

Damiano Cerrone

Urbanist • co-founder of CoPlan AI and SPIN Unit

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Damiano Cerrone is an urbanist and educator. He co-founded SPIN Unit, an urban research and innovation practice based in Helsinki, and CoPlanAI, a platform for collaborative urban planning. He works on wicked problems at BAITT, a think tank on behaviour and architecture. His academic projects at Tampere University and the Estonian Academy of Arts focus on urban research and policy design for both local and national governments. He lectures on urban studies and AI at universities in Finland and abroad. Earlier, he co-founded UrbanistAI and worked at Demos Helsinki.

POSITIONS

PRACTICE

Co-founder — CoPlan AI • 2025–present
Co-founder — SPIN Unit • 2013–present
Co-founder — UrbanistAI • 2022–2025
Expert — Tallinn Technical University • 2022–2023
Consultant — Demos Helsinki • 2021–2022
Principal Researcher — TERREFORM
UR • 2015–2020
Associate — Postopia • 2014–2018
Associate — Spatial Ethnography Lab • 2015–2016

ACADEMY

Project researcher — Tampere
University • 2016–present
Project researcher — Estonian Academy of
Arts • 2025–present
Visiting Researcher — Chalmers University • 2024
Visiting Professor — Beijing University of
Technology • 2018–2020
Visiting Researcher — Nokia Bell Labs • 2017
Visiting Researcher — Sapienza University of
Rome • 2014

ADVISORY, REVIEW & SERVICE

PhD thesis supervisor — Politecnico di Torino • 2026–present
Grant evaluator — European Commission • 2025–present
Advisor & Co-contributor — UrbanAI • 2025–2026
Academic grant reviewer — Swiss National Science Foundation • 2025–2026
Member of the advisory committee — InnovateUS — The GovLab & Allen Lab for Democracy Renovation,
Harvard • 2026
Network member — AI Imaginaries network (Royal Danish Academy) • 2025–2026
Academic reviewer — Springer - BMC Public Health • 2026
Academic Reviewer — Routledge • 2025
Advisory board — City Destination Alliance • 2024
Jury member — European Capital of Innovation • 2023
Fellow — LINA (European Architecture Platform) • 2023
Academic reviewer — Territorio • 2017

GRANTS & FUNDED RESEARCH

2026	Future Cities Platform	Estonian Academy of Arts • European Commission
2025	BiodenCITY	Tampere University • European Commission
2025	EDITUA – an innovative interactive incubator of socio-spatial change fostering green urban regeneration, employing AI in gain of the public democracy	Estonian Academy of Arts
2023	From Playgrounds to Planning	UrbanistAI • Architects' Council of Europe

2022	BIWE: Biodiversity intervention for wellbeing	Tampere University · Finnish Strategic Research Council
2017	ADELE — Autoimmune Defense and Living Environment	Tampere University · Finnish Strategic Research Council

SELECTED PROJECTS

2026	Luleå University of Technology: letting children reimagine their city	CoPlan AI · Luleå University of Technology
2026	Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities	CoPlan AI · Gjerdrum kommune · KS Forskning
2026	TICO — Officina della Conoscenza, Bologna	CoPlan AI · Fondazione Rusconi Ghigi
2026	Vienna Supergrätzl	CoPlan AI · Urban Innovation Vienna
2024	Humanizing Digital Twins	UrbanistAI · Estonian Ministry of Climate
2024	PACES Stockholm - Prototype of Accessible, Calm, Equitable and Shared Stockholm	UrbanistAI · Cloudberry
2024	Re-Imaging the Car-Free City, Munich	UrbanistAI · Zamanand
2024	Urbanist Dubai	UrbanistAI · confidential
2024	UrbanTestbeds.JR — participatory AI for the youth (Hamburg, Aarhus, Luleå)	UrbanistAI · HafenCity University Hamburg · Aarhus University · Luleå University of Technology
2023	City of Vantaa	UrbanistAI · City of Vantaa
2023	Helsinki Market Squares	UrbanistAI · Helsingin Kaupunkilaitos
2023	Helsinki Summer Streets	UrbanistAI · City of Helsinki
2023	URA codesign methods	UrbanistAI · URA - Singapore Urban Redevelopment Authority

PUBLICATIONS

2026	Sustainable rewilding of urban spaces increases microbial diversity doi.org/10.1093/sumbio/qvag020	Tampere University · Oxford University Press
2025	Decarbonisation of Estonia's residential building stock doi.org/10.1016/j.enbuild.2025.116193	Tampere University
2025	How green and blue spaces promote health among vulnerable urban populations facing climate hazards: A scoping review doi.org/10.1016/j.wss.2025.100304	Tampere University · University of Twente
2024	Rethinking the architecture of choice baitt.org/blog/rethinking-the-architecture-of-choice	BAITT
2023	Territorial and Consumption-Based Greenhouse Gas Emissions Assessments doi.org/10.3390/land12061144	Tampere University · MDPI
2022	Report on Estonian shrinking cities patterns to the Estonian Parliament rito.riigikogu.ee/eelmised-numbrid/nr-46/tuhjenemise-mustrid-rahvaa...	SPINUNIT OÜ · Chancellery of the Estonian Parliament
2022	The challenge of food production	SPINUNIT OÜ · SPIN Unit (self-initiated)

2022	What Do We Talk About When We Talk About Shrinkage? sirp.ee/millest-me-raagime-kui-raagime-kahanemisest/	SPINUNIT OÜ · Sirp
2021	Diabetes care - Land Cover of Early-Life Environment Modulates the Risk of Type 1 Diabetes doi.org/10.2337/dc20-1719	Tampere University · Diabetes Care
2021	From smart to people-first cities thefuturescentre.org/from-smart-to-people-first-cities/	Demos Helsinki · The Futures Centre
2021	Implementing Gehl's Theory to Study Urban Space doi.org/10.3390/su13095105	Tampere University · MDPI
2021	RING CITY: A METROPOLIS, NOT AN ENCLAVE doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv2ks71tx.7	Terreform · AUC press
2020	Optional and necessary activities_Operationalising Jan Gehl's analysis of urban space with Foursquare data doi.org/10.1504/ijkbd.2020.106836	SPINUNIT OÜ · International Journal of Knowledge-Based Development

TALKS

2026	FutureECOS	CoPlan AI · European Commission
2025	AI & Cities - Leading Responsibly in the Age of Intelligence	SPINUNIT Lab Oy · Resilient Cities Network
2025	AI in planning and education	SPINUNIT Lab Oy · AESOP
2025	Greencajt festival keynote	SPINUNIT Lab Oy · Greencajt festival
2025	People, places, participation (GIZ SENECA)	SPINUNIT Lab Oy · GIZ
2025	Renovar ciudad es construir acuerdos: gobernanza y habitat desde lo colectivo	CoPlan AI · Urban Housing Practitioners Hub
2025	The geography of dedication. Land use lessons from Finnish and Estonian cities	Tampere University · Finnish Strategic Research Council
2025	Visiting MOSAIC - More-than-Human Sustainable and Inclusive Smart Cities	Tampere University · City St. George's University of London
2024	AI for Participatory Planning (Reboot Democracy event with UrbanistAI)	UrbanistAI
2024	Can Generative AI Help Generate Support for Infrastructure Projects?	Cornell University
2024	City Scape - Triennale di Milano	Triennale di Milano · Paysage
2024	Impact 2024 - panel talk	Impact Foundation
2024	Second CIVINET Forum: a conference that set out to make our lives better	UrbanistAI
2024	URF academy	URF
2023	AI for social imagination	SPINUNIT Lab Oy · AIAAF
2023	COP28 - talk	COP28
2023	Participatory urban planning	UrbanistAI · Tallinn University
2023	The Future of Urban AI: Towards Participatory Planning (Cornell)	Cornell University

TEACHING & WORKSHOPS

2026	From academia to entrepreneurship: SPIN Unit and CoPlanAI	UCL
2026	GIZ Connective Cities	CoPlan AI • GIZ
2026	Urban Theory II	Tampere University
2025	Adapting Education to Artificial Intelligence	BAITT • Association for Computing Machinery
2025	Collaborative AI planning	Virginia Tech
2025	Collective spatial imaginaries	CoPlan AI • TU Berlin
2025	ICLEI youth codesign workshop	UrbanistAI • ICLEI
2025	Masterclass on Participatory AI	Urban AI
2025	New Urban Habits festival	UrbanistAI • UrbanizeHub
2025	Spatial imaginaries	Aalto University
2025	Spatial imaginaries	UCL
2024	AI for Participatory Planning	UrbanistAI • Northeastern University
2024	MUST Festival, Turku	UrbanistAI • University of Helsinki
2024	Sciences Po - lecture	Sciences Po
2024	Spatial imaginaries	Royal Danish Academy

EXHIBITIONS

2023	Edge of Government, World Government Summit	UrbanistAI • confidential
2021	City Unfinished exhibition	SPINUNIT OÜ • Estonian Museum of Architecture
2016	Baltigram	Venice Architecture Biennale
2015	RIXC - Data drift	RIXC

MEDIA & INTERVIEWS

2025	From Citizens to Collaborators: Munich's Streets, Reimagined by AI and Built by Government shows.acast.com/chatting-gpt/episodes/urbanaimunichstreets	Chatting GPT
2025	URBAN AI launches AI in Urban Planning Program worldarchitecture.org/architecture-news/fhghz/urban-ai-launches-ai...	World Architecture Community
2024	Artificial Anthropocene (Focus) baunetz-campus.de/focus/artificial-anthropocene-8602743	Focus
2024	City Destinations Alliance — Can AI tools build more people-centred cities? citydestinationsalliance.eu/can-ai-tools-build-more-people-centred...	UrbanistAI • City Destinations Alliance (CityDNA)
2024	Intervista a Damiano Cerrone, UrbanistAI youtube.com/watch?v=4-gBG_IyYso	Esri • ESRI Italy
2024	Reboot Democracy: AI for Participatory Planning with UrbanistAI youtube.com/watch?v=qvOJYGkVKA0	UrbanistAI • The Burnes Center for Social Change
2024	Tech trends shaping the future of real estate development in Australia thepropertytribune.com.au/opinion/tech-trends-shaping-the-future-of...	UrbanistAI
2024	URBAN magazine (Marmara) — Cerrone interview mbbkulturyayinlari.com/en/urban-cities-developing-solutions-04	UrbanistAI • Marmara Municipalities Union
2023	The Future of Urban AI #9 - Towards Participatory Planning youtube.com/watch?v=n3DYbblG3U	Urban AI

2023	The Urbanist (New Trends edition) — State Conference coverage of AI in planning (Cerrone / Yarwood) udiawa.com.au/news/the-urbanist/	
2023	Urbcast ep. 157: How to use AI in designing our cities (guest: Damiano Cerrone) youtube.com/watch?v=2z-5IxFyIoY	Urbcast

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

2022	Estonian State Cultural Awards	SPINUNIT OÜ · Estonian Ministry of Culture
2016	Premio Mondo D'Oro	Esri
2015	ESRI map of the year	Esri
2015	ESRI scholar of the year	Esri

OTHER

2025	Expert Evaluator	European Commission
2025	Inclusive AI policy hack game	Erasmus University Rotterdam