

Aalto on Waves building bridges between Brazil and Finland!

Helsinki, April 2012 - Aalto on Waves is a student-driven innovation project in which 110 members of the Aalto community travelled in November & December 2011 by ship to Brazil. During the journey, we created a social impact through learning and collaborating on real challenges. On April 4th, the outcomes of the journey will be presented from 16.30 – 20.30 in Salmi Sali, located in Energiakatu 3, Ruoholahti, Helsinki. A livestream will be available from the Aalto on Waves website. Aalto on Waves is part of Aalto University's World Design Capital program.

The aim of the journey has been to build bridges between Brazil and Finland, to foster mutual understanding between the two countries, to spark collaboration and – of course – make new friends. Brazil, the fifth largest country in the world with 195 million inhabitants, is a major economic power in both South America and worldwide. On the other side of the globe, in northern Europe is Finland - despite having just 5 million inhabitants, it has a strong economy and education system. We feel that the European awareness of Brazil and vice versa still needs to be increased. Aalto on Waves wanted to contribute to this by connecting education, economy and people from Europe and Brazil.

Following this aim, the participants worked during the ship journey on challenges ranging from design over business to engineering. Courses worth of one academic year were taught on waves, accompanied by various workshops arranged by participants. A human-centred design project in collaboration with Royal Caribbean focused on improving the crew living environment on board through deploying the principles of design thinking and co-creation together with the crew. Students as well as professors from all schools of Aalto University worked together to create true innovations.

In Brazil, the students from Aalto on Waves built new connections with Brazilian students during an event at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ) and the Innovation Agency focusing on Creative Entrepreneurship. After a one-week stay in Rio, the students found new friends and the base for a fruitful collaboration in the future. In São Paulo, a project started on the ship and initiated by the International Design Business Management (IDBM) program of Aalto University aimed on leveraging the business potential of small textile enterprises continued in collaboration with the University of São Paulo (USP). Brazilian and European students explored the business potential in Zona Leste, an area facing serious social challenges.

Furthermore, an Aalto on Waves Exhibition was completed by the end of the trip at the University of São Paulo, in an impressive building of the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism (USP/ FAU). During three days USP was hosting the exhibition which consisted of a visual representation of the onboard courses in a gallery space, workshops, students' own work and a wide variety of lectures. The lectures were ongoing during the three days, the main objective was the exchange of views upon new research and practice within design in the interdisciplinary realm.

Without our partners, this journey would not have been possible. We especially want to thank, among others, the Aalto University Student Union (AYY), TTE-Fund (TTER), Technology Industries of Finland Centennial Foundation, Liikesivistysrahasto – Foundation for Economic Education, HSE Foundation, Finnish Foundation for Technology Promotion, KAUTE Foundation, Jenny and Antti Wihuri Foundation, Outotec, Multidisciplinary Institute of Digitalisation and Energy (MIDE), Wärtsilä, Royal Caribbean Cruises and the Aalto University.

We hope this press release has provided you with insight into the Aalto on Waves project and has raised your interest. We are looking forward to answering your questions and all types of enquiries. Please also visit our website <http://www.aaltoonwaves.com> for further information.

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