

Mouraria (Colina do Castelo, Lisbon)

Colina do Castelo, 1100-338

Colina do Castelo comprises seven neighbourhoods in the historic urban area of Lisbon. These areas give the city its unique identity, as they are linked with the original expansion of the city and its foundation. This project will focus specifically on the area of Mouraria, one of the most multicultural neighbourhoods in Lisbon. Composed of narrow and sloping streets, it presents a diversity of buildings, featuring some of the oldest buildings in the city.

Despite being the historical and cultural heart of the city, Colina do Castelo has been subject to an ever-increasing abandonment rate. Starting from the 60s, the population of the pilot plot area reduced by 56%. Simultaneously, there is a growing disparity between the young and the elderly, between locals and foreigners as well as workers and the unemployed. To combat against these disparities and retain the identity of the neighbourhoods in this area, **Colina do Castelo Hub** is now being developed as part

of the [H2020 Project HUB-IN](#) (Hubs of Innovation and Entrepreneurship for the Transformation of Historic Urban Areas), carried out in Lisbon by the Municipality and Lisboa E-Nova. This Hub strives to be a transformational engine for the sustainability and well-being of communities, by sharing and combining innovation and traditions, with a focus on sustainability.

The overarching objective of this project is to combat the desertification of this historical area by promoting more circular neighbourhoods while preserving the identity and heritage. One of the main aims for Colina do Castelo Hub is to promote climate action, making it compatible with the cultural-led urban regeneration; creating better living conditions and comfort for local communities. The project should develop strategies to integrate nature-based solutions, improve the use of water resources and empower communities through culture to foster a more sustainable lifestyle.



Credits: Lisbon Municipality

Approx. site area: 21 hectares.

Key information: Even though Colina do Castelo is the beating heart of the city, only 2.8% of the Lisbon population lives there, as a consequence of the high abandonment rate which started in the 60s.

Priority areas & main expectations:

Students should develop a green and thriving neighbourhood preserving the history of the area, with a special focus on the following challenges:

a) Integrate nature-based solutions in

outdoor spaces to reduce the Urban Heat Island (UHI) effect and the impact of heat waves;

b) Enhance water reuse and improve climate adaptation, promoting circularity; and

c) Empower local communities - using art as a vehicle for climate awareness and adopting a more sustainable lifestyle.

Presentation of the site and development expectations

Colina do Castelo's neighbourhoods cover a total of 1.16 km² and serve as the foundation for the development of **Colina do Castelo Hub** as part of the [H2020 Project HUB-IN](#) (Hubs of Innovation and Entrepreneurship for the Transformation of Historic Urban Areas), which is being carried out in Lisbon by the Municipality and Lisboa E-Nova. This Hub strives to be a transformational engine for the sustainability and well-being of communities, by sharing and combining innovation and traditions, with a focus on sustainability.

Colina do Castelo is made up of seven distinct neighbourhoods: Alfama, Castelo, Intendente, Mouraria, São Vicente, Sé and Graça. The cultural-led urban regeneration of these seven neighbourhoods is vital for the sustainable development of Lisbon, as they are the historical and cultural heart of the city. Nevertheless, **this project will focus specifically on Mouraria neighbourhood**. Mouraria is located on the North hillside, which encompasses the historic and popular area that houses the famous Castle of Saint George.

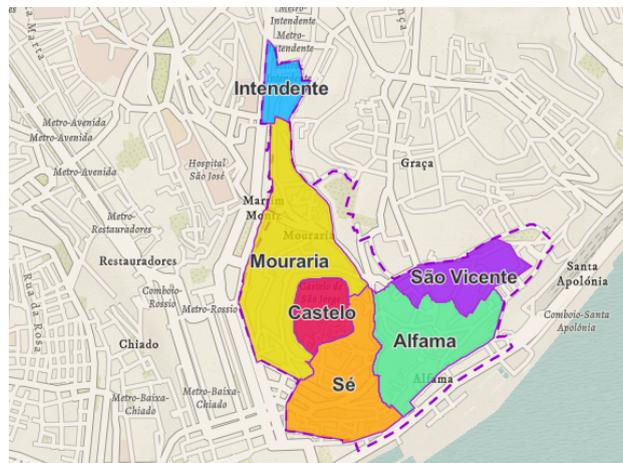


Figure 1: Colina do Castelo, Lisbon - main neighbourhoods (Source: HUB-IN GeoTool)

Mouraria has the highest rate of inhabitants (around $\frac{1}{3}$ of Colina do Castelo population) and hosts the Mouraria Innovation Centre (CIM) - a municipal incubator which supports projects and business ideas from cultural and creative industries. This will also be the main physical focus point for the Colina do Castelo Hub.

The site is strongly associated with the place where the Arab population moved after the conquest of Lisbon in the 12th century. Its name derives from the fact that the first king assigned it to the Moors, who remained in the city over the centuries. Composed of narrow and sloping streets, it presents a diversity of buildings, featuring some of the oldest buildings in the city that coexist with Pombaline buildings from the post-earthquake period of 1755.

Mouraria is currently one of the most multicultural and authentic neighbourhoods of Lisbon. It was known to be a somewhat poor neighbourhood. However, until the XIX century, it was characterised by bohemian life and Fado music. It disputes with Alfama the title of "Cradle of Fado". More recently, the municipality has invested in its rehabilitation, with many cultural associations emerging and developing there. Mouraria has a strong multicultural environment, with religions and cultures from 92 nationalities and individuals from all walks of life. However, the highest coexistence between this diversity is amongst children, as they represent the true cultural unlocks both for this neighbourhood and the entire city.

Since the closure of the police station in Mouraria in 2014, the residents have experienced a climate of fear (aggressions, threats, robberies, prostitution, and increased drug use). Partly because of this, housing was still affordable to residents, however, in recent years real estate pressure has caused many people to leave the neighbourhood.



Figure 2: Images of Mouraria (credits: Lisbon Municipality)

Mouraria as well as the remaining six neighbourhoods included within Colina do Castelo, have been subject to an increasing abandonment rate. Starting from the 60s, the population of the area reduced by 56%. Simultaneously, other trends have been pointed out: an accentuated imbalance between young and elderly population, between local people and foreigners as well as between workers and the unemployed.

Concerning mobility and accessibility, the introduction of mechanical means (predominantly elevators) that allow the connection between the lower part of the city and the top of the hill have been and are still being installed, enabling the barriers imposed by the topography of the land and by the characteristics of the urban fabric of this historic area, that constitute factors of social exclusion and territorial isolation.

Missions and challenges

The overarching objective is to fight against the desertification of neighbourhoods within Colina do Castelo, by preserving their authenticity and identity and protecting and leveraging their material and immaterial heritage. A vision was established for Colina do Castelo Hub, aiming to be an engine of transformation for the sustainability and well-being of communities, through combining and exchanging innovations and traditions.

The HUB-IN Project brought together local residents and stakeholders with great relevance to the area for a variety of engagement and co-design activities, to identify challenges and design solutions to make Colina do Castelo and therefore, also Mouraria neighbourhood thrive. These were organised into three main missions and projected onto a [Roadmap](#):

- **Mission 1:** Promote a circular neighbourhood by valuing cultural heritage based on inclusion and quality of life;

- **Mission 2:** Boost creativity and rethink local businesses to improve the economy and safeguard traditional knowledge; and,
- **Mission 3:** Promote climate action, making it compatible with the cultural-led urban regeneration of Colina do Castelo, creating better living conditions and comfort for local communities.

We encourage students to address the 10 principles defined by the competition to develop a green and thriving neighbourhood and to consider the 3 missions identified by the roadmap. More specifically, the challenges we invite students to focus on for this initiative are part of the key actions raised under Mission 3:

- a) Integrating nature-based solutions in outdoor spaces to reduce the Urban Heat Island (UHI) effect and the impact of heat waves.
- b) Enhancing the reuse of local water resources and improving climate adaptation, promoting circular solutions to close the urban water cycle.
- c) Empower local communities to experiment, using art as a vehicle for climate awareness and foster a more sustainable lifestyle.

City climate priorities and specific environmental challenges

The most relevant environmental strategies that Lisbon is undertaking are the following:

- [LISBON CLIMATE ACTION PLAN 2030](#): The Plan is focused on integrated strategies towards resilience and Carbon Neutrality by 2050. It aims to be an instrument of integration and management of city policies and instruments in mitigation, adaptation, energy poverty eradication and promotion of quality of life and well-being.
- [MUNICIPAL STRATEGY FOR ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE \(EMAAC\)](#): EMAAC focuses on identifying adaptation options and actions aimed at promoting the minimization of the effects of climate change.
- [LISBON SOLAR STRATEGY](#): The strategy is one of the main axes of the Lisbon Climate Action Plan 2030 and is one of the main strategic axes for achieving climate neutrality and eradicating energy poverty by 2050.
- [GREEN ECOLOGICAL STRUCTURE - PRIORITIES](#): The Municipality of Lisbon promotes a set of programs and measures aimed at developing and preserving the ecological structure of the city. Lisbon's ecological structure is composed of three types of articulated and complementary infrastructures: green corridors, green and leisure spaces, and horticultural parks. Indeed, Lisbon has a strong focus on green infrastructure, promoting the creation of green spaces near urban areas (maximum 10 minutes walking distance) and green corridors.

The main **concerns in terms of climate change risks** for Lisbon are the increase of extreme events, in particular intense precipitation and winter storms followed by heavy rain and wind, the increase in frequency and intensity of heat waves and droughts, as well as the increase of days with high temperature ($\geq 35^{\circ}\text{C}$) and tropical nights ($\geq 20^{\circ}\text{C}$). The increase of mean sea level rise is also a concern, especially when combined with storm surge events. These concerns have always been a threat to Lisbon's resilience and are expected to be aggravated by climate change (*Pagani et al., 2018*).

We expect students to address some of these issues associated with the increase and intensity of heatwaves and the development of Urban Heat Island (UHI) effect, which can have an impact on the population's health and quality of life.

Specific planning rules and regulations

[MUNICIPAL MASTER PLAN \(PDM\)](#) (2012) covers the full area of Colina do Castelo (and Mouraria), by Colina do Castelo's ongoing, detailed urban rehabilitation plan.

- "The PDM is a territorial planning instrument that establishes the spatial organisation model and the development strategy for the municipal territory, the soil classification and the rules and parameters applicable to occupation, use and transformation of the soil.
- It constitutes a reference document for the preparation of other municipal plans and other sectoral interventions.
- It binds public entities and, directly and immediately, private individuals. In areas where there are urbanisation plans (PU) or detailed plans (PP), these take precedence over the PDM."

[DETAILED PLAN OF URBAN REHABILITATION OF COLINA DO CASTELO](#) (under preparation) will define a system of incentives and financing for the implementation of urban planning operations of municipal interest provided in the Master Plan. To increase the synergies between the Detailed Plan and the mission of HUB-IN in Lisbon, there is an approximate correspondence between the geographical boundaries of the Plan and the intervention area of the HUB-IN Lisboa. The main objectives of the Detailed Plan are the following:

- Rehabilitation of buildings;
- Integration of renewable energy technologies into urban planning operations and improvement of energy performance;
- Safeguarding cultural heritage values of special architectural, historical and landscape interest;
- Increase of permeable and wooded areas in interventions in outdoor spaces;
- Rehabilitation of water structures and reuse of rain and grey water;
- Introduction of water elements in the public space.

For further information on the Colina do Castelo HUB-IN vision and mission, please refer to the [HUB-IN Lisbon Roadmap](#) (September 2022).

Language requirements

Proposals must be submitted in English (preferably) or Portuguese.

City-specific awards

- 3 days of "Immersive Creative Mouraria": Residence in the Innovation Center of Mouraria of the Municipality of Lisbon (CIM) with mentoring sessions related to entrepreneurship, sustainability / circularity (and also in FabLab Lisboa if applied to the project) – Including accommodation paid for 2 students (last trimester of 2023)
- Presentation of the project to Lisbon policy makers
- Presentation of the project within the scope of the project HUB-IN – within national pilot and international team
- Access to HUB-IN academic resources (HUB-IN Academy)
- Participation in the Community of Knowledge created in Lisbon Historical Urban Area