

“Public participation in the project based teaching”

In this presentation the author reports the results of a collaborative design process, enabled by the use of an integrated public participation methodology, applied to the redevelopment of a public place. This was implemented in a landscape architecture design studio course and through a project based learning method, which engaged students, decision-makers and a diversity of other stakeholders.

The process was initiated by a real call for a public urban square redesign, on the city of Vila Real, Portugal. The objectives were to introduce public participation in teaching processes, to assess the existing pattern of occupancy and people’s level of public satisfaction, needs and preferences, and to educate students on the negotiation practices and on the impact of people’s feedback over the design options.

This work results on a synthesis of key factors for project based learning implementation, enabled by the incorporation of public participation techniques into teaching and studio approaches. It also proposes a specific methodology for a semester project teaching and assessment, from the initial call/problem, through process development, to final product delivery.

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