

J100

Name of the organisation

JES vzw (J100)

Website of the organisation

<https://jesantwerpen.be/> + <https://www.j100.be/>

Location of the organisation

Borgerhoutsestraat 34, 2018 Antwerpen, Belgium

E-mail address of the organisation

Ayla.callebert@jes.be

Good practice aspect(s)/themes of youth work

- Array

Good practice category

A practice of processes and methods

Good practice aim & purpose

J100 is a platform of young people from Antwerp who are committed to combating polarization in Antwerp. They are supported in this endeavor by a collaboration of various youth organizations. The young people within J100 are supported by workers and volunteers from 13 diverse youth organisations.

The activities of J100 revolve around dialogue with each other and dialogue with other stakeholders in the city, from policymakers to civil society organizations, media, entrepreneurs, influencers, and artists. Within J100, meetings are facilitated between different youth groups to contemplate coexistence in the city, take action, and amplify the voice of other young people. The young people of J100 have the ambition to have as much impact as possible on the societal challenges they face.

J100 aims to have an impact on the societal challenges that young people are confronted with by focusing on activities that are geared towards (1) dialogue and connection between young people, (2) empowering young people, and (3) amplifying their voices. Young people are at the center. Activities start from their experiences and knowledge, and they are guided in expanding their horizons.

Good practice description

Why do we do this?

More than 40% of Antwerp's population is younger than 30 years. Since spring 2016, Antwerp organizations have been working on the J100 project to strengthen the position of young people in the city. Not by talking about them, but by thinking together with them about coexistence in the city and giving them a voice in the city.

In this way, J100 also aims to form a representative group of participants because there is no single

‘Antwerp youth’... and every youth organization has its own volunteer network and target audience. It is through the collaboration between these youth organizations that this great diversity of young people in all their variety can be represented.

Who ?

During J100 activities, there is always an opportunity for young people between the ages of 16 and 30 from different parts of the city to connect: different neighborhoods, different organizations, different backgrounds, different social classes, and so on, to meet. Through dialogue, young people gain a better understanding of each other’s worlds.

Where?

Antwerp

J100 activities take place in a nomadic manner across different neighborhoods of the city of Antwerp. Always in spaces provided by J100 partner organizations, tailored to the activities and based on the safety of the young people.

Droomhut (Dream Hut)

In Borgerhout’s Park Spoor Oost, there is a focal point in the city for J100’s young people: the Droomhut (Dream Hut). It serves as a gathering place, a hub, a safe space for young people to freely express their voices. It’s a place above the city where young people can be themselves. Young people collectively decide which J100 activities take place in the Droomhut.

How?

Activities

Within J100, in addition to ongoing activities, there is always room for new ideas. You can think of J100 as a drawer full of various activities that align with the following objectives:

- Facilitating meetings between different youth groups (young people from different neighborhoods, young people with and without a migration background, young people from various socio-economic backgrounds, etc.).
- Collaboratively thinking about coexistence in the city. How do young people experience living together in a super diverse city? How can they make a difference themselves? How can they be inspired to contribute to city life? What can others do?
- Amplifying the voice of young people: taking action together with young people and engaging in conversations with others.

J100 Meetings:

Young people reached by the various organizations involved in J100 meet about every six weeks during a J100 meeting, where they engage in dialogue about various societal topics that are relevant to their lives. External participants are regularly invited to enrich the discussions and listen to the young people’s stories.

J100 Summit (J100-top)

An annual major gathering of J100. A broad group of invitees and young people involved in all different activities come together at a J100 Summit where everything within J100 converges.

Neighborhood walks

Self-organized walks starting from the young people and their perspective on the neighborhood. These are open to residents, city services, (civil society organizations, politicians and other young people.

Good practice result & concrete effects

The young people within J100 are empowered in various ways. They are empowered to make their voices heard and to amplify them to the outside world.

They can also attend workshops during J100 meetings to strengthen various competencies. Some examples include spokesperson skills, active citizenship, and debating. During J100 meetings, we often invite experts. These experts provide insights to the J100 young people on various societal issues, and vice versa.

The various youth organizations within J100 form a strong network. The youth workers from these different organizations stay in contact, lend a listening ear to each other, and, together with the young people, translate needs into recommendations and actions.

The young people and youth workers also engage in lobbying. They communicate their needs across different life domains to policymakers. However, it goes beyond that; they actively think about how to find solutions to problems they experience in society. They make recommendations to the city administration to implement concrete solutions to matters that concern them.

The most important thing for the young people in J100 is that there is a conversation with them, not about them!"

Good practice chapter of the European Charter on Local Youth Work

Organisation and practice