

Successful legacy site revitalization *Governance, risk mitigation and circular solutions*

Revitalization of legacy sites is key in moving towards the 2030 EU soil strategy objectives. Significant portions of our cities have drastically changed in the last decades. Former industrial sites have been converted into business parks or startup incubation zones, as well as urban redevelopment for city expansion fostering innovation and economic growth. Bilbao, our host city, is a vibrant testimony to the successful revitalization of legacy areas, and its Guggenheim museum and metropolitan area shine as a world example of regeneration of degraded industrial sites. But the work is not complete and many legacy sites in Europe are still looking for a future: they may be former mining or industrial sites; they are located in a large variety of settings, from urban to rural; and they have a very diverse market potential and community value. Revitalizing sites requires a complex strategy, which encompasses the business model, governance of the process, mitigation of business risks, and nowadays requires the use of circular solutions during remediation, redevelopment and the planned future use.

1. Business models in revitalizing legacy sites.

The theme explores traditional and innovative business models for the reutilization of legacy sites, focusing on the opportunities they represent for both public and private actors, with the aim to transform degraded land into sustainable economic and social assets. The redevelopment of these spaces may include not only the revitalization of urban areas but also the adaptation of abandoned industrial sites (brownfields) to host new (combinations of) uses, such as production centers, logistics hubs, research and development facilities, as well as recreational or re-naturalized areas. This theme also focuses on finding new functions to mining sites. By applying creative and collaborative business strategies, the economic and social value of these sites can be maximized, while addressing the financial and environmental risks of these projects. We are looking at presentations exploring the diversity of the redevelopments that happened or are on-going, showing innovative approaches for quantitative and economical assessment of ecosystems and social benefits deriving from the site redevelopment, assessing the impact of the market fluctuations on the redevelopment, whether it was public or private-funded conversion, and how the remediation strategy and costs have influenced the future use.

2. Stakeholder engagement and governance in legacy site transformation.

Legacy sites can be large and complex, with varying sensitivities. They have differing potential for transformation. Therefore proper governance is key, as well as effective engagement with direct and indirect stakeholders for the long-term success of the revitalization of legacy sites.

Engagement ensures that relevant parties with the highest stakes in the redevelopment of the site are aligned on a shared roadmap and that stakeholders such as community members, future users and regulatory bodies, can actively participate in the redevelopment process. Proper governance provides a clear and transparent decision-making framework, crucial for maintaining accountability and integrity throughout the transformation journey. Together, proper engagement and governance are a necessary



foundation to ensure the principles of land stewardship are included in a site conversion. We are looking at presentations that show good (or bad) examples of engagement and governance during legacy site conversion and that highlight the do's and don'ts.

3. Project risk management in revitalization of legacy sites projects.

Redevelopment of legacy sites is fraught with various risks — change in regulations, emerging contaminants, contractual, financial, safety, timing, and reputational risks. Redevelopment often includes change in land use and transfer of ownership as well as partial or complete transfer of liability. We invite contributions showing how risks associated with legacy site projects have been identified, assessed, and managed. We welcome submissions that provide insights into the perspectives of different stakeholders involved, from owners, contractors, consultants, 3rd sector, redevelopers to local authorities, and showcase innovative risk management approaches.

4. Innovating with Nature Based Solutions for site remediation.

Nature Based Solutions (NBS) offer the unique opportunity of low impact, low emissions remediation, but generally require longer timeframes when compared to more aggressive, often physical remediation techniques. The redevelopment timeframe can often be a constraint, making the integration of NBS challenging. However, these solutions can also capitalize on waiting periods before redevelopment, serving as interim land uses that enhance ecological functions and social value. In projects where longer timelines are feasible, NBS requires careful planning and integration into spatial planning to ensure they align with future land use goals. We are looking for contributions where NBS solutions have been adopted, alone or with more traditional techniques in redevelopment projects, how they were framed and accepted by the stakeholders, how they have performed and were monitored, and how have they been integrated into the design of the redevelopment.

5. Increasing circularity: from legacy site to land stewardship.

Circular economy principles are, almost by definition, the guiding concepts of a legacy site revitalization process. In land stewardship, the adoption of a well-thought circular economy strategy, encompassing all aspects of a revitalization project, can transform the legacies of our past to valuable assets. These assets support ecological balance, enhance biodiversity, and provide economic opportunities, thereby contributing to the overall resilience and sustainability of urban and rural landscapes. The way and the details to which these circular economy principles are applied is what interests us in this theme: framing methodologies, remediation techniques, soil reuse, coupling redevelopment and remediation, energy management, sustainable building construction, integrated management of remediation systems after site redevelopment, issues due to emerging contaminants or changing legislations. Contributors are encouraged to present case studies, design strategies, and policy frameworks that exemplify the successful integration of circular economy principles into land stewardship. Submissions should also address the economic, social, and environmental benefits of these practices, providing a clear narrative on how circular approaches can lead to sustainable site redevelopment and community engagement.



Submission Guidelines and expectations of the organizing committee:

Authors are required to submit a one-page abstract of what they would like to present, together with an outline of the structure of the presentation and a short biography, as well as an indication of preference towards oral presentation or poster.

Abstracts which include case studies are encouraged, particularly those highlighting problems encountered, lessons learned and identified solutions. Abstracts must be well-written and clearly and concisely outline the material being proposed for presentation. Abstracts with a pronounced advertising or marketing focus will not be accepted.

Authors are invited to address some of the following questions:

- Why is your abstract of interest to NICOLE target groups?
- How does the approach has contributed to the sustainability of the project and how has the case study embraced sustainability concepts?
- How does the proposed paper bring innovation to legacy site redevelopment?
- What is still needed in terms of knowledge development and transfer?

The Organizing Committee will carefully review all submitted abstracts, determine their relevance, compare it with other proposed presentations, and, if accepted for the program, assign it to an appropriate format and session. Session organization will be finalized upon final abstract selections. In this process, some valuable abstracts may not be accepted for an oral presentation: in this case, authors may be invited to the poster session, which includes a short speech.

The selected abstracts will be published on the NICOLE Portal after the workshop. By submitting an abstract, you agree to the publication with your name.

Deadlines:

Abstracts (maximum two pages or your alternative/pitch) should be sent by e-mail to [Chayenne van Dijk](#) before **Friday the 30th of August 2024**. Afterwards the organizing committee will evaluate the abstracts. The authors of the abstracts will be notified if they have been selected by **Friday the 19th of September**.



NICOLE Spring Workshop 2024 in Bilbao
21 & 22 November 2024

The location of the workshop:

The workshop will be organized at the headquarters of IDOM in Bilbao, Spain.

The address is:

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48015 Bilbao

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Organization committee members:

Alan Carter – The Land Trust

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