New European Bauhaus
beautiful | sustainable | together

NEB Local Chapters Model

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1. Introduction

The NEB community has been growing steadily over the last years and currently counts more than 1000 members. In light of this steady growth, we face challenges in further **strengthening the connections** between the community members, **empowering communities on the ground** and **enhancing their collaboration**.

As touched upon by different community members in various contexts, the introduction of Local Chapters could tackle these challenges.

Following the **co-creation** and **bottom-up approach** of the New European Bauhaus, the NEB Team launched a co-design exercise with the NEB community through an online session on 28 October 2022. The aim was to consult and co-design the first concept of NEB local chapters. After the session, the community was invited to keep submitting their ideas and inputs until the end of January 2023. A second stage of the co-design process was initiated in April 2023 when a draft concept note on the NEB Local Chapters was shared with the NEB Community.

This concept note translates **the inputs** gathered during the two co-design stages of the NEB Local Chapters concept into:

- Key principles guiding the operation of NEB Local Chapters;
- Role of NEB Local Chapters ;
- Support for NEB Local Chapters;
- First set of examples and guiding questions.

Altogether, those inputs shaped a framework that guides the establishment and introduction of Local Chapters within the NEB community and their functioning.

2. NEB Local Chapter model

2.1 NEB Local Chapter

A Local Chapter is a self-organised, place-based group of NEB community members that contribute to the delivery of the New European Bauhaus initiative by putting its values and principles into practice in their locality.

In the context of the NEB initiative, a Local Chapter allows **creating, decentralising,** and **delegating coordination roles** in the community, as well as strengthening a multilevel approach.

Ideally, a Chapter is established at a local level, but considering differences between the countries and geographical areas represented within the NEB community, the scale of a Local Chapter can vary from local, municipal to regional, national level or international level.

2.2 Aim of NEB Local Chapter

A Local Chapter is an open ecosystem based on the principles of self-governance, transparency, democracy, openness, inclusion and participation.

A Local Chapter's aim is to enhance the spatial, territorial dimension of the NEB community by:

- **Amplifying the voice** (action, recognition, power) of NEB community members from a specific territory within the wider NEB community and population in a specific territory.
- **Fostering collaboration and networking** among NEB community members in a specific territory.
- **Acting as a connection** between different levels of the NEB Community through sharing of knowledge and information and promoting exchanges between different levels.

A Local Chapter materialises in formal events (e.g. meet-up, pecha-kucha, workshop) or informal gatherings that allow for fruitful discussions, exchanges and collaborations among people and organisations that are part of the NEB community. Members of a Local Chapter are encouraged to explore and implement formal or informal events that fit their needs and context.

Each Local Chapter can decide to invite external actors (not members of the NEB Community) to participate and contribute to the Local Chapter's activities and events.

2.3 Establishing NEB Local Chapter

A Local Chapter is established following an autonomous decision of NEB community members in a specific territory.

NEB Local Chapter establishment process must adhere to the following rules:

- The minimum number of NEB community members required to establish NEB Local Chapter is two (2).
- Only one (1) NEB Local Chapter can exist in a specific territory. Local Chapters can exist on overlapping territories if they are established on different levels (e.g. NEB Slovenia and NEB Ljubljana, NEB Latvia and NEB Baltics)
- Any NEB Local Chapters covering a specific territory should be open to all NEB Community members from that territory.
- Initiator(s) establishing NEB Local Chapter must invite all NEB community members in the designated territory to participate in a Local Chapter.
- The process of establishment of the NEB Local Chapter should be transparent and inclusive in terms of its planning and execution to enable the widest participation of all those willing to contribute to the Local Chapter.

A structure and organisation of NEB Local Chapter are not prescribed but they should follow NEB Local Chapter model as described in this concept note.

NEB team will act as a validator of a NEB Local Chapter establishment.

A group of NEB community members intending to establish a Local Chapter has to present to the NEB team a proposal before establishing a Local Chapter. The proposal has to include:

- The proposed name of the NEB Local Chapter;

- Territorial scope of the NEB Local Chapter;
- List of NEB community members participating in the NEB Local Chapter;
- List of NEB community members that declined their participation in the the NEB Local Chapter and full transparency as to their reasons why;
- Name(s) and contact(s) of the NEB Local Chapter's coordinator(s);
- Any other information deemed relevant to the NEB Local Chapter members to share with the NEB team.

NEB team checks if the establishment process followed the established rules and if the organisation and structure of the NEB Local Chapter adhere to the described model. If both have been taken into account, it confirms the establishment of the NEB Local Chapter and informs about this all NEB community members based in the territory of the proposed Local Chapter.

Initiative establishing NEB Local Chapter or any NEB community member based in the territory of the concerned Chapter can appeal against the establishment process within 30 days after the confirmation or rejection has been communicated by the NEB unit.

2.4 NEB Local Chapter coordinator(s)

Each Local Chapter should have its **coordinator(s).** The Chapter coordinator(s) should be appointed by **consensus** of the Chapter members.

The Chapter coordinator(s) can be appointed for a long period of time (indefinitely) or on a one-off, short and/or rotational basis, depending on the choice of the Chapter members.

The Chapter coordinator(s) can be **individuals**, **organisations** or embodied by the collaborative effort of a **cross-organisation team**. Coordinators are ideally not representatives of public authorities. However, public authorities can play a crucial role in providing different tangible and intangible support through co-creating, co-organising, **sponsoring** and/or **hosting** chapter activities.

The role of a Chapter **coordinator(s)** is to:

- Coordinate development and implementation of the overall direction and vision of the Chapter, taking into account the interest of the Chapter as an ecosystem nurturing creativity, inclusion and citizen-driven innovation;
- Facilitate coordination and organisation of Chapter activities;
- Facilitate cooperation with the National Contact Point(s) and the NEB team from the European Commission;
- Facilitate coordination and collaboration with public authorities, businesses, other local chapters and relevant stakeholders;
- Facilitate information sharing among the Chapter members;
- Facilitate networking and matchmaking of Chapter members;
- Disseminate findings and key takeaways of Local Chapter events, activities, etc.

The list above is not exhaustive. Members of a Local Chapter can agree to add additional responsibilities to the coordinator(s) role as they see fit.

2.5 Key principles

The key principles to guide the operation of NEB Local Chapters are the following:

1. Bottom-up and participatory approach
2. Transparent, locally owned, relatable and acknowledged
3. Well-coordinated and organised
4. Inclusive and relevant to local contexts
5. Cross-sectorial, trans-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder

2.5.1 Bottom-up and participatory

Establishing a Local Chapter essentially implies **empowering** local actors and communities on the ground, and thus, **better-integrating citizens** in NEB activities and projects. The p**roximity** and **relevance** of activities of local chapters result in more actively engaged citizens, who are essentially **NEB agents of change, jointly working** on projects that strive to make their places of living more sustainable, beautiful and inclusive.

At the same time, working together locally on transformations as sought by the NEB allows for a better "**grounding" of NEB values and principles** within various local contexts.

Guiding questions:

- *How can you best ensure a continuous bottom-up and participatory approach to your Chapter activities?*
- *How can you facilitate collaboration between different members of your Chapter?*
- *How can you best ensure that the Chapter members understand and relate to the NEB values and principles?*

2.5.2 Transparent, locally owned, easy to relate to and acknowledged

Developing a Local Chapter makes the New European Bauhaus more **relevant** and **relatable** to local communities and citizens in **an open** and **informative manner**. The Chapter members are the ones coming together and bringing their interests, needs, points of view, expertise, solutions and learnings to the table. They are essentially the agents of change that decide on the content and pace of the discussions, activities and projects, as they are the ones **responsible** and **accountable** for those. In sum, the Chapter members are the owners of the Chapter activities.

In addition, if the Chapter activities are **well communicated** and **well publicised,** they can get exposure, visibility and recognition from the local and national authorities, thus earning leverage to **influence policy decisions**.

Guiding questions:

- *How can you ensure transparency of your work vis-à-vis stakeholders and citizens?*
- *What actions increase the ownership of the Chapter members?*

- *What actions strengthen the trust in and acknowledgement of activities of the Local Chapter?*
- *How can you best measure and communicate the outcomes of your work, so it gets recognition on local, national, European or international levels?*
- *What means do you need to communicate on your activities?*

2.5.3 Well-coordinated and organised

Coordination and tailored approach represent key challenges faced by large communities. Setting up a Local Chapter of like-minded entities that are facing common issues and opportunities can result in the establishment of **functioning structures, holistic approaches** and **stronger cooperation**.

Local Chapter coordinator(s) and members should organise activities and events that are within their **human, time,** and **financial capacity**.

Activities can be organised according to **thematic** or **local territorial interests** or needs, depending on the choice of the Chapter members.

Coming together informally may allow **breaking down silos** that are often present in a community of stakeholders due to the constant competition to access various local, regional, national or EU funds. Instead of competing, Chapter members can consider setting up **cooperative budgets** and thus creating a **common pool of resources** to support their activities or projects. They can also combine forces with other Local Chapters (from within the country or outside) and work on funding applications jointly in consortia (as often required by certain types of EU calls).

By working together on a local or regional scale, the Local Chapter and its members can **build bridges** between **local** and **EU networks and communities**. In the process of building connections between local, regional and other stakeholders, Local Chapters can be supported by their respective New European Bauhaus **National Contact Point (NCP).** The scope of the support is subject to an agreement between Local Chapter(s) and the NCP.

Guiding questions:

- *How can you best ensure the long-term sustainability of the Chapter? Would it imply meeting informally on a regular basis, or formally and sporadically? Or would you prefer to have a combination of the two?*
- *How can you ensure that your Chapter communicates and cooperates with other (external) actors, thus preventing isolation?*
- *How can you establish a functioning relationship with your National Contact Point and your local/regional public authorities?*

2.5.4 Inclusive and relevant to local contexts

Feeling a sense of belonging to and **care** for the specific cultural, social, or natural realities of a territory, as well as **understanding the local language(s)** provides for networking and cooperation opportunities that would not easily emerge within larger, heterogeneous communities. Within local contexts, Chapter members can appropriate a variety of issues

(e.g. climate change) according to the realities on the ground, which results in the development of better-tailored strategies and solutions reflecting the local needs, contexts and approaches.

Understanding local cultures languages and realities (needs, contexts and approaches) can also facilitate the development of **deeper connections** and **relationships** between Chapter members and beyond, thus laying solid foundations for **long-term trust** and, essentially, **successful collaboration**.

Guiding questions:

- *What are the key local needs, contexts and approaches that you need to know?*
- *What are the key issues of your local context?*
- *How can the Local Chapter address key issues?*

2.5.5 Cross-sectorial, trans-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder

Connecting a variety of stakeholders from different sectors locally can have a significant impact on the nature of activities and projects carried out. Pooling the local expertise and knowledge from a variety of fields in a village, city or region can foster the development of highly **cross-sectorial, trans-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder** activities.

By coming together and sharing skills, expertise and knowledge, chapter members can **enrich each other's activities and projects**. For example, architects who want to develop innovative use for bio-based materials may learn from traditional techniques and artisans' know-how, collaborate with researchers to adapt construction systems or find inspiration in art projects.

Guiding questions:

- *How can you best facilitate the matchmaking between Local Chapter members? Through a dedicated pool or database of members?*
- *Will your Chapter organise thematic and/or sub-regional gatherings?*
- *How could you best share learnings with other members of your Chapter? Will you share them on the NEB community platform and/or dedicate some space on your communication channels?*

2.6 The role of NEB Local Chapters

A Local Chapter functions as:

1. A tool to facilitate collaboration between NEB stakeholders
2. An amplifier of NEB values and principles at the local level
3. A bridge between local and global
4. A marketplace of exchange and good practices

2.6.1 A Tool facilitating collaboration between NEB stakeholders

Organising formal and/or informal meet-ups by the Chapter allows for **networking** between local organisations, businesses, citizens, and public authorities who share common values and principles. These meet-ups also function as a tool to collect learnings, case studies, reports and inputs from local communities (among others).

In addition, quality initiatives that resonate widely with the wider NEB community can further scale up in the NEB Lab, considering they fulfil the minimum criteria.

2.6.2 An amplifier of NEB values and principles at the local level

In Local Chapter, members **act locally** but **think globally**. They work on issues and challenges that resonate widely with the communities and citizens on the ground; using a language and means, they can understand and relate to.

Local levels are where transformations of our places of living and minds take place. It is where the NEB manifests concretely. Working jointly on NEB projects and activities raises awareness of the **NEB triad of values** (sustainability, inclusion and aesthetics) at the local scale.

Local Chapters are essentially hubs of active NEB agents, ambassadors and interlocutors in a variety of local contexts. Their actions and voice further support the dissemination of NEB values and principles.

2.6.3 A bridge between local and global

Local Chapters can be instrumental in **highlighting the actions of local communities,** especially when they take the lead on specific issues. They **can draw the attention of other stakeholders** (local authorities, national and EU decision-makers) to local ideas and initiatives. They are spaces for the incubation, piloting, demonstration and development of actions and policies at a local scale.

In the long term, they can turn into **local/regional platforms** for participating in larger initiatives and integrating new communities, with the ultimate goal of having the power and influence to inform regional, national (and EU) policy-making.

2.6.4 Marketplace of good practices

NEB Local Chapters allow a variety of actors from the NEB Community and beyond to **share information** on NEB-related challenges and possible ways to address them. In this context, a Chapter functions as a **marketplace of learnings**, **innovation** and **creativity**, displaying positive examples of change and support.

Within the Chapter, members can share, for example:

- Experience with working on a variety of NEB-related activities and projects;
- Experience with applying NEB values and principles in day-to-day activities within local contexts;
- Knowledge of and experience with participatory and research methods used for gathering inputs from the general public and other stakeholders;
- Knowledge of and experience with methods used to gather wider support (tangible or intangible);
- Experience with using different tools to share project developments “on the go”, etc.

Within the Local Chapter or in exchanges between the Chapters, its/their members can learn about different **methods of adopting the NEB values and principles** in an array of local actions, as well as the **opportunities and challenges** the process entails. On top of this,

gathering positive/negative experiences with the implementation of NEB-like projects can provide invaluable feedback for the wider NEB community and the NEB Team.

Local Chapter can also facilitate the **collection of insights from the citizens**, who are invited to partake in the Chapter activities.

Last but not least, NEB Local Chapter can collect and share **information on funding** opportunities, **calls for expression of interest** from other NEB community members, etc.

2.7 Support to NEB Local Chapters

2.7.1 Formal endorsement

In order to formally **recognise** the establishment of a local chapter, where and if needed, and its central coordinator(s), and thus endorse its operation, the NEB team at the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC B.4) is available to send a formal letter titled "Acknowledgment of NEB Local Chapter in X (location)". This process allows for the recognition of the chapter(s) and its coordinator(s) on local, regional, national and EU levels, when and if necessary.

The letter will be sent after a Local Chapter has been established and Chapter's coordinator(s) has informed the NEB Team (by sending an e-mail to the NEB community managers) about:

- The **official name of the Chapter** as well as information on its **territory coverage**
- The **name(s) of the Chapter coordinator(s)** as well as their **affiliation** and **contact information**
- The initial **list of Chapter members**
- Information on the **envisioned NEB-related activities**
- Information on the **initial support framework** (who provides what support in terms of Hosting/Sponsoring Chapter activities)

2.7.2 Communication and outreach

A Local Chapter can freely use the NEB visual toolkit to support the promotion of all NEB-related Chapter activities and projects. This toolkit includes a **standard presentation** that can be adapted freely to the context/audience/subject as well as the **NEB logo** (in various formats). In regards to promotion, Local Chapters can **promote their NEB-related projects** and **activities** through the NEB Community platform. They can publish information about their Chapter events (seminars, conferences, webinars, workshops, etc.) on the NEB community platform calendar (accessible to all NEB Community members) or request to have them published on the **official website of the NEB** by submitting this form at least 5 working days ahead of the event.

The Local Chapter(s) can set up and maintain a dedicated page on the NEB community platform where the Chapter members can centralise their work, discussions and notes from meetings, as well as share material (pdfs, hyperlinks, presentations etc.).

These pages will be fully maintained and moderated by the respective Chapter members and/or coordinator(s) and will be accessible to all NEB Community members. This will allow

different Local Chapters and NEB Community members to follow the activities and projects of all NEB Local Chapters and eventually get in touch and establish cooperation if desired.

In addition, Local Chapters are highly encouraged **to share their knowledge** (publications, research papers, articles etc.) on the **Knowledge Base** section of the NEB Community platform. The role of the Knowledge Base is to function as a repository of material/sources of the NEB Community members, at the service of the whole NEB Community, including all NEB Local Chapters.

Local Chapters **organise their activities autonomously**, without any interference or guidance from the NEB team. The Chapter coordinators and members have full autonomy and accountability for their activities. The Local Chapter coordinator can contact the NEB team in case engagement and/or support for particular events/activities is desirable. This can be, for instance, by participating in the event physically or virtually or helping to find suitable speakers/audiences. The scope of support of the NEB Unit depends on the available resources at a given time.

NEB working sessions will continue to support the exchange of ideas, expertise and knowledge between NEB community members. If deemed desirable, the NEB team will organise **dedicated country/subject-matter NEB Local Chapters meetings** to facilitate inter-chapter communication and collaboration.

2.7.3 Visibility

In line with the "ambassador" approach of the initiative, each Local Chapter can increase its visibility and recognition beyond its local context by appointing a **Chapter Ambassador(s)**. It can be a well-renowned artist, architect, designer, musician, etc. with a considerable outreach (a significant network of like-minded people or organisations) or recognition. This individual should share the values of the NEB (sustainability, inclusion and beauty) and with her/his work further inspire others.

The Chapter Ambassador(s) can prove instrumental in providing the Chapter members with an **extra layer of guidance**, **visibility** and **support**; her/his role can be fully voluntary and symbolic, giving as much or as little support as possible, according to the agreed arrangements with the Chapter coordinator(s) and members. Having the network, relevant experience and expertise, the Chapter Ambassadors can further **support the role of Chapter coordinators**, by connecting the Chapter with other institutions, communities and networks, and thus pushing the Chapter activities beyond their dimensions.

National Contact Points can further support the promotion and visibility of Local Chapter activities. As an example, Local Chapters can co-organise **a national gathering of all Chapters** in collaboration with other NEB community members, including partners, friends and the respective National Contact Point. The support from National Contact Point depends on the available resources of the respective National Contact Point.

Last but not least, the dedicated NEB infographic known also as the "NEB Dashboard" can further facilitate the **cross-border matchmaking** of Local Chapters as well as the **mapping and visibility** of all **NEB activities and projects**. The NEB Team will consult the respective

Local Chapters pages on the community platform regularly and feed the board with updates on the NEB community and activities in line with the NEB Dashboard updates plan.

2.6.4 Funding

The **establishment and operation** of Local Chapters and/or the Chapter coordinator(s) **will not be backed up by dedicated funding** from the European Commission. However, the Chapter activities and projects can receive any form of support from the EU, national, regional or local initiatives.

Local Chapters are encouraged to **contact the existing EU-funding and/or national support structures** (Eurodesks, Creative Europe desks, etc.) set up specifically for information sharing and support in drafting project proposals to various EU calls. The Local Chapter members can also reach out to their National Contact Point and ask for help with connecting/aligning the chapter activities with other EU and/or national strategies and initiatives (e.g., the EU Cities Mission, CrAFt initiative, etc.).

2.7 Examples of NEB community aggregating NEB community members and activities on a national, regional or local level

Sweden

One of the examples of local chapters can be evident in Sweden, where all Swedish NEB stakeholders organise regular "national gatherings of NEB partners in Sweden". In 2022, all official partners of the NEB in Sweden, including the Swedish National Contact Point, gathered on two occasions to discuss specifically their active involvement in the initiative and concrete ideas for deeper cooperation and better coordination of national, regional and local NEB-related activities. These discussions were also open to strategic friends within the framework of the New European Bauhaus such as cities, regional authorities and academia. They took place in the form of presentations, informal gatherings in the Partner premises (local community and design centres) and workshops. A member of the NEB Team was also welcomed to participate in the discussions on-site. Among the conclusions of the discussions belong the interest to continue welcoming new members to the gatherings and developing cooperation with new stakeholders locally and regionally. The conclusions of these discussions were shared on the NEB community platform, European Commission reports and briefings to various Commission Cabinet members, including the leading Commissioners – Mariya Gabriel and Elisa Ferreira.

Austria

Another example of an effective way of gathering and coordinating local NEB activities can be visible in the case of Austria. In Austria, NEB stakeholders have developed a dedicated "New European Bauhaus Platform". This platform brings together the main Austrian NEB stakeholders and partners working on "Baukultur" and quality architecture. This platform

also facilitates NEB stakeholder gatherings, during which Austrian NEB partners and friends discuss recent developments related to the New European Bauhaus in Austria, especially regarding NEB funding calls, as well as showcasing good NEB examples. In September 2022, the fifth network meeting took place in the presence and was organised by the Austrian 2022 NEB prize winner Gleis 21. In addition to these gatherings, in October 2022, the Austrian NEB Prize winner Gleis 22 invited all NEB Prize winners and finalists to take part in the "Bauhaus of Residence: Vienna 2023" programme, which will welcome four nominees of the NEB Prize winner to work on the topic "beautiful sustainable together" for one month in Vienna. The organiser is covering the travel expenses, accommodation and daily lunch in Gleis 21 and a reward of EUR 2.000.

Croatia

To implement the Communication of the European Commission on the New European Bauhaus, the Croatian Ministry of Culture and Media and the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development adopted a Decision on 21 October 2021 on the establishment of the National Platform of the New European Bauhaus of the Republic of Croatia, whose operational and professional management and coordination was entrusted to the Regional Energy Agency of North-West Croatia (REGEA). REGEA is an official partner of the NEB as well as the National Contact Point for NEB in Croatia. As indicated on REGEA's official website, the main goal and purpose of the platform is to bring together relevant professional stakeholders from Croatia who jointly, through networking through the platform, create partnerships and participate synergistically and in a coordinated manner in NEB activities and projects.

Spain

Another good example of local coordination efforts can be visible in Spain. The NEB Spanish National Contact Point (Dirección General de Agenda Urbana y Arquitectura, Ministerio de Transportes, Movilidad y Agenda Urbana) has developed a highly informative platform offering a comprehensive overview of all past, ongoing and planned NEB-related activities in Spain. In addition to developing a tool for information sharing, in October 2022, several Spanish NEB Partners and other relevant stakeholders were gathered locally on two occasions: during a dedicated NEB seminar gathering all NEB Partners in the Basque Country by an official partner EDE Fundazioa; and during yet another NEB Partner (eCivis) event called "Transiting from the Bauhaus to the SDGs".