Social Equity

THROUGH COMMUNITY EVENTS

C ities often address social equity using high-impact but resource-intensive tools, such as social infrastructure, city planning, and fiscal or other policies. However, pop-up community events featuring unconventional venues or activities have now emerged as innovative ways to effect tangible change more quickly and cheaply. These events also serve as test beds for new ideas, raise awareness and engage diverse groups, sometimes complementing more traditional measures. This photo essay, compiled by **Elyssa Kaur Ludher** and **Joanna Yong** from the Centre for Liveable Cities, profiles four initiatives from around the world, which aim to make their cities more inclusive, accessible, liveable and equitable for everyone.

**Paris
Plages**

Every year, Parisians traditionally escape to the countryside to flee the summer heat and humidity. However, many are obliged by their circumstances to remain in the city. In 2002, Mayor Bertrand Delanoë initiated Paris Plages (Paris Beaches) as a haven for these residents. For one month in the summer, the Georges Pompidou Expressway along the city's right bank becomes a pedestrian refuge complete with three kilometres of sandy beaches, floating pools, outdoor activities and free concerts. Beach chairs, misting fountains and palm trees create a convivial atmosphere humming with activity throughout the day and well into the summer evening.

The project has grown to become a flagship Paris celebration, and its success is attributed to strong management and innovative programing. Maintaining a welcoming atmosphere for everyone is a primary objective – admission is free, water sports and classes are open to the public at no charge, all access points incorporate universal design, and corporate acknowledgements are kept modest to avoid a commercial atmosphere.

Ciclovías ("see-klo-vee-as") is about opening the city's streets to all. On designated days, kilometres of streets are closed to cars and opened to pedestrians, joggers, rollerbladers and cyclists, thereby also encouraging a healthier lifestyle. The original concept was born in Bogota, Colombia, in 1976. From just a few kilometres of streets initially, it is now held every Sunday and public holiday, covering 120 kilometres across the city. Average participation is approximately one to two million (in a city of seven million).

Ciclovías has since been adopted in more than 100 cities all over the world, including Santiago, Guadalajara, Lima, Winnipeg, Jakarta, Los Angelas, and New York City. The event frequencies range from weekly to annual. Aside from the health benefits, Ciclovías encourages social inclusion and interaction, revitalisation of public spaces, job generation, as well as environmental improvements through lower carbon emissions and noise levels.

Ciclovías
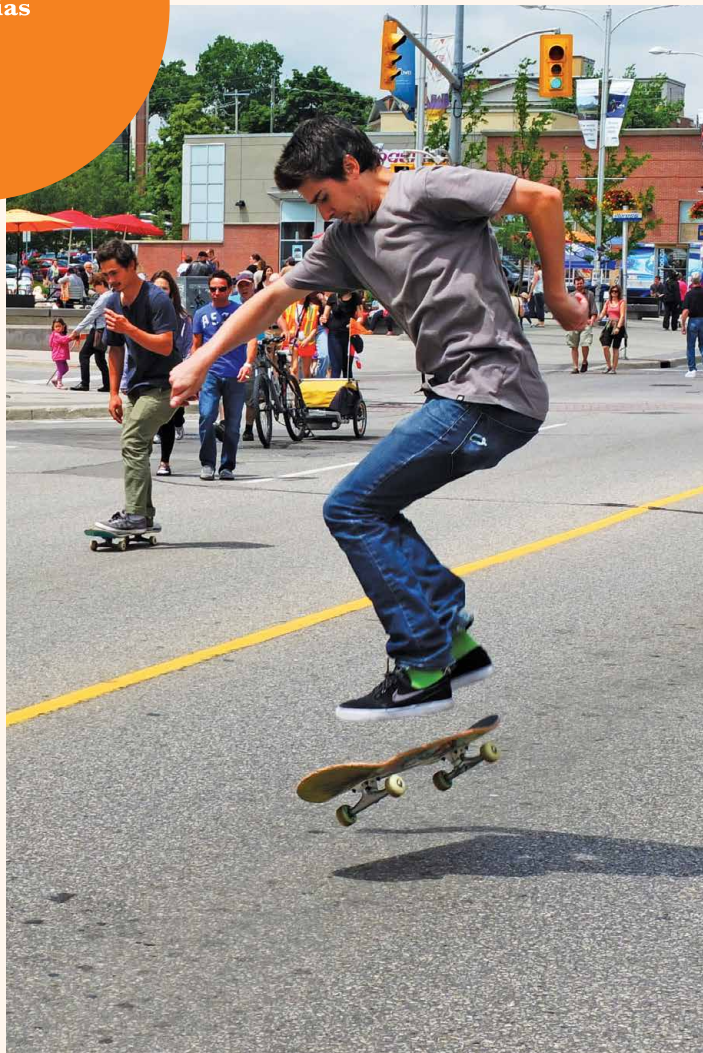
Park(ing) Day

Conceived in 2005 by ReBar, a San Francisco art and design studio, Park(ing) Day is now a worldwide event celebrated annually in more than 160 cities in 35 countries. Single parking lots are temporarily reimagined by individuals and organisations to create public spaces to be enjoyed by all. Created spaces have included parks, pools, clinics, libraries and even mini golf courses.

An open-source event, the mission of Park(ing) Day is to "to call attention to the need for more urban open space, to generate critical debate around how public space is created and allocated, and to improve the quality of urban human habitat… at least until the meter runs out!"

**Singapore
Really Really
Free Market**

The Singapore Really Really Free Market is a temporary market where all goods and services are shared for free and nothing is for sale. Adapted from The Really, Really Free Market (RRFM) movement, this initiative aims to build a community through sharing resources, caring for one another and improving the collective lives of all.

Held once every month in various locations in Singapore, the market is organised by Post-Musuem, an independent cultural and social space in Singapore which aims to encourage and support a thinking and pro-active community.