22@Barcelona: a New District for the Creative Economy

From Making Spaces for the Creative Economy, ed. Waikeen Ng and Judith Ryser (2005)

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Editor’s introduction

In 2002 Carnegie Mellon professor Richard Florida turned urban revitalization and economic development practice in a new direction. He prompted this shift with his new book, The Rise of the Creative Class: And How it’s Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life (New York: Basic Books, 2002), which argued that, to remain competitive in the twenty-first century, cities had to attract not companies but a special class of highly educated workers that he labeled “the creative class.” The lawyers, architects, writers, artists, engineers, financiers, musicians, educators, and doctors who make up this class, Florida wrote, have replaced other types of workers and already constitute 30 per cent of the nation’s labor force. But, Florida warned, these workers are footloose, in search of places that accord with their lifestyles. They prize neither job security nor company loyalty, the values of their parents. Instead, they have a “work hard, play hard” mentality. They seek places with high concentrations of people like themselves and easily accessible entertainment, recreational, and cultural amenities.

Florida’s message was clear. Cities that were attractive to the creative class would thrive. Older industrial cities needed to reinvent themselves, and new cities had to craft the desired amenities. For example, cities with interesting work sites – like reconditioned factories or green buildings or joint live–work arrangements – could be winners. Cities that fostered downtown housing (loft conversions, intown historic districts) or unique locations near waterfronts or anchor institutions like universities, stadiums, and museums would rise in popularity. If they added jogging or bike trails, encouraged “funky” restaurant districts or modern entertainment sections centered on a stadium or arena, had a lively arts and culture scene, or helped institutions expand in central places, they could become “hot,” ranked as the best places to live or do business by any number of magazines. Successes occurred in older places in America’s Northeast and Midwest (including Lower Manhattan, Philadelphia, Boston, Minneapolis, and Chicago) and in the rising cities of the South and West (including Atlanta, Austin, Portland, Seattle, San Diego, and San Francisco). (See Plate II, 10.) European countries had their winners as well.

Some cities already possessed the required accoutrements, but most had to work hard to provide them. They changed their land use regulations (allowing mixed-use districts, converting industrial to residential, or permitting live–work arrangements and residential-oriented retail in central business districts); invested in parks, streetscapes (lighting, sidewalks, plantings), and light rail lines or trolleys. They also built stadiums, arenas, concert halls, jazz centers, and museums. They preserved or upgraded “gaslight” or historic districts, adding period lighting and helping with storefront improvements. They opened farmers’ markets. They sponsored special cultural and sports events – like “First Friday” gallery hopping, and marathons threaded through city streets.
They addressed key service needs like crime prevention and sanitation. They allowed business improvement districts to flourish. In sum, they made urban living attractive.

Seeking the creative class is a worldwide movement with its greatest manifestation in North America and Europe. Manchester, England; Bilbao, Spain; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Singapore, and Amsterdam – all have had varying degrees of success with a variety of methods. Bilbao, for example, constructed a critically acclaimed museum of art designed by Frank Gehry, now a magnet for tourism and a potent symbol of successful city reinvention. Pittsburgh relied on biosciences and synergies with its many universities. Manchester is the regeneration-for-the-creative-class poster child. Once Britain’s leading industrial city, it fell into great decline in the last quarter of the twentieth century. In 1996 a terrorist bomb destroyed its downtown. The national government assisted with its reconstruction. A prize-winning design offered a new image and modern amenities–open space, transportation, and snazzy stores and offices. Other contributions to the city’s revival were investments in sports facilities (due to the awarding of the XVII Commonwealth Games in 2002), entertainment venues, arts and culture programming, and loft conversions by many firms but led by the aptly named “Urban Splash.” By 2006 the press declared Manchester the best place in England to do business, dubbing it the second city (after London) in the country.

Focusing urban revitalization on the creative class is controversial, however. Some analysts criticize this strategy for neglecting undereducated, chronically unemployed residents. Critics also argue that creative-class approaches benefit already established arts and entertainment institutions, or strengthen new elites, with few spillover effects. (See Plate II, 9.) Among these critics are CUNY sociologist Sharon Zukin, author of *Loft Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1989) and *Landscapes of Power: From Detroit to Disney World* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991), and Cleveland State University researcher Mark Rosentraub, author of *Major League Losers: The Real Cost of Sports and Who’s Paying for It* (New York: Basic Books, 1999) and *Guns and Butter of Redevelopment: Big Ticket Items, Neighborhoods and a New Convention Center* (Cleveland, OH: Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs, 2003).

Other scholars have more favorable interpretations of the creative-class and arts-and-culture redevelopment strategies. For example, Philadelphia researchers Mark J. Stern and Susan C. Seifert report their discovery of “natural cultural districts” (“geographically defined networks created by the presence of a density of cultural assets in particular neighborhoods”). In their report *Cultivating “Natural” Cultural Districts* (Philadelphia: The Reinvestment Fund, TRF, and Social Impact of the Arts Project, SIAP, 2007), they argue that these clusters support social capital formation and are focal points of grassroots economic development. Jeremy Nowak, president of The Reinvestment Fund (TRF), a major community development intermediary, further explores this subject in *Creative Society and Neighborhood Revitalization: A Culturally Driven Investment Framework* (Philadelphia: TRF and SIAP, 2007), which discusses how to build a business model based on these findings. In *Cultural Planning and the Creative City* (Minneapolis, MN: Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, 2006), University of Minnesota’s Ann Markusen calls for an integrated cultural planning approach, noting the possibilities of linking neighborhood and city-based initiatives that build on arts communities of varied scale and capacity. Finally, Williams College economist Steven C. Sheppard and his team of student researchers quantified the positive effects of cultural clusters in deteriorated communities in *Culture and Revitalization: The Economic Effects of MASS MoCA on its Community* (North Adams, MA.: Center for Creative Community Development, 2006).

This selection focuses on the efforts of municipal leaders in Barcelona, Spain, to reinvent their city through a creative-class strategy. Stricken with the full panoply of postindustrial problems – declining population, high rates of unemployment, crime, poverty, brownfields – Barcelona also had a magnificent but underused waterfront highly contaminated by industrial pollution and cut off from the rest of the city by rail. And the city lacked many amenities, especially public open space.

In the post-Franco era, municipal leadership decided to compete for the 1992 Olympic Games and, in preparation, undertook critical public investments in sports facilities. After securing the bid, they seized the opportunity to disperse other improvements through many neighborhoods. The most spectacular accomplishment was the transformation of a dilapidated industrial district, including three miles of waterfront, as the Olympic
Village. The city rerouted the rail, added a seaside boulevard, new apartments, hotels, and associated retail amenities. In addition, it revamped public transportation and the airport and built more than 200 local parks, plazas, schools, and markets. It also refurbished the center-city promenade known as the Ramblas, rid the adjacent neighborhood of crime, and built a museum and cultural center to attract new activities and tourists.

The work continued well after the Olympics. Buoyed by the galvanizing effects of hosting an international event, the city initiated another one, the 2004 Forum. Dedicated to culture, sustainable development, and peace – themes explored through seminars, performances, and exhibitions – the Forum took place in a redeveloped district, the Diagonal, a short distance from the Olympic Village. To accommodate the event, Barcelona extended mass transit, added parks, built housing, offices, and retail (for use post-Forum), and mitigated the environmental effects of nearby power and sewage treatment plants. In parallel efforts, the city relocated its port facilities, releasing additional land for redevelopment. All told, the city spent about €27 billion for the Olympics and 2004 Forum-related facilities. While these public works did not arrest Barcelona’s population decline—the city, now 1.5 million people, lost 250,000 inhabitants since 1980—they succeeded in slowing the rate of decline in residents. And they did transform the city’s image, as well as jump-start new economic functions including tourism and business formation.

But municipal leaders weren’t done yet. They next turned their attention to Poblenou, a 500 acre, 117 block area bracketed by the Olympic Village and 2004 Forum. They created a municipal development corporation, 22@Barcelona, to oversee work that includes rezoning and repurcasing, investment in modern communications infrastructure (fiber-optic grids, Wi-Fi connections, upgraded electrical systems), a pneumatic solid-waste disposal system, new streets with bicycle lanes, open space, and incubator facilities for media, telecommunications, biosciences, and energy enterprises. The agency has forged partnerships with universities to relocate academic and research activities to the area. Several international and national corporations have moved in, including Microsoft, General Electric, American Express, and Telefónica Moviles (headquarters for the Spanish telephone company’s cellular business). The development group is also supporting selective historic preservation and sponsoring job training and other programs to attract the necessary labor force. In short, 22@Barcelona is remaking the Poblenou district as a model of twenty-first-century sustainability and creativity, hoping it will one day accommodate 4–15 per cent of the city’s economic activities. This project, which will take decades to complete, bears monitoring. See www.22barcelona.com.

Miguel Barcelo Rota, author of this selection, is president of 22@Barcelona, the municipal development agency charged with overseeing the Poblenou redevelopment. He has written extensively on the use of economic clusters in urban revitalization. Underlying his work and that of other urban planners concerned with this topic are two streams of inquiry. The first is urban economics and its attention to agglomeration and industry cluster theory first described by Princeton economist Edward S. Mills and now discussed in basic urban economics textbooks such as Arthur O’Sullivan’s Urban Economics, sixth edition (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2007). The second is urban sociology, especially network theories first introduced by Saskia Sassen in her classic The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, second edition 2001) and in an edited work, Global Networks, Linked Cities (New York and London: Routledge, 2002). Sassen established the concept of urban places being critical for the social interchange that contributes to economic growth. City planner Elizabeth Currid applies these ideas to the New York arts scene in The Warhol Economy: How Fashion, Art and Music Drive New York City (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).

For additional reading on creative-class approaches to urban redevelopment, see Waikeen Ng and Judith Ryser (eds), Making Spaces for the Creative Economy (Madrid: International Society of City and Regional Planning, 2005), a worldwide survey of cities’ knowledge economy-focused planning programs. For discussion of specialized sectors within the creative economy, see Ann Markusen, The Artistic Dividend Revisited (Minneapolis, MN: Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota, 2004); Ira Harkavy and Harmon Zuckerman, Eds and Meds: Cities’ Hidden Assets (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Center for Urban and Metropolitan Policy, 1999); and Richard Florida, The University and the Creative Economy (Pittsburgh, PA: Heinz School of Public Policy, Carnegie Mellon University, 2006).
BARCELONA AND ITS METROPOLITAN AREA

The Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (MAB) houses one of the biggest industrial and demographic concentrations in Europe. The MAB covers more than 3,200 sq. km, and is inhabited by 4.5 million people. The MAB also acts as a service centre for an extensive hinterland populated by 17 million inhabitants, including Valencia, Saragossa, the Balearic Islands and southeast France.

Thanks to its strategic geographical location and an extensive and fully interconnected transport network, Barcelona is a natural link between Europe, the Mediterranean and Latin America, and provides access to a potential market of more than 40 million people. This is why, throughout history, the city has been a natural point of exchange and attraction of ideas and business.

Barcelona’s economic structure is composed of a polycentric network of cities with high levels of industrialisation, strong external connections and highly diversified production. These circumstances have created an economically stable structure, and a dynamic environment that employs synergies to drive the growth of new companies and projects. As a result, Barcelona has experienced sustained economic growth in recent years (above the European average), and has become one of the EU regions with a highest growth potential for the near future.

In addition, Barcelona has an excellent climate, along with rich cultural, entertainment and educational offerings. These assets have helped Barcelona become a leading European city in terms of quality of life, and one of the preferred locations in Europe for international businesses.

Regarding knowledge creation and transfer, Barcelona is home to one of the main university communities in Europe, including various highly prestigious business schools at the international level. It also avails of an extensive network of research centres, innovation centres and technology transfer centres which have placed the city at the forefront of research in Spain.

Nevertheless, despite these key assets, international indicators show that Barcelona is currently missing from the list of the most interesting cities for innovation and development of clusters. This is primarily due to the fact that the principal knowledge creation and distribution systems are still often based on a linear conception, which belong more to the old industrial production model than to the new demands of the creative society in terms of organisation, functionality and connections.

For this reason, the main public and private entities in Barcelona decided to jointly undertake an ambitious strategy called “Barcelona, the City of Knowledge,” which is aimed at turning Barcelona into an innovation metropolis at the global level. The 22@Barcelona project constitutes a paradigm in terms of the overall regeneration plan, given that it is transforming the old economic heart of the city. The project area was formerly based on the industrial production model, but today its development is being guided by a new concept of “knowledge space” based on networks and corporate cooperation.

RENEWAL OF POBLENOU

For over 100 years, Poblenou was the industrial area par excellence in Barcelona, and Catalonia’s principal economic engine. The 22@Barcelona project is aimed at recovering Poblenou’s productive economic vocation by transforming its obsolete industrial areas into an innovative productive district, equipped with modern infrastructure and high levels of urban quality to attract and develop highly skilled activities.

Known throughout its time as the “Manchester of Catalonia”, Poblenou was one of the most important centres of industrial innovation in Southern Europe up until the 1960s. Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, the development of transport infrastructure and the building of specialized industrial facilities on the periphery of Barcelona led to factories relocating from the city centre out to the metropolitan ring. This trend gained momentum during the oil crises and resulted in the loss of more than 1,300 industries in Poblenou between 1963 and 1990. Transport-related activities ended up occupying the major share of the space, and subsequently the space was gradually abandoned by other activities. These factors contributed to the deterioration of the urban surroundings.

The regeneration of Poblenou began with the interventions that took place as part of the
Olympic Games efforts, and involved important infrastructure and urban renewal projects. Two significant operations performed during this period are particularly relevant to the regeneration of Poblenou. The first project was the construction of the Barcelona ring roads, which removed the tramlines that used to cover the entire industrial heartland and greatly improved its connections with the rest of the metropolitan region, the port and the airport. The second project was the construction of the Olympic Village in this part of the city, which signified the first modern residential neighbourhood in Barcelona’s coastal district. This project initiated the revival of Poblenou’s seafront through the creation of new beaches and parks for civic use. The positive outcome of the Olympic Village project led to new improvements in Poblenou that connected it to the rest of the city, and continued the coastal transformation by creating new residential areas. As a result of these operations, Catalonia’s traditional industrial heartland was gradually transformed into an accessible, central area, equipped with modern dwellings and quality public space.

**CITIZENS’ DEBATE**

This new perspective ignited an interesting citizens’ debate over the future of Poblenou’s industrial areas, which, by the late 1990s, had still not been renewed. On the one hand, a section of public opinion supported the transformation of the industrial areas into residential space, as had been taking place up until that point. The market exercised major pressure in terms of maintaining this trend towards transforming these strategically located seafront areas. On the other hand, some sections of the public opposed transforming Barcelona into a predominantly residential city and, instead, were in favour of reviving the area’s historic vocation as a production centre by adapting the urban and economic fabric to create new forms of wealth.

It was in this context that Barcelona’s Economic and Social Strategy Plan, in its 1999–2005 programme, proposed the creation of a new urban model to encourage the development of emerging sectors of the knowledge economy. During this time, the Pacto Industrial de la Región Metropolitana de Barcelona (a public agency established to promote regional competitiveness) commissioned the Catalan Institute of Technology to study the development of skill-intensive activities and their impact on the transformation of the area. The study, entitled “The Digital City,” showed that the most innovation-intensive activities are naturally concentrated in major urban nuclei all over the world, where there are high standards of infrastructure, flexible production space, a varied cultural, educational and entertainment offering, and a high quality of life. The study concluded that on account of Poblenou’s privileged location and the extensive space available, regenerating the old production areas was a unique opportunity in Europe to create an important platform for innovation that would fulfill all the requirements of skill-intensive activities.

Barcelona’s City Council decided the debate on the future of the industrial areas in Poblenou in favour of the regeneration of its historic production activities. Following this decision, a group of experts from various disciplines were given the task of drawing up new urban regulations that would control the transformation of this privately owned space and direct it towards the objectives established by the public sector. In July 2000, the modification of the General Metropolitan Plan concerning the renovation of Poblenou’s old industrial areas, popularly known as 22@Barcelona project, was definitively and unanimously approved by the City Council.

**Urban and economic strategy**

Given its dimensions and implications, the 22@Barcelona project represents both a necessity and an opportunity. On one hand, the project satisfies the need to promote the renewal of degenerated areas of the city in order to revive their traditional economic and social vitality. On the other hand, the transformation of these extensive, centre city production areas present a unique opportunity to return Poblenou to its original status as the economic heart of the city by creating an important scientific, technological and cultural node aimed to consolidate Barcelona’s position as one of the principal international innovation platforms.

As an urban regeneration project 22@Barcelona reinterprets the function of the old industrial
fabric of Poblenou in a contemporary way, applying a New Town planning model based on sustainability, efficient infrastructure and quality of life. Under this premise, the project establishes a new model for compact, combined urban space by promoting the coexistence of production activities with residential areas and cultural facilities. In this way, the project seeks to create a more diverse, sustainable, balanced city, characterised by enhanced economic strength and cohesion.

As an economic regeneration strategy, the 22@Barcelona project propels the dynamic "Triple Helix" innovation model, based on the interaction between science and technology, and government and business, by concentrating the main institutions of the innovation system and creating new networks of cooperation. As such, the project creates areas of excellence to the overall competitiveness of the production fabric, and consolidates it in terms of international projection.

22@CODE: A NEW URBAN SPACE MODEL

The transformation brought on by project 22@Barcelona rests on substituting the former “22-A” zoning code, which designated Poblenou’s productive space exclusively for industrial purposes, with a new urban classification called “22@”. This new classification creates an innovative productive district that meets the requirements of the knowledge economy. Through an effective balance of incentives and duties, the new urban regulations allow the public sector to lead the transformation of private space towards the following objectives:

*Mixed uses.* The coexistence of complementary activities encourages innovation in production processes and creates an urban environment that is more balanced and sustainable. This ensures the vitality of the public areas throughout the day and allows people to live close to their places of work. Thus, the 22@ zoning code breaks with the traditional zoning model of the manufacturing economy, and clearly focuses on a model of a mixed and diverse city where production activities and research centres coexist with continuous training and technology transfer, commerce, housing units and green areas.

*Urban density.* In order to generate the critical mass necessary to develop agglomeration economies (and to promote a more rational use of space), the 22@Barcelona project avoids the low density that characterised industrial areas and advocates a dense and complex urban space. The new 22@ zoning code ensures the feasibility of this transformation through a system of incentives that requires every development project to contribute to financing the re-urbanisation of each street. This system helps to create new public spaces for green areas, facilities and housing through compulsory and gratuitous land transfers from developers to the community. Thus, the gradual renovation of industrial space promotes the revival of the social and commercial energy that characterised Poblenou in the past, and creates a space with a high standard of living in the centre of Barcelona.

*Focus on knowledge-intensive activities.* The 22@Barcelona project also aims to concentrate the most innovative activities of the creative society (the so-called "@ activities") within its area. These activities are characterised by their intensive use of information and communication technologies, space and highly qualified human capital. In order to ensure that these strategic activities are present in the new production spaces, the 22 zoning code creates a link between the building ratio of projects and the type of activity to be performed in the buildings. Thus, renewal plans that contain a specific percentage of the "@ activities" in their functional programs are entitled to a higher building ratio than projects that do not involve skill-intensive activities.

Through this system of incentives, urban regulations encourage promoters to reach agreements with the most dynamic and competitive companies to construct spaces that are tailor-made to their requirements.

*Innovation Support Centres.* In order to promote knowledge transfer in the production system, it is important that creation, transmission and knowledge distribution centres be located close to companies. This is why 22@Barcelona seeks to create a new system of facilities that provide support to the production system, instead of being linked exclusively to housing, as has traditionally been the case.

Therefore 10 per cent of the converted space is obtained from the compulsory land transfers, and are to be used in relation to the so-called "7@
facilities” to house universities’ centres of scientific and technological innovation, laboratories, design and R&D departments and on-going training centres. With this measure, the project encourages proximity and exchange between the principal innovation partners and ensures the on-going availability of highly qualified human capital.

Modern infrastructure. The most dynamic companies of the creative economy require a high level of services so that they can develop their activities in the most effective way possible. In this regard, 22@Barcelona has undertaken the overall reurbanisation of the sector through a new infrastructure network that is adapted to today’s urban, social and environmental requirements. As a consequence, free competition is promoted among urban service operators, and priority is given to energy efficiency, acoustic comfort and responsible management of natural resources.

This new standard of urban services includes modernized networks for electricity, telecommunications, centralized air conditioning and waste collection and improves mobility of the sector, along with the quality and sustainability of the public spaces.

Flexibility. Given the complexity and extent of the old industrial areas in Poblenou, gradual and flexible renewal is envisaged. This means that each regeneration plan adapts to the environment’s urban, economic and social characteristics without causing traumatic changes from the current land use. In order to accelerate the transformation of the district, the 22@ zoning code is also flexible in terms of the agents involved, given that the envisaged transformation will be a combination of both public and private initiatives.

Barcelona’s City Council originally defined planning for six strategic sectors to act as focal points for urban revitalization, in addition to promoting the renovation of the remaining areas on behalf of the private initiative.

Finally, the project is also flexible in terms of its transformation mechanisms. In contrast to traditional urban planning, 22@Barcelona does not define the detailed precise planning of the district. Instead, it allows for different kinds of initiatives that vary in magnitude and building typologies, while respecting the typological and morphological diversity of previous industrial designs. In this way, the design of the district meets the quality, functionality and presentation requirements for a diverse range of final users.

TRANSFORMATION MANAGEMENT

22@Barcelona is a municipal corporation created by the Barcelona City Council to manage and promote the regeneration of the old industrial areas in Poblenou, which now have the new 22-A zoning code.

As an agency for urban development, the Council-run company 22@Barcelona is aimed at promoting and managing the creation of more than 4 million sq. m of new GFA, the re-urbanisation of 35 km of streets and approximately 240,000 sq. m of new public land for facilities, green spaces and subsidised housing in the former inner-city industrial areas.

As an agency for economic development, 22@Barcelona’s mission is to promote the introduction and development of strategic content in these new areas and to favour the international projection of the new economic, scientific, training and cultural activities in the district.

STATUS REPORT

In the project’s final phase, the transformation has been focused on developing facilities for knowledge-based activities as the vital step towards enabling economic regeneration in the area.

Consequently, since the project was approved, urban transformation of the 22@Barcelona district has been very intense and sustained. Over the past four years, refurbishment has begun in over 50 per cent of Poblenou’s industrial areas, guided by a total of forty-two approved plans for urban amelioration. These plans have brought approximately 1.3 million sq. m of potential productive space to the market, and have concentrated 60 per cent of the supply scheduled for Barcelona in the coming years. The plans also designate more than 100,000 sq. m of land dedicated to new facilities, open spaces and approximately 2,300 subsidised housing units, of which a minimum of 25 per cent must be used as rented accommodation.

In the business sphere, 22@Barcelona has also received a very warm welcome. More than ninety companies, leaders in their respective sectors, are
already installed in the 22@Barcelona district, or are in the process of having their corporate headquarters built. In the new locations alone, productive activity in the district has increased by almost 280,000 sq. m. As a consequence, since approval of plan 22@, Poblenou has seen a significant increase in its productive structure, which is clearly evolving towards knowledge-intensive urban activities. Approximately 90 per cent of the new companies and institutions setting up in the 22@Barcelona district are intensive users of ICT, space and qualified staff. In other words, they respond to the prototype for “@ activities”.

After this initial phase that boosted the creation of new spaces and infrastructures, 22@Barcelona has begun a new, highly intensive phase of economic transformation of the area. A new set of projects, known as the “Seven Motors” for the 22@Barcelona district, have been designed to attract and create high value-added activities.

ATTRACTION TALENT: SEVEN MOTORS FOR DISTRICT 22@BARCELONA

The Council-run company 22@Barcelona promotes a set of initiatives, based on the dynamic “Triple Helix” innovation model, with the objective of structuring the area’s economic transformation, and promoting the creation of areas of excellence in certain spheres of knowledge, to boost Barcelona’s leadership in the knowledge economy. These initiatives, known as the “Seven Motors” for the 22@Barcelona district, reflect strategic objectives in terms of their present and future growth potential in Barcelona, and involve the main public and private agents in the processes of innovation. The “Seven Motors” are:

22@Media

Directed at encouraging the culture of excellence in the audiovisual sector, the 22@Media initiative promotes the creation of a large multidisciplinary centre to bring together currently dispersed and atomized major public and private agents in the sector. The objective of concentrating agents is to multiply their competitiveness and international projection.

The first phase of the 22@Media engine is the “Barcelona Media Park”, a 60,000 sq. m facility that will be operative in mid 2007, and will bring together technical areas and offices related to the audiovisual sector. It will include university and continuing education, research and technology transfer centers, areas and services for incubating audiovisual companies, as well as temporary residences for students, teachers and entrepreneurs, and exhibition and interaction areas.

Barcelona Media Park is the result of collaboration of a public university (Universidad Pompeu Fabra), a leading private company in the Catalonian audiovisual sector (Mediapro), several entities from Barcelona City Hall (Department for Culture, Local Development Agency, 22@Barcelona) and the regional government (Centre for Corporate Innovation and Development). This is a clear example of an innovation medium in which public–private collaboration has made it possible to create an emerging system by bringing together leading players in the audiovisual sector.

22@TIC

Aimed at the Information and Communication Technologies (TIC in Spanish) sector, 22@TIC covers a set of initiatives to generate the critical mass required to position the 22@Barcelona district as a European leader for the ICT sector. To its advantage, Catalonia already has several highly renowned groups in the field that are able to attract investment and R&D.

The creation of this critical mass is based firstly on recruiting leading companies and institutions, and in creating spaces for small and medium-sized enterprises. The recent relocation of some important public institutions and private companies to Poblenou is a good example of this. These include the Department for Universities, Research and the Information Society of the Catalonian Government, as well as companies such as T-systems, Indra and Auna. As a result of an agreement between 22@Barcelona, the property developers Castellvi and the Dutch firm of consultants Zernik, the 22@Barcelona district will also begin construction of a landmark building for software and telecommunication SMEs, with high value-added exclusive services.
Secondly, the productive fabric need requires infrastructures for knowledge generation and transfer, such as the ICT Technological Centre promoted by the Catalanian government. Areas for diffusion and interaction, such as the future ICT and Productivity House promoted by Barcelona City Council, are designed to help spread the impact of ICT into society and business innovation.

Finally, mention should also be made of other initiatives directed at creating specialized business environments, such as the E-learning cluster promoted by the Open University of Catalonia and the Multilingual cluster led by the Digital Barcelona Foundation. 22@Barcelona will also include projects that promote the development of innovative services, such as GeriaTIC, a new welfare centre model which puts ICT developments to work for the well-being of the elderly.

22@Bioempresa
Catalonia has a strong clinical and biological base and great biotechnical potential, and 22@Bioempresa aims to support new companies (empresas in Spanish) in this sector that are in the growth and maturity phase by creating new services and areas adapted to their specific post-incubation needs.

Towards this end, 22@Barcelona has concluded agreements with both the Barcelona Scientific Park and the Biomedical Research Park to promote the creation of post-incubation areas for new companies. In conjunction with the Catalanian Investment Agency, 22@Barcelona has also undertaken a programme for attracting biotechnical companies to help create a business environment that encourages competition and exchange of experience among both consolidated and newly created companies.

22@Campus
Located in the area which housed the Universal Forum for Cultures in 2004, 22@Campus is designed for excellence in themes related to sustainability, which was one of the central themes developed during the cultural event. The new inter-university Campus for Technology and Business is specialised in mobility, energy and water technologies, as well as architecture, town planning and construction. 22@Campus is aimed at concentrating teaching, research, innovation and production activities related to each of these areas of knowledge.

The objective of this initiative is to become a clear exponent of the dynamic “Triple Helix” innovation model. 22@Campus itself is the result of an agreement between the Department for Universities, Research and the Information Society of the Catalanian Government, the City Halls of Barcelona and Sant Andria del Besos and the Barcelona Provincial Council. Construction of the first elements in this new space will begin shortly, thanks to the relocation of the Barcelona Industrial School and the recent agreement with the Consorci de la Zona Franca (Duty-free Zone Consortium) to create a business incubator. The construction will include a building for the temporary residence of teachers, students, entrepreneurs, professionals and researchers.

22@Emprendedores
The aim of 22@Emprendedores is to develop suitable conditions for district 22@Barcelona to become a magnet for entrepreneurs (empreedores in Spanish), and to consolidate its position as an international platform for business creation and development. 22@Emprendedores has an integral and transversal programme, which includes various initiatives directed at creating a complete network of support infrastructures for national and international entrepreneurs, such as specialised incubators, temporary residential areas and finance programmes.

Among the programme’s main assets is the presence in the district of the “Barcelona Activa”, a Local Development Agency, which is the largest business incubator in Europe. 22@Emprendedores signed an agreement with the Consorci de la Zona Franca to construct a new building for entrepreneurs, which will be dedicated to the incubation and growth of technology-based spinoff companies developed in the area’s research centres, such as the Polytechnic University of Catalonia and the Ramon Llull University.

22@Tecnologico
The technology centres amass in-depth knowledge of the optimum environment in which new
technologies are generated in order to transfer this to the productive system. Therefore, these centres are one of the main intermediation structures between research and business. 22@Tecnologico is transversal in nature, and includes several initiatives to attract technology centres linked to those sectors with the greatest potential for future development in Catalonia. 22@Tecnologico then encourages centres to locate within the district’s vicinity in order to promote the advantages of proximity and interrelation.

Mention should also be made here of the agreement to locate Alstom’s Centre for Research, Development and Innovation in the 22@Barcelona district, along with leading technological centres such as the Centre for Technological Innovation “Barcelona Media”, promoted by the Catalanian Regional Government’s Department of Industry.

22@Poblenou

To foster quality of life and employment in Poblenou, 22@Poblenou encourages interaction between different urban agents through the creation of new links and cooperation channels. It consists of several initiatives, including:

The Association of 22@Barcelona Companies and Institutions, whose objective is to foster environments that facilitate cooperation between “@” companies or institutions located in Poblenou, and to become actively involved in configuring district 22@Barcelona as a European platform of innovation.

The Educational Project, the result of a joint agreement between 22@Barcelona, Barcelona City Hall and the educational institutions in Poblenou, is designed to encourage the use of new technologies with students and promote work internship experience at companies in district 22@Barcelona.

VISION 2010

In summary, the 22@Barcelona initiative is a paradigmatic example of ambitious strategic planning and close public–private collaboration which has characterised Barcelona’s transformation over the last twenty-five years, and which some have termed the “Barcelona Model.”

With the support and involvement of the key urban institutions, 22@Barcelona has done well in the first phase of implementation; far exceeding initial expectations. However, the second phase of development will be decisive for the project’s success, given that the competitiveness of other emerging regions will be decided over the next few years as well.

Barcelona firmly believes that, by maintaining a creative culture, the city can make the leap forward to obtain a leading position in the global knowledge society. The vision is that in the next five years 22@ would become more than a local town-planning zoning code, and would become a symbol of innovation. To this end, collaboration networks will be woven through leadership, perseverance and collective enthusiasm to turn the 22@Barcelona district into the geographical expression of the culture of excellence, and consolidate it as an international reference for Tolerance, Technology and Talent.