Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy

Innovate4Cities: A global climate action accelerator
WHAT IS THE GLOBAL COVENANT OF MAYORS?

A first-of-its-kind and largest global alliance of cities leading the fight against climate change, with support from city networks and other partners.
**Why is the Global Covenant Important?**

- Creates the largest coalition of cities and local governments supported by global and local city networks, committed to greater climate impact and recognition.
- Recognizes that “climate action” is about improving quality of life, creating new jobs and economic opportunities, while ensuring a climate safe for future generations.
- Values vertical alignment and collaboration across all levels of government in support of local action.
- Makes all city data on local actions available to the public in one place in a consistent way – for the first time ever.
- Creates an “evidence base” for increased investment in urban low carbon infrastructure.
Current Global Reach and Impact

9,098 CITIES
120 COUNTRIES
770+ MILLION PEOPLE
OVER 10% OF THE GLOBAL POPULATION
CITIES COULD COLLECTIVELY REDUCE 1.3 BILLION TONS PER YEAR IN 2030
NEW GLOBAL COMMON REPORTING STANDARD
Innovate4Cities

A Global Climate Action Accelerator
WHAT IS INNOVATE4CITIES?

• Innovate4Cities will define specific cities’ research and innovation needs, exploring ways to incorporate these priorities into national research agendas.

• Synthesized into the first-ever cities driven research agenda launched at the One Planet Summit in NYC during Climate Week.

• This initiative will catalyse the scientific advances necessary to better equip cities with the intelligence and tools to drive even more ambitious climate action.
A MODEL OF COLLABORATIVE CREATION

CITY OFFICIALS  BUSINESS LEADERS  LEADING ACADEMICS
GLOBAL WORKSHOPS  DIRECT INTERVIEWS  REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#INNOVATE4CITIES
THE INNOVATE4CITIES PROCESS

ACADEMIA GOVERNMENTS PRIVATE SECTOR CITIES

OPPORTUNITY PILLARS and KNOWLEDGE & INNOVATION GENERATION

CITY RESEARCH AGENDA

WHY? HOW? WHAT? SCALE?

PARTNERSHIPS FINANCING GOVERNANCE

SUSTAINABLE & LIVEABLE CITIES

#INNOVATE4CITIES
1 WHY SHOULD WE TAKE CLIMATE ACTION?

Cities need information to understand the potential detrimental effects of climate change on their communities and related ecosystems and how their everyday decisions contribute to climate change globally. Information which is specific to particular cities, or particular regional or geographic contexts is needed for cities to understand the scope of the problem in their local context and see themselves in the solution. Successfully identifying options (including nature-based solutions and social innovation) and justifying them requires access to information, expertise and local-level data on the science of climate change, the impacts it will have on local communities and ecosystem services, and the timelines within which action will be necessary to address the problem. Impacts on vulnerable populations must be considered so that climate action supports all residents.

2 HOW SHOULD WE PRIORITIZE?

Once cities have established a need for action, the next step is to set goals and develop a strategy to meet them. Fortunately, global and local city networks have been working for years to assemble evidence for best practices in many different city contexts. Generally, effective actions are known, but the feasibility and trade-offs between various options and the specific priorities for a certain community may not be. It is important to understand what to prioritize and why, in the context of a specific city and region. In certain cases, big ticket items will provide greater gains in efficiency, resilience and societal co-benefits. In other circumstances, implementing multiple easy wins will have greater impact. It is important for cities to understand the implications of action on different sectors and parts of society.

3 WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

To be successful, a climate action plan must be secured in a solid policy strategy and bolstered by support from stakeholders who carry both a shared set of sustainability goals and the capacity to assist the city in implementing them. There are several sectors where cities have a strong role in reducing emissions and building resilience, and it is important to work with key partners and institutions who influence these sectors to promote effective solutions. In many cases, cities lack information on policy options and examples of successful implementation of “known solutions.” Selecting the right approach for implementation may also require collaboration with local partners or other levels of government in new and innovative ways that are untested. Clear illustration of direct and indirect climate and societal benefits of action within these sectors can be critical in receiving approval of a particular project.

4 HOW DO WE FINANCE & SCALE CLIMATE ACTION?

Successful policy instruments must often be scaled to larger, more complex systems that interact with other aspects of the local and regional governance, and that impact with a city’s socioeconomic fabric. At times, necessary financing can be difficult to access which is why close collaboration with other levels of government, development agencies, and financial institutions is key to maximizing climate policy creditworthiness. A clear understanding of the mechanisms which can be used to create a better landscape for financing within a city’s local, regional and national context is key to ensure financing of solutions is sustainable and scalable.

5 RESEARCH PRIORITIES

Evidence is required to progress decision making in cities and provide a rationale to act.

- Generation of city scale data for development of specific observation, models, scenarios.
- Communication of uncertainty and risk for cities relating to climate hazards.
- Decreasing the gap to climate relevant data on vulnerable communities.
- Equitable development and dissemination of knowledge and data.
- Calculation and communication of economic and health effects of action vs inaction.
- Measures to value a wide range of climate and societal co-benefits of climate solutions.

6 RESEARCH PRIORITIES

Local context needs to be built into the knowledge generated to enable cities to prioritize and act.

- Understand co-benefits and reduce risks for most vulnerable populations.
- Evaluate combinations of high-tech and low-tech innovation.
- Determine how to incorporate informal settlements in urban planning strategies.
- Use of social science in engaging a broad group of stakeholders on new initiatives from planning through implementation.
- Explore incentives for municipal employees to innovate and take risks with transformative decisions.
- Investigate emerging social innovations in cities that could be exported globally to scale solutions.
- Develop solutions which are flexible and distributed/networked that can be expanded or changed as innovation progresses or financing allows.

7 RESEARCH PRIORITIES

Urban Planning and Design
- Assess planning policies to help mitigate urban heat island effect.
- Quantify potential for different blue/green infrastructure and nature-based solutions to reduce emissions, build adaptive capacity and resilience, provide co-benefits and address issues of biodiversity.
- Buildings: identify a strategic approach to retrofitting city building stock based on building typology to reduce emissions.
- Develop policy to set new building standards to accelerate uptake of efficiency standards.

Energy
- Evaluate balance between connected vs. distributed renewable systems based on access and reliability.
- Assess energy efficiency increases through use of micro grids.

Water
- Assess solutions to address the urgency of water scarcity, pollution and allocation in cities and their related ecosystems.
- Explore connections between water, energy and materials to develop sustainable solutions in urban areas.

Waste
- Evaluate benefits of diversion and recycling considering supply and demand.
- Communicate community benefits of controlled landfilling to build understanding and buy-in of waste collection systems.

Transportation
- Explore how digital infrastructure can be built into transit systems to connect public and private transit technology.

Food
- Support community-based and entrepreneurial innovation in climate smart food systems.

8 RESEARCH PRIORITIES

Policy and finance instruments:
- Collaboration and capacity building to develop bankable projects and increase creditworthiness to de-risk investment.
- Governance
  - Governance landscapes (considering formal and informal action) to support greater generation of greater municipal revenue.
- Procurement
  - Strategic methods for awarding projects which prioritize sustainability in their solution.

GLOBAL COVENANT OF MAYORS FOR CLIMATE & ENERGY
CITY RESEARCH AGENDA