Pantelimon, Bucharest

Pantelimon–Fundeni Neighborhood, Bucharest – District 2

Located in the northeastern part of Bucharest, the Pantelimon–Fundeni neighborhood in District 2 is a dense, post-socialist residential area composed of 10-storey collective housing blocks surrounded by fragmented and underused green spaces. The demonstration site covers 2748 m² within a broader 54,000 m² network of green areas, contributing to a 25% increase in the district's public green surface. Built between 1974 and 1979 as factory housing, the neighborhood once hosted cohesive, community-driven residents who maintained semi-public courtyards. Over time, privatization and high tenant turnover have weakened social cohesion, while much of the open land has been converted into parking lots.

The population is socially and culturally diverse—elderly owners, young families, tenants, and ethnic minorities—living in proximity to a school, kindergarten, and parish hosting a social canteen for vulnerable groups. Despite this rich social fabric, challenges such as poor air quality, heat stress, and fragmented public space limit quality of life and community interaction.

Through the **ReGreeneration project**, District 2 City Hall aims to transform this "dormitory neighborhood" into a **co-created urban ecosystem**. Environmental priorities include improving air quality, reducing urban heat islands, enhancing biodiversity, and promoting sustainable water and waste management through **rain gardens**, **raised-bed community gardens**, and **small-scale composting installations**. These spaces—co-designed and co-managed by residents, schoolchildren, and parish volunteers—will serve as inclusive green commons fostering environmental stewardship, education, and social cohesion. The long-term ambition is to create a replicable model of nature-based, community-led regeneration in post-socialist urban contexts.



Approx. site area:
The land pertaining to the investment consists of several adjoining plots, with a total area of approximately 26330 sqm, of which 12748 sqm are designated as landscaped green areas.

Key Information:
Home to over 5,000 residents in 1-0 storey housing blocks, the site includes a school, kindergarten, parish social canteen, in District 2. Porta.

Priority areas & main expectations:
The city aims to pilot an innovative regeneration model for post-socialist residential areas through nature-based solutions and community-led governance. Students are expected to propose strategies that revitalize underused courtyards into productive green commons, integrating rain gardens, raised-bed gardens, and small-scale composting, to enhance climate resilience, biodiversity, and social cohesion, while demonstrating scalable models for inclusive, low-carbon urban transformation. ex. Cras.

Presentation of the Site

Located in the northeastern part of Bucharest, the **Pantelimon–Fundeni neighborhood** represents a typical **post-socialist residential district**, characterized by large collective housing blocks, fragmented green spaces, and a mix of social and cultural diversity. The demonstration area covers **2748 m²** within a wider network of **54,000 m²** of green spaces, contributing to a **25% increase in green surface** across District 2.

This neighborhood lies between **Pantelimon Avenue and Fundeni Avenue**, two major boulevards connecting the city's eastern neighborhoods. The area benefits from good access to public transport (bus and tram lines), proximity to educational and social institutions, and a network of local businesses and services. Within walking distance are a **school, kindergarten, and a parish** that operates a **social canteen**, providing meals for vulnerable residents.

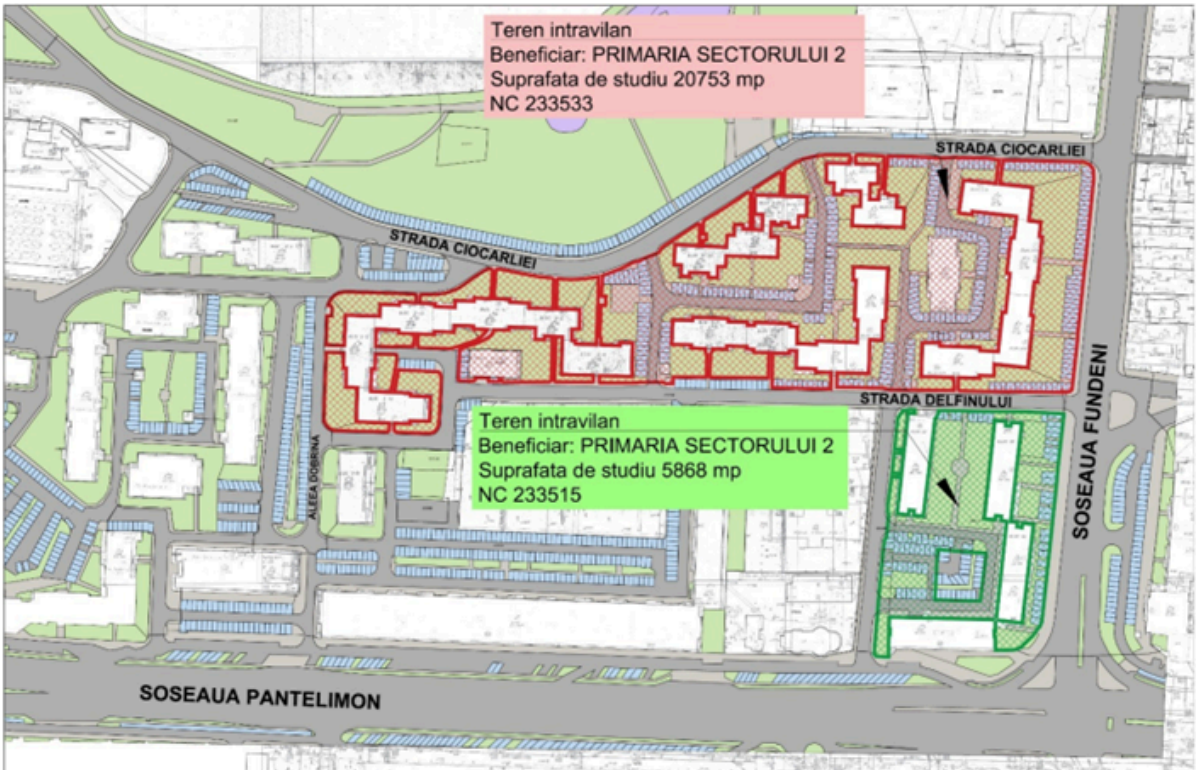
The **urban fabric** reflects the legacy of socialist urban planning (1970s–1980s): high-density, 10-storey apartment buildings surrounded by semi-public courtyards that were once maintained by residents and used for recreation, gardening, or community gatherings. Over the years, these open spaces have been gradually **taken over by parking lots**, fenced gardens, or informal uses, resulting in **fragmentation and social disconnection**. While elderly residents remain attached to the place, younger tenants and newcomers often lack engagement with the local community.

Demographically, the area hosts a **socially mixed population** of approximately **5,000 inhabitants**, including elderly owners, young families, refugees, and ethnic minorities. Economic disparities, aging infrastructure, and environmental stress—especially **poor air quality, high dust levels, and urban heat**—affect the quality of life. Despite these challenges, the proximity to schools and strong institutional partners create opportunities for **education-based engagement and social inclusion**.

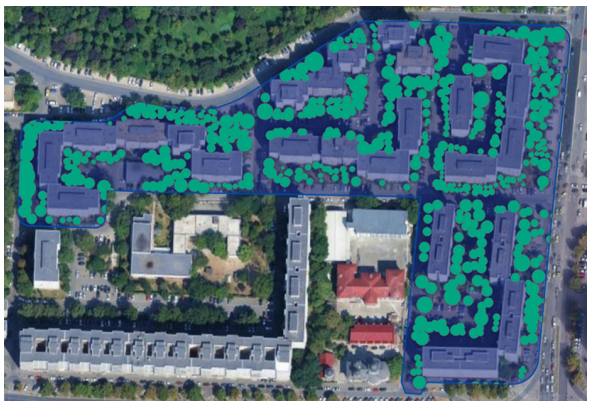
The **ReGreeneration project** aims to address these challenges through a **climate-adaptive, inclusive transformation**. Planned interventions include **rain gardens**, **raised-bed urban gardens**, and **small-scale composting systems**, designed as **community-managed green commons**. These spaces will integrate **water management, biodiversity enhancement, and food-growing functions**, while serving as educational and therapeutic places for schoolchildren, elderly residents, and people benefiting from the social canteen.

The city's long-term vision is to establish the Pantelimon–Fundeni pilot as a **model for post-socialist urban regeneration**, where environmental resilience and social innovation converge. The approach combines **nature-based solutions (NBS)**, **citizen co-creation**, and **inclusive governance** to demonstrate how residual spaces between housing blocks can become productive, climate-responsive, and socially cohesive ecosystems for the future of Bucharest.




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Development Expectations

The redevelopment of the **Pantelimon–Fundeni site** is part of the District 2 City Hall's broader effort to **rethink post-socialist residential landscapes** through ecological innovation, community stewardship, and inclusive governance. The city envisions the site as a **prototype for climate-responsive regeneration**, where underused open spaces between collective housing blocks are transformed into multifunctional, community-managed ecosystems.

The **main expectations** for the student competition are to develop **innovative yet feasible design concepts** that:

- Integrate **nature-based solutions (NBS)** such as **rain gardens, green corridors, pollinator-friendly planting, and community gardens** to enhance urban biodiversity and climate adaptation.
- Reimagine existing residual spaces as **productive and social commons**, accessible to all residents, including children, the elderly, and vulnerable groups.
- Improve **stormwater management, soil regeneration, and air quality**, reducing urban heat island effects.
- Foster a **sense of place and belonging** through low-cost, replicable interventions that promote interaction, education, and local ownership.
- Address the **challenges of post-socialist morphology**—monotony, shade, and rigid layouts—through creative small-scale landscape and design strategies.

The competition outcomes will inform the next implementation stages of **Lots 2 and 3** of the ReGreeneration pilot. Proposals that align with the approved masterplan, respect existing constraints, and demonstrate technical feasibility will be considered for **integration into the city's investment program** (approx. 700,000 EUR).

City climate priorities and specific environmental challenges

Bucharest's **City Climate Action Plan** identifies adaptation to **heat, air pollution, and flooding** as critical urban priorities. District 2 faces **poor air quality, compacted and degraded soils, low biodiversity**, and limited green permeability. The area's dense urban structure amplifies **urban heat** and **stormwater runoff**, while poor waste management contributes to pollution and visual degradation.

Therefore, the city seeks proposals that integrate:

- **Rainwater retention and reuse systems** (bioswales, rain gardens, permeable surfaces).
- **Soil decompaction and phytoremediation** techniques to restore fertility and resilience.
- **Biodiversity corridors** linking fragmented green spaces.
- **Circular waste and composting systems** connecting local food, water, and soil cycles.
- **Climate education and community participation mechanisms** embedded in design.

The ultimate goal is to turn a degraded residential landscape into a **living laboratory for resilience**, where design and participation converge to restore ecological balance, improve public health, and redefine the relationship between citizens and their environment.

Specific planning rules and regulations

The **Pantelimon–Fundeni site** is part of the **ReGreeneration pilot**, an EU Horizon Europe demonstration project led by the **District 2 City Hall** in collaboration with Nhood, UrbanizeHub, Climatosfera, and UTCB. The project aims to transform residual open spaces between collective housing blocks into adaptive, inclusive, and climate-resilient public commons.

The area is regulated under Bucharest's **General Urban Plan (PUG)** as a **mixed-use zone (M2&M3)**. It is structured into **three development lots**, each corresponding to a phase of design and execution approved through the district's **Feasibility Study** and **technical documentation**. All interventions must comply with local planning instruments as mentioned in the excerpt from the Urban Planning Certificate in the dataroom (**PUG & RLU District 2**) and remain within the **public domain**.

Permanent buildings are not allowed; however, students may propose **temporary, modular, or lightweight structures** (e.g., pavilions, pergolas, composting units, rainwater harvesting systems) as part of landscape and social design strategies. Interventions should enhance existing pedestrian connections, respect the current circulation logic, and preserve public accessibility. Vehicular access must remain limited to emergency or maintenance services.

All existing parking spaces shall be retained, considering that there is no possibility of providing centralised parking facilities in the area.

Environmental and Technical Conditions

The site's **soil is compacted, nutrient-poor, and partially contaminated**, requiring ecological restoration through compost integration, phytoremediation, and native planting. The existing tree stock includes both mature and declining specimens; selective pruning, soil aeration, and replacement with **native, drought-tolerant trees and shrubs** are encouraged.

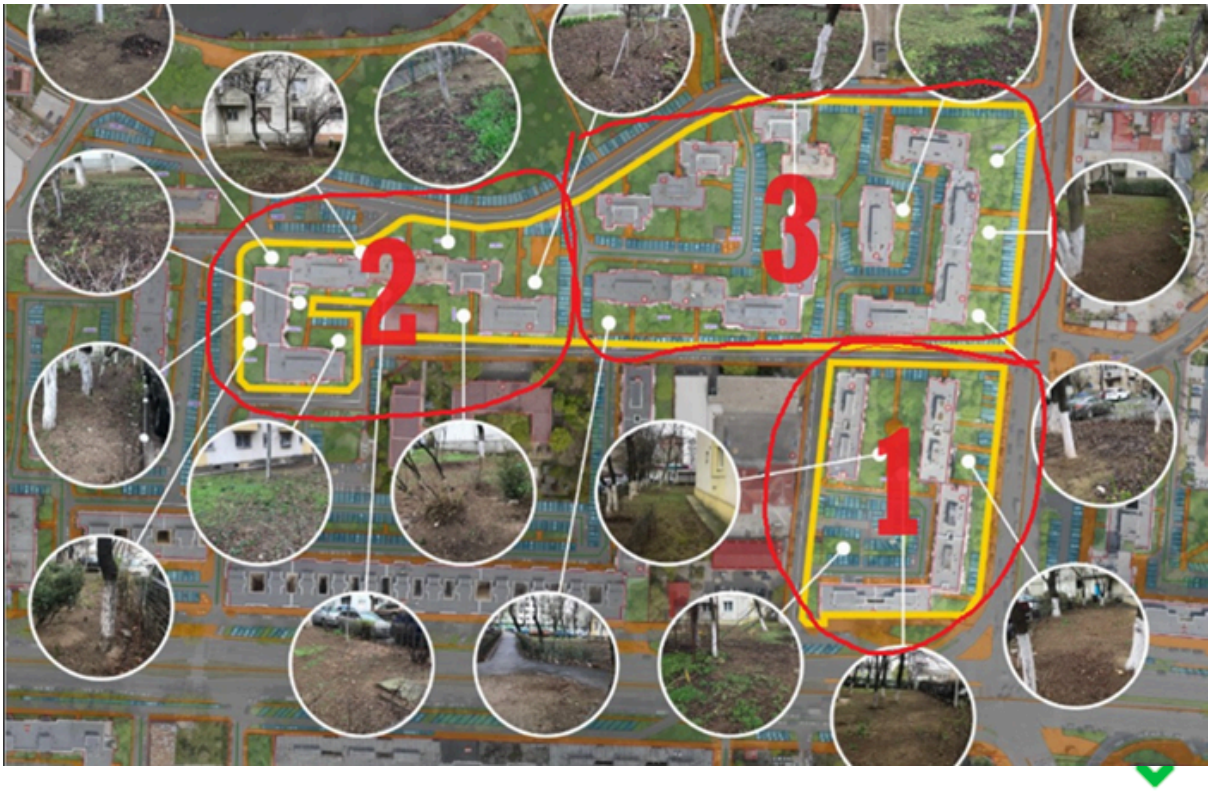
Microclimatic conditions are challenging: dense 10-storey buildings create **deep shade, poor air flow, and localized heat accumulation** in summer. Proposals should consider **diversified vegetation layers**, microhabitats, and cooling through evapotranspiration. Drainage remains a key constraint — **permeable surfaces, bioswales, and rain gardens** must be integrated into design proposals to reduce runoff and improve water infiltration.

Materials must be **durable, low-maintenance, and circular**, favoring reuse and adaptability. Designs should address the **visual clutter and environmental degradation** caused by informal parking and waste areas, offering coherent, nature-based solutions that reclaim public space for community benefit.

Implementation Framework

The overall investment for Lots 1–3 is approximately **€700,000**, and projects must remain realistic within this envelope. Proposals should build upon the approved **masterplan and landscape zoning**, and be compatible with permits under preparation by the **District 2 Urbanism Department**.

Student teams are encouraged to explore **low-cost, high-impact urban design strategies** that combine ecology, participation, and aesthetic renewal. The City Hall aims to identify **scalable prototypes** capable of informing future urban regeneration actions in other Bucharest districts and across post-socialist European cities.



Language requirements

Proposals must be submitted in English.

City-specific awards

The **District 2 City Hall of Bucharest**, together with the partners of the **ReGreeneration project**, will actively explore the integration of the **winning proposal** into the next implementation phase of the pilot site, **subject to its feasibility, compliance with the approved masterplan, and alignment with the available investment budget**.

If selected, the proposal will contribute directly to the **redevelopment of Lots 2 and 3**, serving as a tangible example of how student-led innovation can shape real urban transformation.

The **winning team** will be formally **acknowledged by the City of Bucharest – District 2** and **invited to an official ceremony** organized with city representatives, institutional partners, and community stakeholders. The project will be **publicly promoted** through local and European communication channels, highlighting its contribution to climate innovation, participatory design, and ecological regeneration in post-socialist urban contexts.

This recognition aims to celebrate **creative thinking, environmental responsibility, and civic engagement** in urban design education. The competition is conceived as a bridge between **academic exploration and practical implementation**, providing students with a rare opportunity to see their ideas inform real-world urban policies and design actions in Bucharest.