

BORDERS TO CROSS

Title:	Think small, act small
Name workshop:	Alternative Financing
Projects presented:	1.Voor je buurt 2.At the playground
Workshop director(s):	Thijs Roelofs en Brenda Hunt
Name rapporteur(s):	Irene Kruijssen
Date and time of workshop:	11:30-13:00

How can we do the things discussed in de workshop before? In this session: alternative financing, how you can overcome when you're getting stuck. What can we do when we can't find financial help for our projects? This workshop we discussed this kind of questions led by Thijs Roelofs and Brenda Hunt.

The most interesting of this workshop was the idea that municipality have to think like civilians. Make initiatives small en accessible, so It's easy for civilians to participate. For this, the frame of the municipality need to change, so 'street level bureaucrats' have the ability to approach civilians differently.

The first case presented at the workshop was an civilians initiative in Romania. In the Manastur neighborhood, a problem area with a lot of old houses, but a large common green field, was the perfect place for a pavilion to attract people and get people together to talk about problems in the neighborhood. A debate started between experts, retired and other civilians. This initiative started with finance from the European Union and of the government. The important question now is: how to continue and to get more independent and supported by the community?
Lisette Kalshoven, then, told us about crowd funding for civic initiatives of the company she works for: Kennisland. Government is in a secondary role here and Kennisland is more like the facilitator. Funding is not only about money: you can finance in another way. The initiatives are more about getting people together rather than making money out of it. The interaction and become a fellow owner of the project. It's about people coming together and sharing ideas and qualities.
The most important question in these civic initiatives can be: "what's in it for me?" You need to feel connected with the project. This is often symbolic. You're not buying something it's engaging in something.

“Think small act small” was the most important thing concluding from this workshop. “Sometimes finding money is a blind spot in our mind” someone mentioned. “We are so looking for money that we can’t put the time and energy into the project”. We can put our time in energizing and getting people together for the initiative. There is enough money; we only need to use the money you now spend smarter.