



Charter

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1 Purpose of this document

The purpose of this document is to define a basic set of principles for mutual collaboration and conduct. It shall also make sure that members of the Focus and Discussion Groups (see sections 1.1.2 and 1.1.3) of the Smart Cities Marketplace know what they may expect and what is expected from them, in general terms.

Both group forms are expected to produce tangible outcomes, following the overall purpose of the Smart Cities Marketplace to facilitate and foster the uptake, replication, and upscaling of sustainable urban solutions with the help of its dedicated services and supporting the implementation and further acceleration of the EU Green Deal at local level (see also section 2).

1.1 Definitions

1.1.1 Advisory Board

The Advisory Board consists of representatives of the European Commission (both the contracting authority DG ENER and other services), selected members of the SCM community and representatives of (urban) (flagship) initiatives the Smart Cities Marketplace collaborates with and which it supports, such as the Renovation Wave¹, the Horizon Europe Mission on Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities,² the Covenant of Mayors,³ the EU City Facility,⁴ CIVITAS,⁵ or Living-in.EU.⁶

The Advisory Board is chaired by the contracting authority, DG ENER. It provides political and strategic steering to the operations of the Smart Cities Marketplace and fulfils the following functions:

- Approve, together with the Contracting Authority (European Commission, DG ENER), the detailed Roadmap for the Smart Cities Marketplace and the suggested list of events;
- Approve, together with the Contracting Authority (European Commission, DG ENER), new members of the Advisory Board;
- Provide guidance and formulate recommendations aimed at giving a political and strategic steer to the Smart Cities Marketplace's activities, which should be selected and planned following measurable added value principles, with clear benefits, both at EU level as well as at local level;
- Approve by a qualified majority specific functions and/or roles related to the Smart Cities Marketplace, in accordance with this Charter;

¹ https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/energy-efficiency/energy-efficient-buildings/renovation-wave_en

² https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/eu-missions-horizon-europe/climate-neutral-and-smart-cities_en

³ <https://eu-mayors.ec.europa.eu/en/home>

⁴ <https://www.eucityfacility.eu/home.html>

⁵ <https://civitas.eu>

⁶ <https://living-in.eu>



- Approve and provide input on the topics, objectives and expected duration of the Focus and Discussion Groups in line with the Smart Cities Marketplace's Roadmap.

Advisory Board members are assigned to the board as long as they wish to fulfil their voluntary role. A termination of their participation in the Advisory Board would require a simple written notification, ideally at the latest three months before the next Advisory Board meeting. A remuneration is not foreseen.

Advisory Board members are not allowed to chair any of the Smart Cities Marketplace's Discussion or Focus Groups (see sections 1.1.2 and 1.1.3) as this would imply a possible conflict of interest.

The Advisory Board is expected to meet up to two times per year. One meeting will be held on-site (if allowed by the situation at the time) alongside the yearly Smart Cities Marketplace Forum, and a second meeting will be held online.

1.1.2 Discussion Groups

Discussion Groups are online fora on an agreed topic and work programme, operational for a period of between 3 and 6 months. The aim of the Discussion Groups is to share knowledge and fill currently existing knowledge gaps identified by the suggested topic. Discussion Groups ideally produce lasting pieces of guidance to be published on the SCM website.

1.1.3 Focus Groups

Focus Groups are more intensive collaborations with both an online forum and exchange meetings. The aim of the Focus Groups is to actively work on a commonly identified challenge related to the transition to smart cities and present the outcomes to the Smart Cities Marketplace. This, for the purpose of supporting the knowledge exchange and capacity building activities of the Smart Cities Marketplace and providing input to the Explore-Shape-Deal process of the Smart Cities Marketplace.



2 Overall aims of the Smart Cities Marketplace

With a view on the transition towards a Climate Neutral Europe as informed by the European Green Deal, the aim of the Smart Cities Marketplace is to advance the market for smart and sustainable city solutions while ensuring a mutual level playing field for all smart city stakeholders within the European Union and associated countries.⁷

The Smart Cities Marketplace aims also at being a catalyst and facilitator for innovative economic and financial approaches capable to help the post-pandemic recovery phase and under the umbrella of REPowerEU⁸. The Smart Cities Marketplace operates in an impartial and transparent fashion.

3 Smart Cities Marketplace | Calls for topics

The structure of the Smart Cities Marketplace has evolved ever since its launch and starting from 2022 includes Focus and Discussion Groups (see sections 1.1.2 and 1.1.3).

The Smart Cities Marketplace organises regular calls for topics, both for the Focus and the Discussion Groups. The calls for topics will be launched at a minimum on a yearly basis and aim at a work programme with clear outcomes on topics of relevance for the sustainable green and digital transition in European cities.

The topics and objectives resulting from the calls will be evaluated, clustered where relevant, and presented to the Smart Cities Marketplace Advisory Board for selection. Up to four topics for Discussion Groups and five topics for Focus Groups will be admitted on a yearly base.

Once the topics have been selected, the Focus and Discussion Groups will be supported by the Smart Cities Marketplace to draft a work programme on the respective topics, linked Terms of Reference⁹, and promote the t to establish a group of members (chair, Co-Chair, participants, and support team) that will jointly deliver the work. The Smart Cities Marketplace Secretariat will select a secretarial support team and Co-Chair from its secretariat, to support the work of the respective groups.

Focus and Discussion Groups can also suggest improvements or additions to the work programme at any time, to better deliver the topics and meet the objectives accepted by the Advisory Board. Once the final work programme and Terms of Reference are accepted by all members of the respective group, the work is initiated and delivered according to the agreed work programme.

⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_horizon-euratom_en.pdf

⁸ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/repowereu-affordable-secure-and-sustainable-energy-europe_en

⁹ Templates will be provided by the Smart Cities Marketplace's secretariat.



4 Smart Cities Marketplace | Community members and roles

Applicants to the calls for topics for the Focus and Discussion Groups as well as other members of the Smart Cities Marketplace community commit themselves to contribute to the overall aims of the Smart Cities Marketplace as stated above (see section 2) and agree to the provisions of this Charter.

Applicants to the calls for topics must be from EU Members States, associated countries or countries generally eligible under Horizon Europe¹⁰. They cannot be in the situation of a conflict of interest (COI) which exists where the impartial and objective exercise of the functions of chair/participant is compromised for reasons involving family, emotional life, political or national affinity, economic interest or any other direct or indirect personal interest. Applicants to the calls for topics are at least 18 years old.

All members in the Smart Cities Marketplace Community take part in their own capacity and on a voluntary basis while representing their respective organisation and adhering to the Code of Conduct laid out in section 7. Members are not paid for their contribution by the European Commission nor by the Smart Cities Marketplace Secretariat. The data protection considerations of members are regulated by the Smart Cities Marketplace Privacy Statement¹¹ and in full compliance with the GDPR.¹²

4.1 Members of Focus and/or Discussion Groups

Members of Focus and/or Discussion Groups are invited or can express interest to participate in one or more Focus and/or Discussion Groups by registration through the Smart Cities Marketplace website and signing up for particular Focus and/or Discussion Groups.

After the registration on the Smart Cities Marketplace website, the registrant is proposed as a new member. Following acceptance by the chair and Co-Chair of the Focus or Discussion Groups, the member is included in all relevant communications within the Focus or Discussion Groups and generally, the Smart Cities Marketplace in case he/she opts in for that.

4.2 Focus Group Chairs

A **Focus Group** consists of a group of members¹³ who signed up to the Smart Cities Marketplace and jointly work on **actions** advancing the European market for smart and sustainable urban solutions in a specific area.

A member can take the role of the **Focus Group Chair**.¹⁴ These members have either submitted the idea for a

¹⁰ https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_horizon-euratom_en.pdf

¹¹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/privacy-policy_en
https://ec.europa.eu/info/legal-notice_en

¹² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:02016R0679-20160504&from=EN>

¹³ The respective group members are identified in the Terms of Reference of the specific Focus Group.

¹⁴ In principle the Chair of the Focus Group is supported by the co-chair from within the Smart Cities Marketplace Consortium. It is nevertheless possible to assign a second Co-Chair from the community, e.g., as a backup, if that proves useful or needed.



Focus Group or volunteered – e.g., following a call for interest (see section 3) – to chair a Focus Group on a specific topic in a personal capacity.

The **Focus Group Chair** is expected to be a central contact point and partner for the Focus Group during meetings and bilaterally, to develop strategies, work plans, concrete activities, and work towards the agreed outcomes. The Focus Group Chair is supported by the Smart Cities Marketplace with a Co-Chair and secretarial support team.

The actions performed in the **Focus Group** might entail sharing of knowledge, taking away specific barriers for the market uptake of smart and climate-friendly solutions, identifying, and promoting best practices, seizing new opportunities for this uptake, and development of innovative and novel methods and technologies.

The **Focus Group Chair and Co-Chair** will finalise the Terms of Reference in line with the work programme agreed with the Advisory Board. The Chair is committed to the realisation of planned outcomes. Additionally, the Chair coordinates the planned actions which advance the cause of the Smart Cities Marketplace and is responsible for good internal communication within the **Focus Group**, i.e., with its members. A monthly or more frequent coordination meeting/call is considered good practice.

Focus Group Chairs are expected to ensure responsiveness to the Co-Chair and Focus Group's Secretarial Support Team, the European Commission, and the Smart Cities Marketplace within reasonable timeframes (in the range of 5 business days) and organise a back-up for communication during longer periods of absence such as holidays and sick leave.

Finally, **Focus Group Chairs**, supported by the Co-Chairs, are responsible for monitoring of and reporting on the progress on a two-monthly basis to the Smart Cities Marketplace, which will consolidate the feedback for communication with the European Commission.

The **Focus Group Chair** is supported for mutually agreed tasks by the Focus Group's Secretarial Support Team. The latter will assist the **Focus Group Chair** with secretarial support (e.g., templates, follow-up on reporting, and general calendar setting) and external communications.

4.3 Discussion Group Chairs

A **Discussion Group** consists of a group of members who signed up to the Smart Cities Marketplace and jointly work on **topics** advancing the European market for smart and sustainable urban solutions in a specific area.

Members can take the role of the **Discussion Group Chair**¹⁵. These members have either submitted the idea for the group or volunteered – e.g., following a call for topics (see section 3) – to chair a Discussion Group on a specific topic in a personal capacity.

The Chair and Co-Chair of the Discussion Group will finalise the Terms of Reference in line with the work

¹⁵ In principle the Chair of the Discussion Group is supported by the co-chair from within the Smart Cities Marketplace Consortium. It is nevertheless possible to assign a second Co-Chair from the community, e.g., as a backup, if that proves useful or needed.



programme agreed with the Advisory Board. The Chair commits himself/herself to the realisation of planned outcomes, coordinates the online Open Social community. The role of the chair of the Discussion Group is to build trust and a lively dynamic online community motivating and inspiring the members of his/her Discussion Group as well as members of the Smart Cities Marketplace.

The Discussion Group Lead is supported by the Smart Cities Marketplace with a Co-Chair and secretarial support.

5 Smart Cities Marketplace | Role of the Secretariat

The operation of the Smart Cities Marketplace and services are specified in more detail in the annexes to the service contract ENER/OP/2022/0001/B1/SER/2022-322/SI2.878268 signed with the European Commission.

The contract establishes the Smart Cities Marketplace Secretariat, which is the organisational body of the Smart Cities Marketplace acting under the instruction of the European Commission and welcomes everybody to participate and contribute to the overall aims of the Smart Cities Marketplace (see section 2) and will inform (new) members about this Charter being applicable to their participation.

The contract focusses on a continuation of the previous operation, with a focus on small and mid-sized cities, meaning cities with less than 100.000 inhabitants, representing roughly 70% of the EU's urban population. The aim is to bring these cities even more up to speed with the urban green and digital transformation, the different policy initiatives, and the current market trends. To do so, a set of dedicated activities and events is organised, including:

- Financing masterclasses, peer-to-peer exchanges, and matchmaking activities;
- Provision of knowledge material and knowledge sharing activities;
- 1-on-1 consultancy to advance projects and concepts from idea to implementation;
- Events and outreach activities with a strong focus on the local level.

Focus and Discussion Groups are considered a valuable contribution to these activities. Hence the Smart Cities Marketplace Secretariat will support their operation, including through:

- Within the specific actions that are set up in the Terms of Reference of each Focus Group of Discussion Group, helping to bring the Communities and groups with potential partners, key decision makers, influencers or other relevant to that specific action;
- Support Focus and Discussion Groups with external communications, disseminating/sharing/promoting of their outcomes;
- Enable and support a smooth transfer of knowledge from the Focus and Discussion Groups to the cities and municipalities within the scope of the Smart Cities Marketplace contract.

6 Smart Cities Marketplace | Role of the European Commission



The European Commission issues a service contract or grant agreement with a consortium establishing and running the secretariat of the Smart Cities Marketplace.

The Smart Cities Marketplace Secretariat provides the web platform and all services agreed in the mentioned service contract or grant agreement, in close coordination with the European Commission.

The European Commission collaborates with and gives support to the Focus and Discussion Groups in the respective policy areas of the involved Directorates-General¹⁶ of the European Commission as well as to the cross-cutting areas of the Smart Cities Marketplace by:

- Chairing the Advisory Board (only contracting authority, DG ENER, European Commission);
- Giving feedback and advice on the operations and roadmaps of the respective Focus and Discussion Groups as member of the Advisory Board;
- Supporting events, workshops, webinars, etc. with presentations, speeches, input, etc.;
- Facilitating a high-level dialogue between Focus Groups of the Smart Cities Marketplace and high-level representatives of the European Commission on contributions to European Smart City policies.

¹⁶ Currently: DG ENER, DG MOVE and DG CNECT, further additions possible at any time, e.g., via direct involvement in Focus and/or Discussion Groups and/or involvement at events, in the Advisory Board, etc.



7 Code of Conduct

Members of the Smart Cities Marketplace commit themselves to follow the code of conduct following hereafter.

7.1 Support the overall aims of the Smart Cities Marketplace

All members commit themselves to supporting the overall aims of the Smart Cities Marketplace (see section 2) in a professional, transparent, and respectful manner, in an open atmosphere with sufficient room for interaction and dialogue, where leading by example is the norm. Chairs of Focus and Discussion Groups are fully aware that the interests of members of these groups are likely to be much broader than those of their specific business or institutional affiliation. They make sure to meet these broad interests in the best possible mutual way when planning and executing the actions.

7.2 Not a channel for organisational promotion

All members are understood to bring their own, or their organisation's insights and expertise. However, they must never use the Smart Cities Marketplace for promotional or sales activities.

Networking is understood to possibly lead to discussions towards the aims of the members' business activities. Should these discussions not create benefit for the Smart Cities Marketplace Community, or should they even be to its detriment, they must happen outside of the Smart Cities Marketplace, be it in terms of the content shared electronically or during events organised by the Smart Cities Marketplace. Where cases of (potential) conflicts of interest arise, the European Commission will inquire their legal aspects and propose a solution, if such cases can't be mutually settled with support of the Smart Cities Marketplace Secretariat.

7.3 No association

Members of the Smart Cities Marketplace Focus and/or Discussion Groups must not use the Smart Cities Marketplace visual identity, including textual or graphical reference, to implicitly or explicitly imply that any activities, including business activities, are endorsed by the Smart Cities Marketplace or the European Commission, unless these activities have been officially endorsed by the latter two.

To clarify and unify the visual appearance of the Smart Cities Marketplace's Discussion Groups and Focus Groups a sub-identity of two "stickers" has been created by the European Commission, covering the following use cases:

- For Discussion Groups' related business, a sticker "A Discussion Group of the Smart Cities Marketplace";
- For Focus Groups' related business, a sticker "A Focus Group of the Smart Cities Marketplace".

In cases where the Smart Cities Marketplace is not directly in charge as organiser, author, etc. (e.g., during events, for publications, etc.) these stickers establish a direct link to the Smart Cities Marketplace while not



including the EC logo and therefore not being directly affiliated with the European Commission¹⁷. Regarding any other use of the EC logo and/or the Smart Cities Marketplace visual identity on documents content and communication, social media and so forth, members will follow the guidelines provided by the Smart Cities Marketplace Secretariat.

All Smart Cities Marketplace publications and digital content must have a disclaimer that makes clear that the content does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the European Commission and that the European Commission does not take responsibility or accept liability for the content of outcomes of the Smart Cities Marketplace.

Content, which implicitly or explicitly promotes the business of any organisation – whether commercial or otherwise – must be explicitly authorised in writing by the Smart Cities Marketplace (on behalf of and in consultation with the European Commission) before being disseminated by any Smart Cities Marketplace group or even by their members (if this is done by means supported by the Smart Cities Marketplace Secretariat).

For clarity, Chairs of Focus and/or Discussion Groups may mention their roles in their Curricula Vitae and biographies. The relationship between organisations and the Smart Cities Marketplace is determined only by written agreements made bilaterally, and organisations should otherwise limit the description of their association with the Smart Cities Marketplace by only stating the roles of their staff and/or officers.

7.4 Non-compliance with the Charter

In case members in the Smart Cities Marketplace do not follow this code of conduct and where their actions may harm the overall aims of the Smart Cities Marketplace, the Smart Cities Marketplace Secretariat will ask members to align their conduct with this Charter or (after consultation with the European Commission), or to stop their participation if deemed necessary for the benefit of the Smart Cities Marketplace.

8 Validity and contents of the Charter

The European Commission – referring to its role outlined in section 6 – reserves the right to update the Charter of the Smart Cities Marketplace if needed and every two years at the very latest.

¹⁷ For further guidance on the sub-identity for Focus and Discussion Groups and a comprehensive Q&A list please contact info@smartcitiesmarketplace.eu.