

The Class of 2020 host the world's largest student housing & coliving conference in Berlin

Submitted by: BlueSky Education

Monday, 11 November 2019

The Class of 2020 host the world's largest student housing & coliving conference in Berlin

Student housing and coliving CEO's call for radical reform to resolve housing crisis and advocates 'Blended Living' as an innovative solution for the next generation of global citizens.

- Investors set to deploy €25 billion into 'blended living' globally in the next five years
- The Class Conference foresees further blending of residential typologies as mobility and technology in cities blur lines between living, working and learning
- Outdated planning codes and anti-investment policies hinder innovation and development of much needed housing solutions

Berlin, 8th November - On the 7th of November 2019, think tank The Class of 2020 hosted the world's largest student housing & coliving conference in Berlin, titled Blended Living. Around 800 industry experts, city government and higher education institution officials discussed the challenges and opportunities that blurring boundaries create for the future of living, working and learning.

University cities are predicted to be transformed by the co-revolution. Single purpose real estate for students and young talent are expected to become integrated in mixed-use developments with flexible accommodation and public uses, catering to a wide range of talent. From Berlin to London, New York City to Shanghai, micro housing, coliving, and coworking are dominating discussions around transformations in the way of living, working and learning globally. The Class of 2020's conference in Berlin and its new annual Trend Report 2020, which was released during the event provide the most urgent, relevant and important insights into the housing crisis and possible solutions.

Looking ahead to the year 2020 and beyond, delegates shared the urgency, relevance and importance of finding new solutions as global housing crisis intensifies especially in the urban districts. The conference highlights community-based 'blend' as an innovation and a new phenomenon, while identifying the key drivers influencing how students and young talent aspires to live, work and learn together.

Oke Hauser, Creative Lead at MINI Living highlighted as a keynote speaker of The Class Conference 2019 shared "Leaders from all over the globe were here in Berlin with focus on the same problem: How to reinvent housing and find better solutions - MINI Living's approach being the creative use of space, working with a small footprint in mind they use their design expertise and focus on experience."

David Weißert, Head of Economic Policy Unit, Berlin Senate Department for Economics, Energy and Public Enterprises and Burkhard Volbracht, Head of Unit Talent, Berlin Partner for Business and Technology emphasised "Cities also need to cater for talent moving to cities and housing needs to keep up with demand – Berlin is attracting on average around 50,000 people per year which means in the past five years the talent influx in Berlin totaled 250,000, which is equivalent to the inhabitant size of Eindhoven. Responding to the demand for affordable housing solutions is one of the city's

priorities.”

Paloma Lisboa, Director of Operations at Kings College London suggested “Universities have the opportunity to be instigators of change in many ways. Providing high quality accommodation that enables students to connect with their local community is certainly one of them and in many ways a key part of urban regeneration”

Ryan Manton, Programme Director of The Class 2020 explained “The established investment asset classes are now blending with new models. Coliving and hybrid concepts which are the examples of ‘blended living’ typologies’, have proven to work and investors are ready to deploy significant amount to counteract urban housing crisis”

Charlie MacGregor, CEO and Founder of The Student Hotel agreed with this: “Blended living is the reality and it is all about community. We shouldn’t really label a student, a young professional, or a hotel guest or an older person. They are all our guests. They are all welcome in our communities.”

Daniel Gorzawski, Managing Director at Harrison Street shared “The steady increase of student’s international mobility is driving a lot of the demand for high quality housing that offers convenience, flexibility and a community experience at affordable rents in cities that are attractive to young people. The significantly lower provision rates in Europe compared to the USA demonstrate the undersupply in European cities and hybrid housing models offer the opportunity for innovative solutions”.

Brian Welsh, CEO of Nido Student added “Student housing sector hasn’t been operational for that long. It’s really important that we spend time together as a sector to understand how to evolve, how to challenge each other, how to create a right sense of competition and how to stimulate everyone in the sector to do better.”

With almost 20 panel discussions throughout the day held on three stages simultaneously, The Class Conference 2019 clustered multiple approaches to all the above challenges and opportunities into five

Key takeaways:

1. Experience Vs. ownership

There is a whole new generation of global citizens growing up in the new economy, where experience is valued over ownership.

2. No one size fits all

Operators and providers cannot copy-paste a successful model and expect it to work in another place. Each community is unique in its needs, wants, and demands.

3. Community is key

In the past, all that was needed for tenants was to have a roof over their heads. Now, they seek a like-minded community that fulfils their needs.

4. Reform outdated policies

Planning and building regulations need to adapt to encourage innovative solutions to the housing crisis – high quality design and shared spaces enable more efficient use of buildings

5. Innovation and Tech-centered

Technology is not an add-on anymore but a full cycle driving force: from design and conceptualisation to

construction and maintenance.

/ENDS

For more information, contact Olivia Nieberg at BlueSky PR on olivia@bluesky-pr.com or call +44 (0)1582 790 091.