

Urban Climate Policy and Public Service Expertise Centred on Principles of Justice



Niall Dunphy^{1,2}, Alexandra Revez³, Gerard Mullally⁴, Brian Ó Gallachóir^{2,3}

¹ School of Engineering and Architecture, University College Cork, Cork.
² Environmental Research Institute University College Cork, Cork.
³ MAREI, the SFI Research Centre for Energy, Climate and Marine, University College Cork, Cork.
⁴ Department of Sociology and Criminology, University College Cork, Cork.

Contact: n.dunphy@ucc.ie

Abstract

In the sage words of urban ecologist Herbert Girardet, *'there will be no sustainable world without sustainable cities.'* Similar messaging was advanced by the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Jan when he stated that *'the battle for sustainable development is going to be largely won or lost in cities.'* Sustainable cities can offer a diversity of opportunities to deliver good living standards that are uncoupled from high consumption levels and high greenhouse gas emissions. Cities per capita can be more efficient places to live than rural areas, and traditionally, the use of the public realm within cities can help create new civic imaginings and a new social order focused on climate action for adaptation, mitigation and sustainable behaviours.

Just Cities Hub encapsulates a combined concern for embracing the challenges of climate action and promoting stable, just, and healthy urban environments. The project is led by a multidisciplinary team at University College Cork and started 31-March-2024 and will run for four years.

Introduction & Objectives

JustCities Hub aims to contribute to urban climate policy by improving collaborative scientific and public service expertise in sustainable transitions centred on principles of justice, resilience, and community vibrancy. It's guided by 5 objectives:

1. Rethinking frameworks for delivering urban sustainability through partnership, experimentation, and service provision.
2. Critically reviewing existing climate action service infrastructure for supporting just transitions at city level.
3. Mobilising and supporting innovation through small transdisciplinary action-based interventions.
4. Developing a shared understanding of assets and opportunities for a just transition in the city underpinned by a commitment to deliberative engagement and transdisciplinary learning.
5. Developing an integrative model for engagement that supports and enables a diverse and vibrant democracy in the city.

Results

Looking ahead at the project's outputs and deliverables

Research Outputs

- Final report – launched at a MaREI/ERI symposium for an audience of citizens, NGO's/ CSO's, national and local policy makers, urban leaders and practitioners.
- Four open access journal articles, two emerging from the work within WP2 *'Comparative Mapping of Climate Service Infrastructure at City Level'*, one from WP3 *'Piloting micro interventions and enabling seeds of change'*, and one from WP4 *'Foresight and Innovation Masterplan'*
- Four Policy and Learning Briefs – publications that will focus on synthesising the findings and recommendations for a national and local policy audiences.
- A curated portfolio of micro-interventions that can be adapted and scaled across the city and nationally

Project deliverables

- D2.1 Mapping of Climate Service Delivery in Cities
- D2.2 Journal paper 1: Best Practice in mitigation and adaptation service delivery for the city
- D2.3 Policy Brief on User-led review of climate services
- D3.1 A curated portfolio of micro-interventions
- D3.2 Three pilot micro-interventions
- D3.3 A report outlining the findings from the evaluation of impacts/continuity pathways.
- D4.1 Foresight tools multi-stakeholder workshop
- D4.2 Foresight tools and service delivery forum session
- D4.3 Foresight and innovation at micro-level

Conclusion

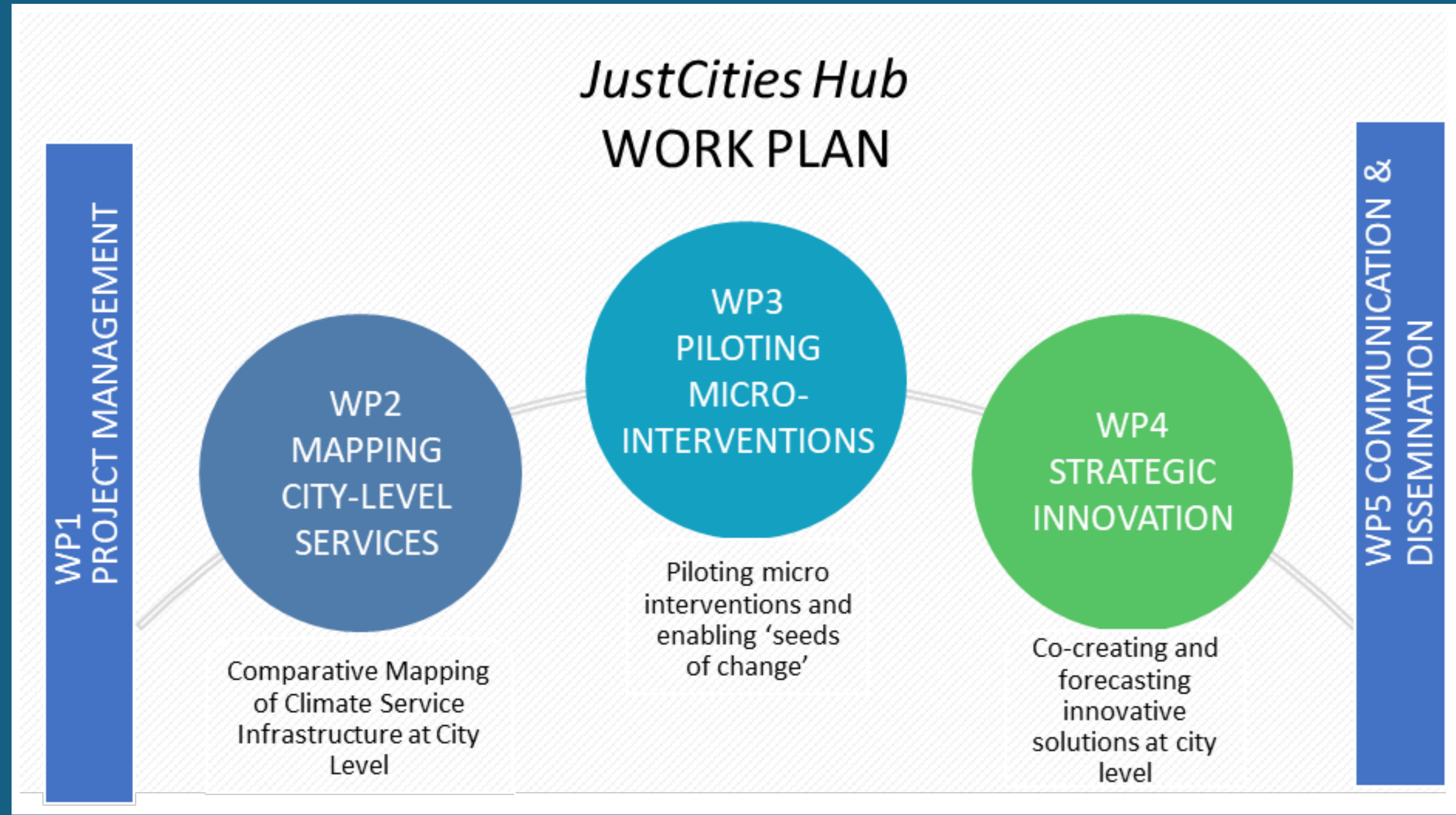
Key expected research impacts include:

- Strengthening connectivity through the enabling of diverse civic expressions and engagements with a focus on the city
- Stronger liaison, collaboration and support local people and communities in the pursuit of low carbon and sustainable initiatives that also work towards climate justice;
- Enhance existing impact and evaluation metrics on climate action centred around principles of justice and equality.
- Informed policy recommendations and outputs leading to transferable and upscaled innovations that draw from clear examples based on empirical research in Dublin and Cork.

References

Girardet, H., 1999. Creating sustainable cities (No. 2). Schumacher Briefings.
UN, 2015. *Battle for Sustainable Development Will Be Won or Lost in Cities, Deputy Secretary-General Tells Mayor's Forum*
<https://press.un.org/en/2015/dsgsm874.doc.htm>

<https://eri.ucc.ie/>



IN THE SPOTLIGHT: 'SEEDS OF CHANGE' Programme

JustCities Hub will pilot micro-innovations at city level. Conceived as a 'seeds of change' it will work to mobilise, facilitate and help implement micro climate action interventions in the city. Tapping into a rich ecology of skills, knowledge and interests it provides a well-designed programme that will allow us to support the implementation of the three pilots, capture results and explore ways to maximise the long-term potential of micro-interventions.

JustCities Hub will adopt an RRI lens on grassroots-led innovation in the programme, which will provide the means to accurately support, measure, and evaluate follow-on interventions in the city.

Micro-interventions may include sustainable cooking demos, awareness festivals, developing family friendly active travel solutions, exploring nature-based solutions for biodiversity, building climate resilience within the community.

Continuity, long-term benefits and behavioural impacts within these will be evaluated by the team. The core value in this work is exploring ways to ensure that the 'seeds of change' interventions can continue to flourish and grow



This project is funded by the Environmental Protection Agency under grant agreement no. 2023-CE-1214

SCAN ME



ERI website