

SAN BERILLO RISING PLANNING FOR PEOPLE HOUSING FOR ALL!

**Catania - Italy
June 8th > 17th, 2025**

**Call for
What is CoPED?**



CoPED '25
SAN BERILLO RISING:
PLANNING FOR PEOPLE,
HOUSING FOR ALL!
What is CoPED?

Community
Planning
& Ecological
Design
Summer
School

Knowledge and skills to empower those who are in the greatest need. After all, isn't that why you want to be a planner?

How can the pursuit of knowledge through research not only advance science but also foster profound social learning? **How might the fruits of research be tangibly harnessed to address the challenges of local communities?**

For over a decade, these pivotal questions have been the driving force behind a collaborative effort among researchers from three different Universities: the University of Catania, the University of Memphis, and UMASS Boston. Their brainchild? The CoPED summer school, an immersive, cutting-edge training module in transdisciplinary participatory action research.

Every summer, since 2012, CoPED works with one or more organizations located in a specific area of Sicily, experimenting with a research process that becomes an occasion for collective learning, aimed at shaping strategies to deal with a specific planning and/or development issue.

The experience developed by CoPED over these years, in line with the scientific literature on the matter, emphasises a fundamental point: when scientific research meets collective learning, it becomes way more effective.

MUTUAL LEARNING AGREEMENT

Each year, CoPED activities are shaped around one specific objective, which is identified by the local organization(s). This objective is the foundation of a Mutual Learning Agreement (MLA), which is co-developed by instructors and the local organization over the months before the summer school. In the MLA, CoPED participants' learning objectives and deliverables are aligned with those of the organization's members, providing a clear indication of mutual expectations, commitments, and advantages. This mutuality occurs within a process of co-learning and relies on both reciprocity and reflexive use of theory.

ACTIVITIES

CoPED uses a participatory action research methodology focused on co-development of research questions, background/historical research, bi-directional learning, co-design, specialized and technical data analysis, and community review of results.

Each year, CoPED methodological design is adapted to the specific place and community challenge, but its general structure is characterized by an iterative movement between specialized (qualitative and quantitative research activities) and relational activities (collaborative workshops, open houses, etc.), according to the following sequence:

- participants learn about theories that are relevant for the project;
- they engage in fieldwork and data collection;
- they critically reflect on how data challenge the theories they started with;
- they share their reflections with a broader audience, and collect feedback in order to re-shape the starting point (which then leads to the need to go back to other theories and further data collection).

This allows participants to engage with many different people and exchange perspectives, expertise, and ideas through a variety of experiential learning activities, by working together to identify the values, practical needs, and aspirations for future transformations.

Scholars have been exploring, for several decades, the pedagogical turn that is labeled with the expression of experiential learning, which refers to the idea that true learning occurs only when learners overcome the traditional gap between theory and practice through a real, practical experience through which they reflect critically on theory.

The exposure to situations where theoretical knowledge is intertwined with highly controversial social, economic, and environmental issues can allow CoPED participants (be they researchers, students, and locals) to develop technical skills, to deepen their ethical awareness, and to share full responsibility in the creation of knowledge meant to make the world a better place.

SUGGESTED READINGS

Greenwood D., Levin M. (2006) **Introduction to Action Research: Social Research for Social Change.** Sage Publications

Lambert-Pennington K., Saija L., Franchina A. (2018) **From Possibility to Action: An Interdisciplinary Action-Learning School dealing with Waste.** *Cambio* Vol. 1, n. 15: 73-88

Raciti A., Saija L. (2018) **From ecosystem services to Ecological Devices: The CoPED Summer School experience in the Simeto River Valley, Italy.** *Journal of Urban Management* Vol. 7, n. 3: 161-171

Reardon K. (2006) **Promoting reciprocity within community/university development partnerships: Lessons from the field.** *Planning, Practice & Research*, 21:1, 95-107

SUGGESTED READINGS (San Berillo & Trame di Quartiere)

Barbanti C., Saija L., Li Destri Nicosia G. (2023) «**Welfare abitativo e rigenerazione urbana nella fase di Recovery. Sperimentazioni d'azione collettiva a Catania**» in Marchigiani E., Perrone C., Savoldi P. & Tosi M.C. (a cura di, 2023), *Forme di welfare e dotazioni di servizi, un'eredità in continua evoluzione*, Atti della XXIV Conferenza Nazionale SIU Dare valore ai valori in urbanistica, Brescia, 23-24 giugno 2022, vol. 06. Planum Publisher e Società Italiana degli Urbanisti, Roma-Milano 2023. Pagine 155-164. ISBN 978-88-99237-48-6.

http://media.planum.bedita.net/84/c1/Atti%20XXIV%20Conferenza%20Nazionale%20SIU_Brescia_VOL.06_Planum%20Publisher_2023_.pdf

Barbanti, C. (2022), «Problematizzare il 'basso' nei processi di rigenerazione urbana per un'autentica inclusività: il caso di San Berillo a Catania». *Tracce urbane. Rivista italiana transdisciplinare di studi urbani*, 8(12). <https://doi.org/10.13133/2532-6562/18134>

CoPED '25
SAN BERILLO RISING:
PLANNING FOR PEOPLE,
HOUSING FOR ALL!
What is CoPED?

Community
Planning
& Ecological
Design
Summer
School

Barbanti C., Buscimese Fagone L., Privitera E., Saija L. (2021), «**Cooperativismo immobiliare per la rigenerazione urbana solidale: una esperienza di ricerca-azione a Catania**». Caudo G., Paone F., Sampieri A. (a cura di, 2021) Atti della XXIII Conferenza Nazionale SIU DOWNSCALING, RIGHTSIZING. Contrazione demografica e riorganizzazione spaziale, Torino, 17-18 giugno 2021, vol. 06. Planum Publisher e Società Italiana degli Urbanisti, Roma-Milano 2021, pp. 26-34. ISBN 978-88-99237-33-2 | DOI: 10.53143/PLM.C.621

Di Ronco, A., Garozzo, E., & Re, V. L. L. (2021). **Sex workers nel quartiere catanese di San Berillo: presenze, resistenze e trasformazioni**. Tracce urbane. Rivista italiana transdisciplinare di studi urbani, (9).

Barbanti, C., Privitera, E. (2019). «**Riabitare l'esistente come risposta al disagio sociale. Sperimentazioni sull'abitare collaborativo nel quartiere di San Berillo a Catania**». AA. VV. (2020), Atti della XXII Conferenza Nazionale SIU. L'Urbanistica italiana di fronte all'Agenda 2030. Portare territori e comunità sulla strada della sostenibilità e della resilienza, Matera-Bari 6-7-8 giugno 2019, Planum Publisher, Roma-Milano, pp. 160-168 | ISBN 9788899237219

Lo Re, V. (2018). **L'informalità del cambiamento urbano. Pratiche e progettualità dell'abitare nel quartiere San Berillo di Catania**. Cambio. Rivista Sulle Trasformazioni Sociali, 8(15), 99–112. <https://doi.org/10.13128/cambio-23037>.