremental optimizations are part of the IBA_Vienna. In the ongoing operations, the evolution of the system could be advanced through the cooperative setting as well as subsequent monitoring of content-related foci.

This is best illustrated by the neighborhood approach, which was strengthened, applied and established in many processes. Because in a complex system with so much tradition the processes themselves function in a very differentiated way, in iterative developments the needs and possible directions must be determined cooperatively with all the actors involved and then tested in the implementation – in the sense of the next best step in a continuous learning process. In this way, creativity is shifted from a few to many heads, who have to bring their local, role-specific knowledge into partly real-world-laboratory-like experimental fields and complex constellations. This is about more than the development of a project. It is about the development of a multi-layered system of actors and actions. In addition, however, the special importance of key persons who unfolded creative potential on the most diverse levels becomes apparent. In the context of IBA_Vienna, it was they who sometimes opened up, defended and framed even small spaces for experimentation.

A > Exhibition and discourse: For all the curatorial significance and positive resonance of, for example, the interim presentation and certainly also the final presentation, the role of the period of intensified discourse appears to be an essential moment of IBA_Vienna. The IBA team was able to engage in agenda-setting, create links in content, stimulate and bundle reflections on a meta-level, make existing things visible, create linkages, strengthen critical thinking and solution orientation, and much more. This is more than the collection and presentation of selected IBA projects, namely to (co-)curate and manage an urban innovation process. The IBA principle of “exhibiting” thus becomes more than a final performance show, namely a permanent space for progressive discourses and actions.

Overall, the IBA_Vienna has contributed to reflection and learning on concrete projects in feedback with the established system on different levels – even if many of the interviewees wished that more time and a specific budget for experimental implementations and additional qualities had been available. (see chapter “Internal resonances – Working methods”)

Innovation engine

In this resonance study, the IBA_Vienna is interpreted as a platform for social learning and innovation processes, the IBA team as a supporting actor of the same. Learning is revealed less as a one-off creative, perhaps heroic act, but rather as a collective ongoing task in a complex system. This change in the understanding of IBA can also be read in the context of a change in the social innovation regime, which has long since elevated innovation to a paradigm and is actively trying to produce it:

“Innovation has long been limited to [... laboratories, development departments and studios ...]. Today, creative practices and innovative processes have become a ubiquitous phenomenon that encompasses all areas of society. What is special about innovation today is that the production of the new is no longer left to chance, the ingenious ideas of individuals and the creative practices of separate sectors. Innovation is increasingly pursued with intention, with reference to many others, and in the context of general demands for strategic production of the new.” (Hutter et al. in Rammert et al. 2016: 18, English translation)

For a better description of the innovation processes, the term **social innovations** is used here. These can be understood as “**variations** of ideas, practices, processes, objects and constellations” (Rammert 2010: 16, English translation), which are normatively experienced and legitimized as **added value** in social or ecological terms, and thus contribute (as profound second-order change; cf. Suitner 2022: 58-59) or can contribute (cf. Bernögger et al. 2022: 2 building on Ardill/Lemes de Oliveira 2018: 209, 217; Christmann et al. 2016: 278-283; Rammert 2010: 16) to the sustainable **transformation** of society. Social innovations use existing knowledge and local expertise to produce new knowledge that increases urban resilience to societal challenges by strengthening the system’s capacity to act (Ardill/Lemes de Oliveira 2018: 218).

In addition to this triad, six stages of social innovation are distinguished. Summarized pointedly: 1. diagnoses, 2. ideas and 3. experiments, which lead to variations; the 4. perpetuation and 5. diffusion of variations experienced as having added value; and finally 6. the transformation of the social subsystem (building on Ardill/Lemes de Oliveira 2018: 209). Not every social innovation passes through all stages, but this classification should at this point also contribute to a better understanding of the learning and change processes within the framework of the IBA_Vienna. Through its activities and the inclusion of many internal and international experts, the IBA_Vienna made contributions at all these stages:

Diagnoses of tasks and fields of action were deepened and specified, and new tasks were named. The identification of problems and questions is an important but by no means conflict-free and simple step, which cannot be skipped simply because of the circular logic of the learning processes.

Ideas were generated, communicated and brought into discourse. In addition, international trends were highlighted and discussed with regard to their relevance for Vienna. The closer look at the diverse Viennese practice evoked many next thoughts.

Experiments were initiated, accompanied and made possible – within the scope of possibilities – through direct and indirect, small and large contributions by the IBA_Vienna and its partners. This led to variations of projects and processes, some of them small and invisible, but described as significant, which in turn were presented and made not only visible in the discourse, but also discussable in terms of their added value.

The IBA_Vienna supported the **consolidation** of innovative aspects, i.e. the integration of these into the systemic processes in interaction with the actors involved.

The **diffusion** of successful, i.e. value-added, variations could take place via the diverse communication and discourse formats. It was often mentioned that the everyday practice of diverse actors in different spheres and parts of the Viennese housing system, but also in international networks and in partner cities was changed or at least inspired by this (see in particular comments by Brigitte Scholz and Uli Hellweg).

Finally – and this process is certainly only just beginning – the sum of changed practices, processes, roles and task understandings, i.e. the sum of the learning processes among the actors of the system, could contribute to a gentle evolution of the system in the eyes of the interviewees. However, it is suggested that the far-reaching transformation should

be a task for the future and to work on it more intensively. In a circular, systemic understanding, this **transformation** in turn leads to new diagnoses being made, ideas being generated, experiments being initiated, and so on.

"The linear temporal sequence of conception-invention-innovation-diffusion is changing under the pressure of accelerated global competition into a recursive and synchronized innovation process in which all steps must be related to each other simultaneously at all times." (Rammert et al. 2016: 4, English translation)

The simultaneity and circularity of the learning and innovation processes also become clear when considering the IBA_Vienna. The contribution of the IBA_Vienna is measured by the learning of the actors in the Viennese housing cosmos, which in turn is accompanied by a collectively driven evolution of the system. In addition to competencies and knowledge, changes in motivations, willingness, perspectives, processes, methods and instruments can also be observed. With all the aspects named as innovative, the contextualization and specification to the concrete case and the concrete action and cooperation structures always appears to be essential – and thus not only the peak but also the breadth of the learning processes.

"[M]any innovations inevitably bring into the world not only new solutions but also new problems." (Christmann et al. 2016: 283, English translation)

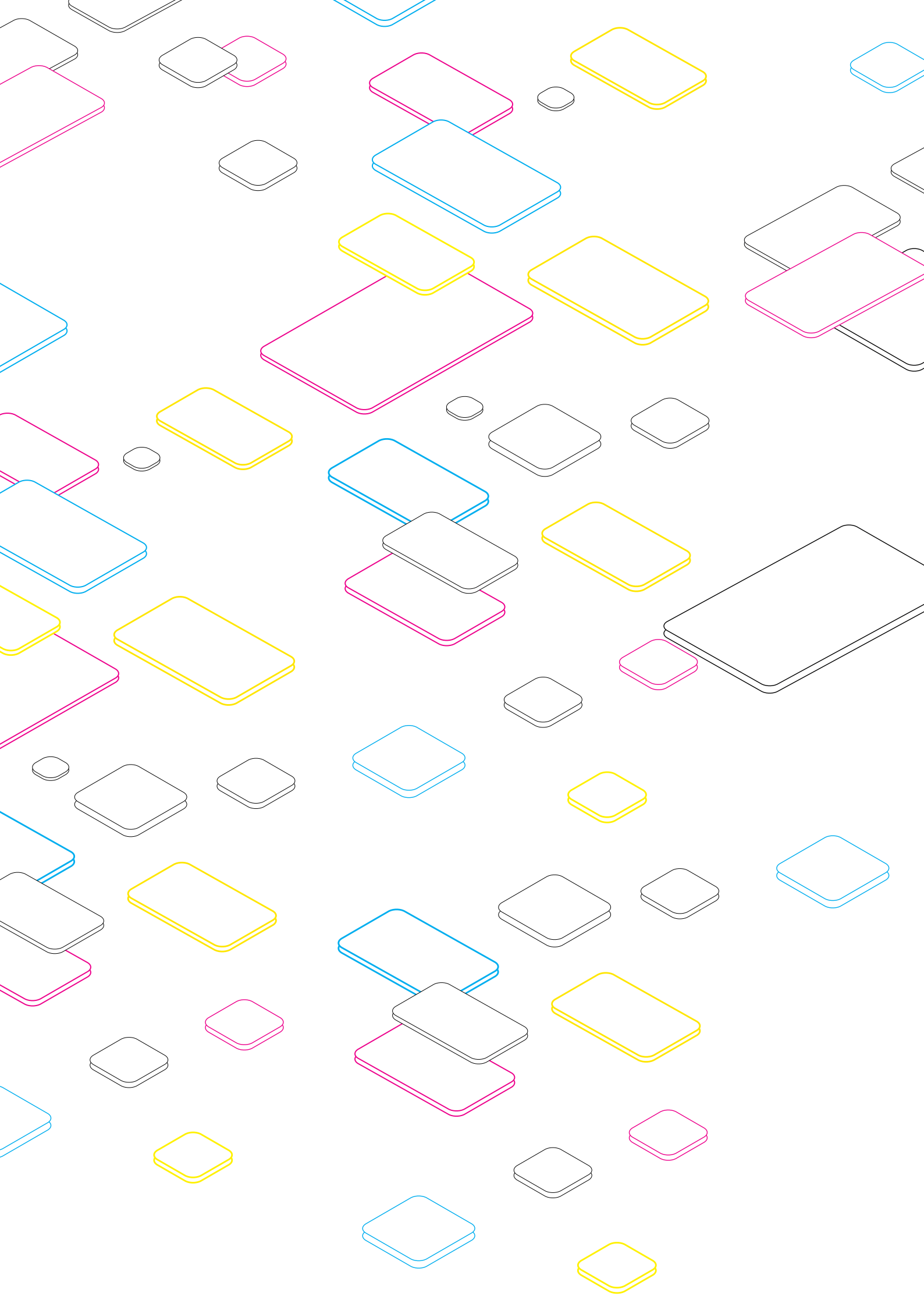
It is also clear that innovation and transformation processes must be continuously reflected upon and accompanied. Because new problems constantly arise. Because innovative solutions have not only added values but also disadvantages, which, moreover, are not equally distributed and thus have to be weighed up. Because the (repaired) future simply cannot be predicted.

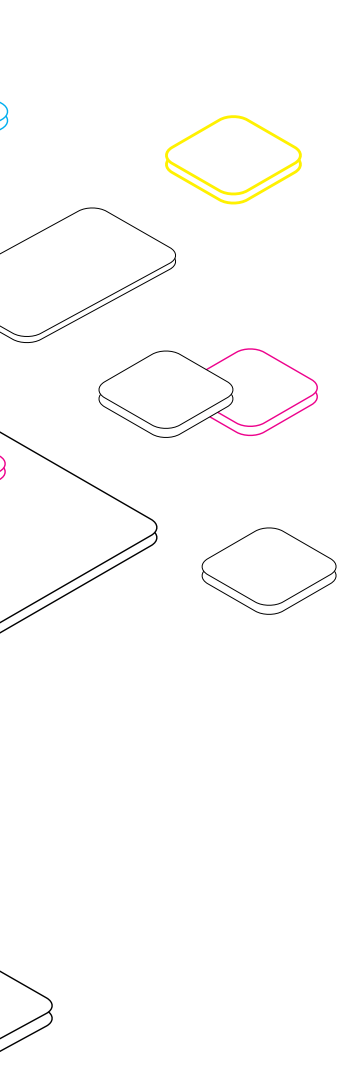
This brings us once again to the important political dimension, which is a special one in Vienna. In the 1920s, many social democratic movements in Europe discovered the political field of social housing. "Red Vienna" is regarded as a prototype and beacon of this time, which, moreover, has constantly developed and, in contrast to many other cities, has also successfully defended itself against neo-liberal counter-models. Thus, for example, the privatization waves of the 1990s and 2000s that took place elsewhere did not occur in Vienna. Thanks to the continuity, but also to the continuously developed program and the often supplemented instruments, there is today an extraordinary quantity and quality of social housing and a comparatively inexpensive rent level. The own administrative department on the subject is still considered a social democratic core business. The IBA_Vienna is read (among other things) as a political statement for the topicality and self-confidence of this policy field.

A closer look reveals that politics has important roles beyond the commissioning, equipping and enabling of innovation processes: Just like the users, the acting players and civil society, the political level must be part of the learning processes. For it is necessary – professionally as well as politically – to recognize new tasks, to name goals, to change

roles, to adapt framework conditions, to find solutions and to reflect and legitimize all of this. The associated change in the self-image between politics, the professional world and civil society has often been discussed in the context of this study and thus offers many further occasions for scientific, political and practical debate.

This introduces a final thought: IBA cannot bring about change on their own. In view of many fundamental and difficult tasks in the city and the country, they can only do so together with their context and its actors. But if this context and its actors are willing, IBA and its way of working can contribute a lot. A glance at the global events quickly shows how necessary it is to develop and communicate new ways. This will certainly be a driver for many more IBA and other transformative planning formats.





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