

CASE STUDY

Barcelona (ES) – Brisbane (AU)



August 18 - 2023

Thematic Network(s): Urban and Regional Renewal, Innovative, sustainable, carbon neutral ecosystems and strategic sectors

Thematic Cluster(s): Innovation centers

Cross-cutting challenge(s): Smart City and Digital Transition

Topic keywords: Urban Transformation, Innovation, Smart City

www.iurc.eu

**IURC**
INTERNATIONAL URBAN AND REGIONAL COOPERATION

Urban transformation through the Olympic and Paralympic Games

Brisbane will host the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, an event Barcelona hosted in 1992. Through the IURC, experts from both sides engaged in several activities to gain a deeper understanding of how global events can create tangible benefits for their citizens and strengthen sustainable urban development.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Barcelona and Brisbane both share a passion to be global benchmarks in achieving lasting benefits as a result of hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The IURC Asia-Australasia programme facilitates this process by ensuring that IURC cities like Brisbane can achieve their aspirations as cities that create a more peaceful and better world through sport, implementing sustainable strategies that create high impact for their city, country, and citizens. IURC cities like Barcelona provide an enriching knowledge transfer to assist Brisbane in achieving high-impact and long-term sustainable results.

In 2021, the city of Brisbane was awarded the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. This fitted with the goal of boosting the city and surrounding South East Queensland (SEQ) region's global identity, improving transport infrastructure and increasing economic growth. The International Olympic Committee's 'New Norm' shifts the focus from Olympic parks to integrating the Games within the fabric of the city and will provide an opportunity for Brisbane and SEQ to accelerate and amplify its long-term plans, such as delivering innovation precincts. Through the IURC, both cities have exchanged knowledge on boosting innovation through governance and community engagement and how to establish a lasting legacy from major events.

MAIN CHALLENGE AND SOLUTION

In 1992 the one of the legacies Barcelona achieved from the Olympic and Paralympic Games was infrastructure ("opening the city to the sea") and public space. The main challenge for the City of Brisbane is to use the Olympic and Paralympic Games as a driver to accelerate long term plans, such as delivering world class innovation precincts within Brisbane's Knowledge Corridor, delivering sustainable and well-designed subtropical housing, and establishing a global identity.

In the 1980's, Barcelona's urban transformation was accelerated by winning the bid to host the 1992 Olympic Games. The city built top-class sports facilities but also new neighbourhoods and large infrastructures, such as the road network round the city, a bigger airport, a new port and better urban transport and a new waterfront, with the reclamation of the city's beaches for public use. The city is now undergoing a third wave of urban transformation to reclaim and regenerate green corridors. It aims to restore biodiversity in the city and develop high value metropolitan strategic environments for socio-economic revitalization by using smart and nature-based solutions. Key urban remodelling and development projects include the Besòs River Plan, the regeneration of Les Glòries and 22@ district.



“The IURC has given us a unique opportunity to meet cities from other continents and learn that we share similar challenges and values. Working together to find common solutions can only make us better cities” David Martínez (Executive General Manager of the Municipal Institute of Urbanism and City Planner of Barcelona City Council)

Brisbane is Australia’s fastest growing capital city and is predicted to grow from a population of approximately 1.26 million people in 2021 to 1.721 million by 2046. The City of Brisbane is planning to meet this growth challenge by accommodating increased density through the renewal of existing inner city and suburban areas. Adapting the city’s existing employment areas to become high amenity environments for new and emerging industries, will help grow employment options and improve the Brisbane’s global identity. Brisbane’s Knowledge Corridor, located in the inner city, is where the city’s knowledge-based activities are based, and is where the Gardasil® vaccine was developed. This world leading vaccine will irradiate cervical cancer. Advancing the knowledge corridor and its innovation precincts will be a key focus for the Brisbane-Barcelona cooperation.

The announcement of Brisbane as the Host City for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games will provide the catalyst to achieve a legacy for the city and the surrounding region. Work is currently underway on the Brisbane 2032 Legacy Plan, which is being prepared jointly by the Games Delivery Partners including the Australian and Queensland Governments, the City of Brisbane, Australian Olympic Committee, Paralympics Australia and the Brisbane 2032 Organising Committee. This plan will focus on legacy aspirations at a range of scales, aiming to ensure that lasting

benefits are delivered before, during and after the Games. With 9 years until the Games, the City of Brisbane is also planning for legacy. The City's focus is on the actions that can have the maximum positive benefit to residents and businesses within Brisbane in the lead up to and long after the Games.

“As Brisbane has been confirmed as the Host City for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, achieving a strong legacy for the city will be critical, both in the lead up to and beyond the Games. The IURC connections to other cities, in particular Barcelona, have been an invaluable way to collaborate on common urban challenges and learn from the experiences of other Olympic and Paralympic cities.” Dy Currie (Executive General Manager, Brisbane 2032 Host City and Strategic Partnerships and City Planner)



Brisbane's cooperation with Barcelona provides a significant opportunity to share learnings on Olympic and Paralympic legacy. Barcelona is considered global best practice for Olympic and Paralympic legacy, having achieved large scale and ongoing urban transformations through the catalyst of the Games. Both organisations are committed to the cooperation and this has helped to strengthen the relationship between the cities through knowledge sharing and capacity building. Specific areas of focus include:

- How to use global events to accelerate and boost urban transformation and establish a global identity
- Boosting innovation through governance and community engagement
- Overcoming physical barriers (including infrastructure) through placemaking
- Developing innovation precincts, specifically the 22@ precinct in Barcelona and the Boggo Road Innovation Precinct in Brisbane.

RESULTS AND IMPACT

Since 2021, Barcelona and Brisbane have engaged in many online meetings with other European and Australian pilot cities to exchange views in urban transformation. Before the onsite study visits conducted in [Brisbane](#) and [Barcelona](#) in 2022, both cities conducted several online exchanges with experts from research and innovation areas. They involved stakeholders from the *Boggo Road Innovation Precinct* as well as the *22@ Ciudadela of Knowledge*.

In October 2023, a high-level delegation from Barcelona will participate in the Asia-Pacific Cities Summit and Mayors' Forum (APCS), the landmark event for city leaders and those involved in the business of cities in the Asia-Pacific region. Both cities will participate in a panel discussion on "*Cities of Legacy – From Olympic City to Global City*". The IURC is also speaking at the APCS under the "Cities of Connection" theme.

The City of Brisbane is planning several activities in Brisbane, outside the APCS, with city representatives, researchers and businesses, to maximise learnings on Olympic and Paralympic Legacy and improve inter-city connections. This will include site visits to Brisbane's established and emerging innovation precincts, workshops and forums with industry and businesses.

In November 2023, Brisbane will participate in the Smart City Expo in Barcelona, preparing a joint paper on *Major Event Led City Transformation* with Brisbane and Barcelona as case studies. The cities are currently investigating formalising a bilateral relationship in the long term.

KEY OUTPUTS BY DECEMBER 2023

1.000+

Relevant audience informed about the bilateral cooperation through participation in flagship events

1

Joint paper on *Major Event Led City Transformation*

1

Progress on a formal agreement on long-term bilateral cooperation

2

Barcelona City Council attendees at the Asia Pacific Cities Summit and Mayors' Forum in Brisbane

2

City of Brisbane attendees at the Smart City Expo in Barcelona

1

Barcelona session "From Olympic City to Global City" at the Asia Pacific Cities Summit in Brisbane

1

IURC session on cities of connection at the Asia Pacific Cities Summit in Brisbane

1

Joint workshop for IURC cities at the Asia Pacific Cities Summit in Brisbane

THE IURC PROGRAMME

The International Urban and Regional Cooperation (IURC) programme enables cities in different global regions to link up and share solutions to common problems. It is part of a long-term strategy by the European Union to foster sustainable urban development in cooperation with the public and private sectors, as well as representatives of research and innovation, community groups and citizens. Through engaging in IURC, cities will have the chance to share and exchange knowledge with their international counterparts, building a greener, more prosperous future.

The IURC programme is an opportunity for local governments to learn from each other, set ambitious targets, forge lasting partnerships, test new solutions, and boost their city's international profile. Its activities will support the achievement of policy objectives as well as major international agreements on urban development and climate change, such as the EU Urban Agenda, the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and the Paris Agreement.

Authors:

Rebecca Arnaud, Manager Legacy and Games Planning, Brisbane 2032 Host City and Strategic Partnerships Branch, Brisbane City Council.
Bettina Stollar, Programme Director for Asia-Pacific, Department of International Relations, Barcelona City Council

Acknowledgments:

Dy Currie, Executive General Manager, Brisbane 2032 Host City and Strategic Partnerships and City Planner
David Martínez Executive General Manager of the Municipal Institute of Urbanism and City Planner of Barcelona City Council

Links:

www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/about-council/news-and-publications/brisbane-2032
<https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/instituturbanisme/es>