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Gamified Cohousing

Submitted By: Gamified Cohousing Oy



Organization Profile

Organization Name: Gamified Cohousing Oy

Organization Type: Private sector

Website: https://gamifiedcohousing.com/

Practice Details

Country(ies): Finland, Nepal

City(ies): Lohja, Kannus, Oulu, Kajaani, Lappeenranta, Kathmandu

Start Year: 2018 **Ongoing:** Yes **End Year:** N/A

Main Adequate Housing Components:



Housing Thematic Areas:

- Housing Affordability & Financing
- Communal & Self-Build Housing
- Housing Rights & Social Inclusion
- Technology & Digital Solutions in Housing

Relevant SDGs:



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Problem & Context

Europe faces a crisis of loneliness, unaffordable housing, and the neglect of vacant heritage buildings. Current policies focus on new construction, overlooking circular renovation and community-led living. In low-density areas, underused spaces like old schools offer potential for housing and tourism but face legal and financial barriers. Gamified Cohousing addresses these gaps by combining sustainable renovation, communal living, and digital tools for self-management. It tackles social isolation through shared responsibilities and rewards, using a gamified system to foster participation and reduce costs. Existing policy frameworks lack support for hybrid models like this, where affordability, inclusion, and environmental goals meet through co-creation and digital innovation.

Solution Developed

Gamified Cohousing addresses loneliness, unaffordability, and vacant buildings by creating self-managed cohousing communities in renovated heritage structures. The model targets diverse groups: low-income residents, creatives, digital nomads, families, and the elderly—people seeking affordable living with a sense of community. It combines minimal-impact renovations with a gamified app that assigns tasks, tracks contributions, and rewards participation. This fosters shared responsibility, reduces operational costs, and builds social cohesion.

The practice aims to:

- Make housing more affordable through shared spaces and resources.
- Promote sustainable renovation over new construction.
- Enable inclusive, intergenerational communities.
- Reduce loneliness through daily interactions and communal decision-making.

Its innovation lies in merging architecture with game design and technology. The digital platform enables transparent self-governance and encourages proactive engagement. The project also redefines “tenant” as an empowered co-creator of the living environment. Being a 2025 New European Bauhaus Prize finalist affirms its relevance and impact.

Implementation

The implementation began by identifying underused heritage buildings such as old schools and railway stations, assessing their potential for low-impact renovation. Actions included engaging future residents directly in spatial design, carrying out sustainable retrofitting, and developing a gamified digital platform for facility self-management. Residents earn points for completing shared tasks like cleaning or maintenance, redeemable for benefits, creating a circular, low-cost internal economy. Shared spaces host cultural and communal activities including events, residencies, and workshops.

Key actors included the private sector, architects and digital developers, for design and execution. Metropolia University of Applied Sciences co-developed the platform with students, Parmaco Oy supported with modular design, Curves n' Colors contributed to digital UI/UX, Kajaani University of Applied Sciences assisted with outreach. Oulu2026 collaborated on cultural use of spaces, ect. The project was exhibited at the Venice Biennale and is a finalist in the 2025 New European Bauhaus Prize. We are organizing the upcoming Re-Renovate Symposium, enhancing international dialogue.

Implementation spans 12 to 18 months. Funding includes private capital, resident labor, grants, and in-kind support. The model is modular, scalable, and replicable.

Enablers & Obstacles

Key enablers included strong resident commitment and a gamified digital platform that promoted transparent self-management. Support from Metropolia and Kajaani Universities enhanced technical capacity and outreach. Municipal cooperation enabled access to disused buildings. Cultural collaborations, including Oulu2026 and the upcoming Re-Renovate Symposium, brought visibility and legitimacy.

Major obstacles included the rigidity of legislation, especially outdated building codes and zoning rules that don't recognize hybrid living-working-communal models. This was addressed through phased renovations and close negotiation with local authorities. Financing posed a challenge due to the unconventional structure, mitigated through private investment, resident labor, and in-kind support. The platform also required adjustments to balance usability and privacy, resolved through resident feedback and testing.

Results & Impact

The Gamified Cohousing model has been implemented in five sites across Finland, including former schools and a railway station. Each site accommodates 8–15 residents, with over 60% identifying as low-income, artists, single parents, elderly, or migrants. Housing costs have been reduced by up to 40% through shared services, minimal-impact renovations, and internal economies based on gamified responsibility-sharing. Around 3,000 m² of disused space has been reactivated, reducing the carbon footprint compared to new construction.

Qualitatively, residents report stronger social bonds, reduced loneliness, and increased participation in communal life. Many take on active roles in local activities, such as hosting cultural events or maintaining shared gardens. The digital app enables transparency and accountability in communal task-sharing, with over 1,000 tasks logged and tracked since 2023.

Longer-term, the model contributes to local economies through building reuse, support for local producers, and tourism potential via cultural programming. It fosters environmental sustainability by prioritizing renovation over demolition, using low-energy systems, and

promoting shared resources. As a finalist in the 2025 New European Bauhaus Prize, the model has gained international recognition and is being considered for replication in Portugal, Germany, and Nepal.

Replication & Scale Up

Yes, the Gamified Cohousing model is being replicated in Portugal, Germany, and Nepal, adapting to local contexts while keeping its core: low-impact renovation, shared spaces, and a gamified self-management system. Key enablers include its modular design, scalable digital platform, and international recognition such as being a 2025 New European Bauhaus Prize finalist and its presence at the Venice Biennale. Partnerships with local governments and universities have further supported its expansion and adaptability.

The practice can be scaled by partnering with municipalities to access vacant buildings and with universities for local adaptation. Its modular renovation system and gamified digital platform allow easy replication. Supportive policies and impact-driven funding are key to wider adoption. With growing international interest and recognition, including as a NEB Prize finalist, the model aims to reach 500+ households across Europe and beyond in the coming years.

Policy Uptake

This housing practice is a new or innovative practice that is not yet adequately or fully integrated into formal policy frameworks.

Recognize cohousing and communal living models in national housing legislation to enable flexible zoning and mixed-use buildings. Support adaptive reuse of public assets through simplified permitting and incentives. Fund digital tools for self-management in housing. Encourage municipalities to allocate vacant buildings to community-led projects. Promote hybrid ownership and non-monetary economies in housing policy to improve affordability and inclusion.

Lessons & Takeaways

We would develop the digital platform earlier, involving residents from the start to better align features with real needs. More structured onboarding processes for new residents would improve integration and task participation. We also learned the need for stronger legal templates to clarify rights and responsibilities in communal living. Early engagement with local authorities could ease regulatory hurdles and speed up approvals.