Softurb

Joining forces for fairer cities.

Softurb.com is an online tool and social platform that helps fundraise for socio-urban initiatives, by promoting the adoption of corporate social responsibility strategies in local small and medium-sized enterprises. For greener, more equitable, and more resilient cities.

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Softurb is an initiative of **Oficina Matías Gatti**, an architecture and urban planning practice based in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

ABOUT

Softurb was launched with the goal of helping those who fight every day for fairer and more democratic cities by supporting the development of the most vulnerable communities with the help of those who, through donations and volunteer work, can make a difference and generate a positive social impact. Softurb is a mediator, a tool that connects and facilitates the work of social organizations in their quest for funding and achieving their goals.

HISTORY

Softurb was founded in 2019 as an initiative that proposes no radical transformation of cities but rather acts as a virtual interface to mediate between citizens and their environment, such as governments, companies, or climate change. In 2019, **Softurb** was selected as a winner, among other projects, in the **Beyond Bauhaus Competition**, held in Berlin. Since then, it has evolved into a mobile app and has been awarded several times.

AWARDS

Our initiatives have been awarded and recognized in various international competitions and events. Highlighting, the 2nd place in the covid-19 ideas contest with the project **ERES, "Espacios de Resiliencia Urbana,"** organized by **CAF and the Avina Foundation**; an honorable mention in the **Wikitopia** contest held in Japan with the proposal **Make The Streets Green Again**; and 2 recognitions granted by the Municipality of Montevideo with the **Montevideo Comestible** initiative and its respective **Montevideo Compestible API**. And the aforementioned recognition in the **Beyond Bauhaus Competition**, which rewarded the most innovative initiatives for the future of the cities.

* OBJETIVES *

Bridge the gap between the demand for solutions to specific socio-urban problems and the capacity of governments to satisfy them.	Promote in SME's an ethical and socially responsible business culture that takes into account their role in building a more fair and democratic society.	Raise awareness about the needs and demands of Latin American communities, especially the most vulnerable.	Contribute to the implementation of fairer and more equitable public policies.	Facilitate and support civil society organizations to finance their operations.

Democratize access to information about local activities, events, and projects.

DIAGNOSIS

Latin American cities, particularly those on the outskirts of urban centers, lag decades behind, not just in terms of basic infrastructure such as roads and sanitation, but also in terms of the qualities that make a city a space for establishing citizenship.
Some of the major unmet needs of the periphery communities include a lack of quality public spaces, streets that are not meant for people, a lack of green areas, cultural and educational facilities, public lighting, and failures in trash management and public safety policies. And they evolve into multi-causal structural issues that will not be handled by generic or tabula rasa solutions.

CHALLENGES

These metropolitan areas face tremendous future challenges, which have grown in recent years due to commodity shortages, food inflation, and climate change.
In the best-case scenario, many of these issues are met with generic solutions by governments that do not take into consideration the unique characteristics, context, or history of each community. However, cities have the potential to restore themselves, as evidenced by the network of groups, activists, and charities.

OPORTUNITIES

Thousands of disadvantaged people's living conditions are being improved every day by hundreds of organizations, groups, and individuals.
The network of SMEs, who operate in the communities and are thus a part of them, is one of the additional actors that can and should join these efforts. Supporting social causes as part of a CSR program has been proved to have a good effect on a company's reputation and sales, creating a win-win situation.

SCOPE

Small scale urban projects
Urban gardens and squares
Parklets
Urban furniture
Flooding manage

Events and activities
Open streets events
Street markets and fairs
Urban farming activities

Social solidarity and volunteering
Clothing donations
Medical assistance
Homeless shelters
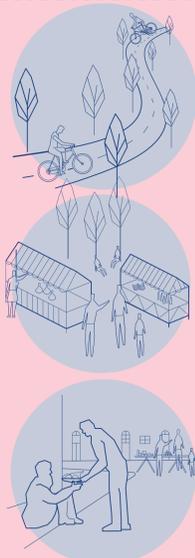
* HOW IT WORKS? *

It will show on a map all the projects and events near the user, if they have received support from local companies, and in what phase of execution they are. At the same time, if necessary, it will connect with a list of previously registered local suppliers and entrepreneurs.
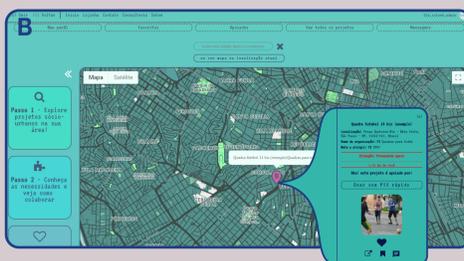
CONNECT
All community members

ENSURE VISIBILITY
To amplify the voices of those who fight to improve the lives of citizens.

GUIDE
To help NGOs achieve their goals

A. Home page.
Here, users have an overview of all the projects and activities in the city and the companies that are supporting them, together with news, blog, and social online store links.

B. Donors page.
Here, donors can search for social projects and get in touch with their managers.

C. Beneficiaries page.
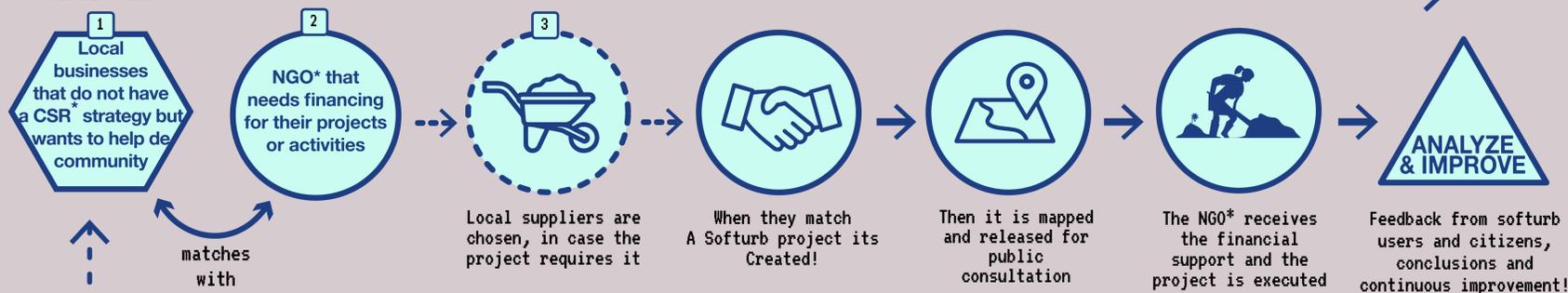Here, users can upload a project that needs funding.

PROCESS FLOW

1. Local businesses that do not have a CSR* strategy but wants to help de community
— matches with —
2. NGO* that needs financing for their projects or activities
3. Local suppliers are chosen, in case the project requires it
→ When they match A Softurb project its Created!
→ Then it is mapped and released for public consultation
→ The NGO* receives the financial support and the project is executed
→ **ANALYZE & IMPROVE**
Feedback from softurb users and citizens, conclusions and continuous improvement!

Softurb will assess the social impact of projects and, just like software, determine what works, what needs to be improved, and what does not have the anticipated beneficial effect and will not be given priority in the future.

— CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT —

1- Local businesses that support the community

2- Temporary neighborhood event with cultural and gastronomic activities

3- Local entrepreneurs working as suppliers for the initiative.
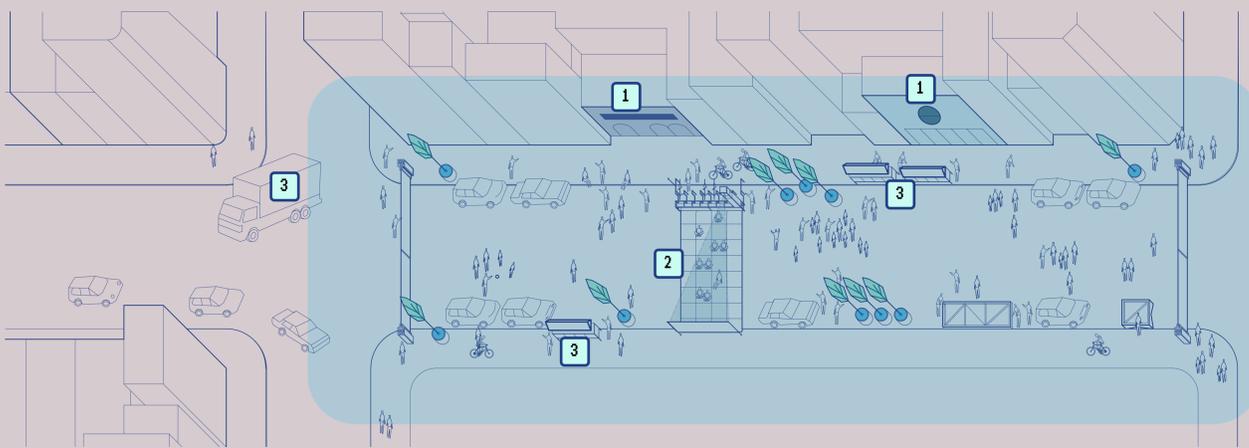
FUTURE

We are not interested in radical urban redesign; rather, we want to set in motion a multi-layered, multi-dimensional process that will prepare society for the upcoming ecological, economic, and social difficulties. We wish to collaborate with social organizations to create and test innovative solutions.
Softurb bridges physical and virtual interfaces and encourages the use of digital tools, place-making, or tactical urbanism to release cities' creative potential and turn urban living space into an environmentally friendly organism.
Our long-term aims are for Softurb projects to be built, tested, developed, and updated in the same way that software is, depending on data analysis of the community effect generated by each executed project.

* NGO: Non-governmental organizations, CSR: Corporate social responsibility

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