



**Proposal of the City of Rostock  
to the 88 UBC Executive Board Meeting on 30 November 2021 (on-line)**

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**SMILE CITY goes Baltic**

In September 2020 the City of Rostock was granted a huge financial support within the national programme *SMART CITY made in Germany* aimed to be a *SMART model city* for the wellbeing of its citizens. For this purpose, digital strategies for a future-oriented urban life are taken in focus. One important element in this endeavour is the internationality of the administrations which may contribute decisively to accelerate the process for all involved partners.

Rostock immediately set up a special task force in order to concentrate strongly on this challenge which can use the allocated financial resources funding during seven years working under the brand *SMILE CITY*.

During the application phase in 2020, we already could count on UBC. The Letter of Interest given into our motion resulted to be extremely important. International networking is the key in a modern, effective and direct exchange of experience.

Thanks to the positive development we are now in the good position to extend our first offer. Assuming that many cities were or even are in the same situation to assure a quick development, our interest is to offer a digital discussion platform aimed to very concrete and immediate topics:

- 1 - Citizens' involvement and community building
- 2 - Interaction of local stakeholders and data based decision making
- 3 - Shared public spaces in the cityscape
- 4 - Scientifically supported knowledge transfer

By the beginning of 2022 we will start to encourage a Baltic-wide debate on these themes looking forward to giving an impulse to a lively learning process for all participants.

The City of Rostock is inviting UBC to commonly develop this format and to make it accessible to all UBC member cities, i.e. Baltic-wide, and also beyond.

The UBC Executive Board may decide to support ***SMILE CITY goes Baltic*** – an initiative of the City of Rostock.

Jens Will, Project Leader Smile City – Places  
Karin Wohlgemuth, Mayor's Office



## Smile City Rostock – a model for a Smart City 2.0

*+ short description +*

At the height of the pandemic, the City of Rostock prevailed in the competition for national funding within the framework of the Program *Smart Cities made in Germany* as one of 31 winners among a total of 86 cities, districts, and municipalities receiving funding in the amount of eight million euros. The project has an overall budget of around twelve million euros. In addition, Rostock was also the only city selected for special press coverage by the funding agency and KfW bank.

As a model for a Smart City, Rostock is implementing a project which is both ambitious and complex, and which will master already pending challenges of digitalization in the years to come. It was the very COVID-19 crisis which has once again clearly shown the need for digital citizen services, reduction of bureaucracy, data-based decision-making and optimization of work processes.

In national and international comparison, in the fields of digitalization and smart urban development, the City of Rostock is still at the beginning. There is still no digital strategy. With the Smile City project, a joint process will be initiated over a period of seven years to develop and assess digital strategies for the city life of the future. An essential part of it is to initiate and support pilot and *lighthouse* projects such as a contact tracking App for pandemics named *luca*, our *Folkemøde* festival for the citizens, and *Box Air*, which is an innovation and living park.

*Successful in the competition Smart Cities made in Germany:*

As special features of Rostock's application, the jury recognized and highlighted two essential aspects that are important for the further development of the Smart City into a *Smile City* or *Smart City 2.0*, respectively:

1. *The view across the border - Rostock is curious*: The City of Rostock is taking Scandinavia and the Baltic states as models for digitalization. Finland has the lead over Sweden and Denmark in the EU's digitalization ranking; Estonia (7<sup>th</sup>) is also ahead of Germany (12<sup>th</sup>). The intensive exchange with the partner cities enables Rostock to take advantage of already available experience and innovation lead and to make use of the partners' technologies and digital processes that have already been tried and tested.

2. *Citizens in the focus - living happily together*: The future is made by people. The strategy is developed collaboratively and co-creatively inspired by the Scandinavian model of user-focused problem solving. As a people friendly city, it is about developing a new culture of cooperation and at the same time finding ideas, concepts, and implementation options for making processes more transparent, effective, and citizen-friendly avoiding inefficient administrative work as well as long waiting periods for citizens.

### *Smart City 2.0 - further development towards a people-friendly city*

The people-friendly city consistently places the needs of its citizens in the foreground: Smile City is citizen-oriented, not technology-oriented. The focus lies, therefore and among other things, on the development of an agile administration that can act in a modern and future-oriented manner in the best interests of the city population achieving thereby a high degree of participation and transparency. The same is with shared public spaces - smartly networked and with a high quality of stay. The measures are always based on the life of Rostock citizens.

### *Main components of the participatory process:*

Happy Citizens // Smile Citizens

(citizen participation, involvement and community building)

Intelligent Structures // Smile Governance

(interaction of city actors and data based support regarding decisions)

Connecting Places // Smile Places

(shared public spaces and implementation in the cityscape)

Learning Network // Smile Exchange

(transfer of knowledge and involvement of research and science)

### *Structural development*

The work on the core content of the project is taking place as a smooth transition from project application, its approval and the beginning of implementation. In December 2020, the *Fast Lane Smile City* was set up in the Mayor's Office to develop this model project.

### *The funding consists of two phases:*

A. Development of goals, strategies and measures to initiate digitalization (max. 2 years)

B. Implementation of goals, strategies and measures (max. 5 years).