



FABLAB.HR

ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROMOTION OF DIGITAL FABRICATION

FABLAB ZAGREB • PEOPLE • PLACES • POLICY

Organisational Profile

Organisation, mission and structure

ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE • V3 • 2026 • ZAGREB

Not a technology organisation that does social good — a social organisation for which technology is a tool.



Organisational Profile

FabLab Zagreb is building a strategically coherent innovation ecosystem that unites local roots with European ambition — through the people, places and policy that support them.

FOUNDED

1 March 2013

STATUS

Non-profit civil-society association

DOCUMENT VERSION

July 2026

PEOPLE

People

We empower individuals to develop the creative confidence and resilience to meet the challenges of the future.

PLACES

Places

We transform abandoned and marginalised spaces into open, creative ecosystems.

POLICY

Policy

We build frameworks that durably support local ecosystems as engines of development.

OUR POSITION

We are not a technology organisation that happens to do social good. We are a social organisation for which technology is a tool.

Who we are

FabLab Zagreb was founded in 2013 as the **first FabLab in Croatia** and a non-governmental non-profit organisation. Over more than a decade of work we have built a distinctive identity grounded in four interconnected areas of activity.

- **Transforming education** through the synergy of institutional and non-formal learning — bridging the gap between the formal system and the real competences the future demands.
- **Including individuals and communities** — especially those with fewer opportunities — in processes that reduce inequality and build personal and collective capacity for the challenges of the future.
- **Fostering entrepreneurial thinking** and supporting the journey from idea to prototype — from grassroots creativity to market-relevant solutions.
- **Digital transformation of society** grounded in democratising access to technology — because technology that cannot be accessed deepens the gap between more and less developed environments and contributes to poverty.

Our core value is accessibility — **accessible, responsible, inclusive**. We are convinced that inclusion is a condition, not an option, and that a diversity of perspectives and experiences produces better solutions for the community.

13+

years of active work in civil society

100+

schools and educational institutions

850+

teachers and educators

15,000+

children and young people in 2025

As part of the international FabLab network founded on the MIT FabLab Charter, we are the only active Fab Academy node in the whole of south-eastern and central Europe running the programmes of the global Fab Academy. Our space is equipped with 3D printers, laser cutters, CNC machines and electronic components — infrastructure that enables individuals and communities to make almost anything they can imagine.

International network and memberships

GLOBAL NETWORK · [FABLABS.IO](https://fablabs.io)

Fab Foundation

A global network of more than 2,500 FabLabs in 110+ countries. FabLab Zagreb is the only active Fab Academy node in the whole of south-eastern and central Europe — the nearest nodes are in western Europe and Turkey.

EUROPEAN NETWORK · [VULCA.EU](https://vulca.eu)

VULCA Network

A European mobility and residency programme for makers and makerspace organisations. Member since 2017. Roberto Vdović has served on the VULCA Board since 2024.

GLOBAL INNOVATION NETWORK

Global Innovators Gathering

An international association of innovators, makers and creative organisations promoting knowledge exchange and cooperation between local innovation ecosystems.

People • Places • Policy

The entire work of FabLab Zagreb today is framed by the **People • Places • Policy** strategic framework — a triad that considers community development simultaneously at the level of people, spaces and the policy that supports them. This framework is not merely a communication strategy — it is the operating logic that connects all of the organisation's activities, projects and partnerships.

PEOPLE

Empowered people

We empower people — especially those with fewer resources and opportunities — to develop creative confidence, empathy for the challenges of others, and the ability to create solutions to unknown challenges. This is the core of resilience: not only personal but collective. Tool: Designing the Future Academy.

PLACES

Transformed places

We develop local ecosystems in abandoned and marginalised spaces, transforming them into open, interdisciplinary and creative environments. Such spaces democratise access to technology — infrastructure in remote areas is a social obligation, not a privilege.

POLICY

Systemic policy

We work to create policies and financial frameworks that can durably support this model — because without a systemic approach every project remains a one-off success. We actively participate in EU policy processes as an expert civil-society organisation.

Two complementary contexts of action

URBAN CONTEXT

In urban environments young people are surrounded by an abundance of content and resources, which makes motivation harder to capture. Our response is not to compete with that offer, but to create **meaningful experiences** that activate creative potential and build a sense of personal and social responsibility. Concrete manifestation: **FabCity Zagreb** — the local expression of the global goal “Locally Productive, Globally Connected” by 2054.

NON-URBAN CONTEXT

Rural areas, islands, remote and sometimes deprived places carry a different but equally important potential. A scarcity of resources paradoxically breeds resourcefulness. Our goal: to build reasons to stay and develop — from **Adriatic GreenLab** on Prvić to **Grobnik** and the **REWEAVE** centre in Krvavica.

Croatia is not the periphery of Europe — it is a **living laboratory** for the revitalisation of non-urban spaces that Brussels and Berlin lack. The Mediterranean is the natural extension of the same logic through the **Mediterranean Makers Initiative**.

Designing the Future Academy

The shared tool across all contexts is the **Designing the Future Academy (DFA)** — a curriculum and methodology grounded in design thinking and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). DFA is not a conventional educational programme. It is an experiential framework that, through gamification, role-play and teamwork, strengthens the core competences for challenging futures.

COMPETENCE 1

Creative confidence

Belief in one's own ability to create and to change — especially among those the system has not favoured until now.

COMPETENCE 2

Empathy and resilience

Understanding the perspectives and needs of those who are different. The ability to face uncertainty and build shared responses.

COMPETENCE 3

Personal empowerment

Sensitisation to the challenges of the future — from climate change to digital transformations — and the capacity to act.

As the operating tool of the curriculum we have developed the **DFA application** (app.dfa.fablab.hr), which enables the methodology to be practised, repeated and measured in a gamified, digital environment. The application is not an end in itself — it makes the curriculum accessible, measurable and scalable. It is being developed in specialised versions: **DFA Class** (schools), **DFA Org** (organisations and teams) and **DFA Community** (communities and stakeholders).

Reach and recognition

FabLab Zagreb is recognised as one of the leading civil-society STEAM organisations in Croatia. Each year we organise or co-organise **more than 50 events** across Croatia, alongside participation in 10+ gatherings across the region and Europe — from Lisbon and Barcelona to Brno and Prague, from Dublin to Skopje.

- **2019–2023:** Five consecutive editions of **Maker Faire Zagreb** — a regional reference maker event.
- **2024–present: Makers Expo** under an open licence — a model of partner replicability.
- **26 September 2026: STEAM Festival Sesvete**, Zagreb — the top event of the year.
- In 2025 we reached **at least 15,000 children** and the wider public through our activities.

EU projects and strategic position

FabLab Zagreb has long-standing experience in European projects and is an active participant in shaping policy at national and European level. Our activities are consistently positioned within the intervention fields of non-formal and informal education (**SOC 100**) — the home ground of the civil-society sector in the EU's new financial envelope 2028–2034.

Active and approved projects

- **RIPPLE** (GAP-101296045) — Horizon Europe, HORIZON-MISS-2025-03-OCEAN-02. A citizen-science approach to marine plastic litter and innovation tools for public authorities. Start: 1 September 2026.
- **TSP “STEM as a Driver of Development”** — National Foundation for Civil Society Development. Umbrella support for building local STEM ecosystems since 2024.
- **DiSTT** — Interreg Central Europe. Digital skills and transformation for the labour market.

Previous EU projects (selection)

- **CENTRINNO** — Horizon 2020. Transforming industrial brownfield sites into creative innovation hubs.
- **FabLabNet** — Interreg Central Europe. A network of innovative creative laboratories in Central Europe.
- **DOIT Europe** — Erasmus+. Entrepreneurial mindset and social innovation for young people.
- **SCOPE / Science Connects People** — ESF. Thematic network “STEM as a Driver of Society”, 11 partners.
- **VULCA network** — European network of makerspaces, Roberto Vdović board member since 2024.

Strategic preparation 2026–2028

Three consortia are in preparation for Horizon Europe calls within the **People • Places • Policy** strategic framework, with a total value of ~€12.75M: HERITAGE-01 (People, ~€4.75M), NEB-BUSINESS-03 (Places, ~€4.5M) and TRANSFO-10 (Policy, ~€3.5M).

WHY WE TALK

This profile is a starting point, not a catalogue. Behind every theme lie years of experience, concrete partners and lessons from the field. We gladly share them with those who believe that local STEM ecosystems can be engines of development — for the people, places and policy that support them.