

## PRESS RELEASE 23 August 2011

### The first international Sustainable Summer School in the Euregion

From 19 to 25 August 2011 REcentre organises a unique programme on sustainable design in the Euregion. For this programme REcentre works together with the famous Institute without Boundaries (Toronto, Canada). The participants include an international and interdisciplinary public of designers, students, teachers and interested parties with different backgrounds but with one common interest: sustainability.

#### Four case studies in four Euregion cities

At the Sustainable Summer School the participants work on three themes for seven days, i.e. **food**, **water** and **public space** in four different case studies. Those case studies take place in four Euregion cities: **Maastricht (NL)**, **Liège (BE)**, **Hasselt (BE)** and **Genk (BE)**. For the Genk and Liège case studies the participants work on the theme 'public space'. In Genk they get the assignment to develop a public space which promotes social cohesion in an old, very multi-cultural mining neighbourhood. For Liège, a solution is sought for Saint-Gilles, a poor neighbourhood with lots of derelict and empty buildings. Here, as in Genk, the aim is to develop a concept to initiate a neighbourhood community. The third case study addresses the theme of 'food' in the Limburg city of Maastricht. Alternative distribution possibilities for an urban farm are examined here. Finally, the participants are challenged in the fourth case study to find a solution for excess water in a former mining area nearby Hasselt (Eisden Dorp, Leut and Meeswijk). That water is currently discharged in the canal.

The summer school participants are divided in four teams. Each team is instructed to develop a sustainable concept for one of the four case studies. During a two day trip to Maastricht, Liège, Hasselt or Genk, each team, led by 15 international experts, will gain insight in the specific problems of the region and examines how design can be used to provide innovative and sustainable solutions. The case studies are organised in close consultation with local partners such as MAD-faculty, ID Campus, the City of Genk, the 'Tuin van Sint Pieter' and LRM. On the final day of the Sustainable Summer School each team will present a design concept to a panel of experts and various stakeholders of the region.

#### Towards a post graduate course in sustainable design

REcentre organises the Sustainable Summer School in cooperation with the Institute without Boundaries which approaches the development of sustainable design from a multidisciplinary angle. The summer school aims to set up local and international changes and develop thorough expertise on sustainability in practice by tackling *real life* challenges

in a multidisciplinary group. By uniting people from all over the world, we can not only propose solutions for the specific case studies but we can also develop universal resources and concepts.

It is REcentre's intention to provide **a postgraduate course in sustainable design** in the future. Natascha Rommens, director of REcentre, indicates that the course in sustainable design could be a strong additional asset for the development of the Euregion: "Our own course in sustainable design recognises the importance of this field and can further strengthen our knowledge of it. It is the mission of REcentre to give the Euregion Meuse-Rhine a lead in the area of sustainability to ensure that young, creative companies can get established here and can thus contribute to the region. With such a training programme the region has already made some progress."

### **REcentre**

REcentre is a **knowledge and promotion centre for sustainable design in the Euregion Meuse-Rhine**. REcentre therefore makes its network and know-how available to companies, designers and schools. On the other hand the organisation also organises projects with a societal agenda to publicise sustainable design. REcentre wishes to expand the Euregion Meuse-Rhine to a reference region at the crossroads between ecology and economy.

REcentre is an Interreg IVa project, supported by Wallonie Design (Liège, BE), Z33/Design Platform Limburg (Hasselt, BE) and NAIM/Bureau Europa (Maastricht, NL).

[www.recentre.org](http://www.recentre.org)

### **Institute without Boundaries**

Institute without Boundaries (IwB) is a unique **post-graduate institution for an interdisciplinary design strategy**. The IWB is mainly active in the field of **design from a sociological, economic and ecological viewpoint** and also has its own design studio where professors and students with different backgrounds work on projects together. Luigi Ferrara, director of IwB, will actively participate in the Sustainable Summer School as educator. According to Ferrara Toronto and the Euregion have a similar industrial history and share a number of complex problems: the heavy industries that slowly disappear and require an economic alternative, the ageing of the population, the increasingly large gap between the generations and the brain drain of young talent. "In addition we - just like the Euregion - also have different languages and different cultures which live close together. This means that people are used to crossing borders, literally and figuratively. That mentality is the perfect breeding ground for what we want to do. In our experience creativity always flourishes in this type of circumstances", says Ferrara.

<http://www.institutewithoutboundaries.com>

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### **More info and picture material:**

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#### **Annexes:**

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Logo partners REcentre

Logo Sustainable Summer School © Groenergras

De Heerlijckyt van Elsmeren © Bert Sohl

Sustainable Summer School-Case study water © Bert Sohl

Sustainable Summer School-Case study public space (Genk, BE) © Bert Sohl

Sustainable Summer School-Case study public space (Liège, BE) © Bert Sohl

Sustainable Summer School-Case study food (Maastricht, NL) © Bert Sohl

Sustainable Summer School-Educators © Bert Sohl

Deputy Paul-Emile Mottard, Natascha Rommens, Luigi Ferrara, Priscilla Machils, Deputy  
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