

# OASC<sup>/26</sup>CONF

28-29 January 2026 → Fundão, Portugal

Council of Cities meeting  
January 29, 2026  
11.15-12.30

## OASC mission statement Updates on OASC task forces

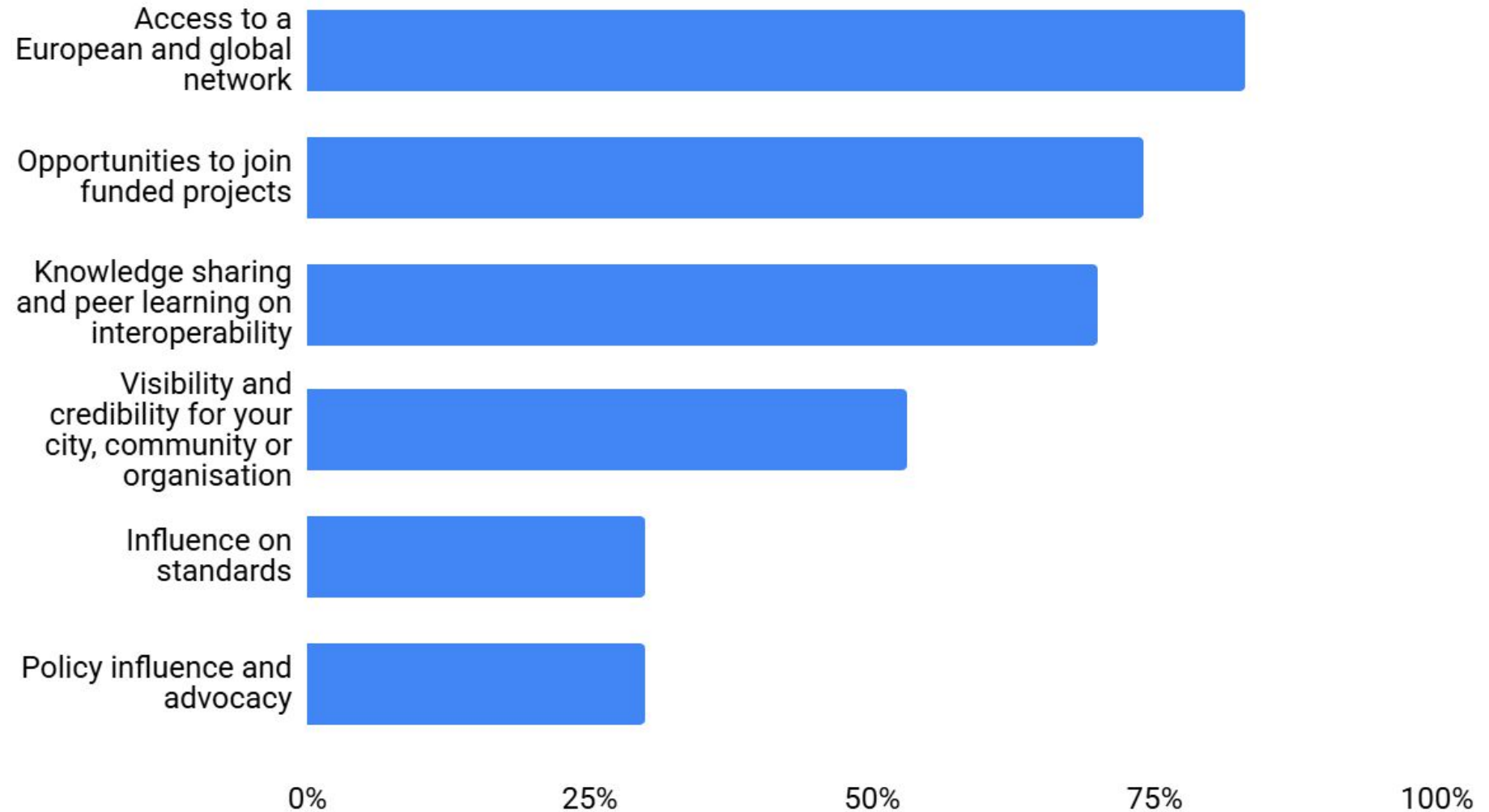
*Søren Jørgensen  
Anni Joela  
with special guests*



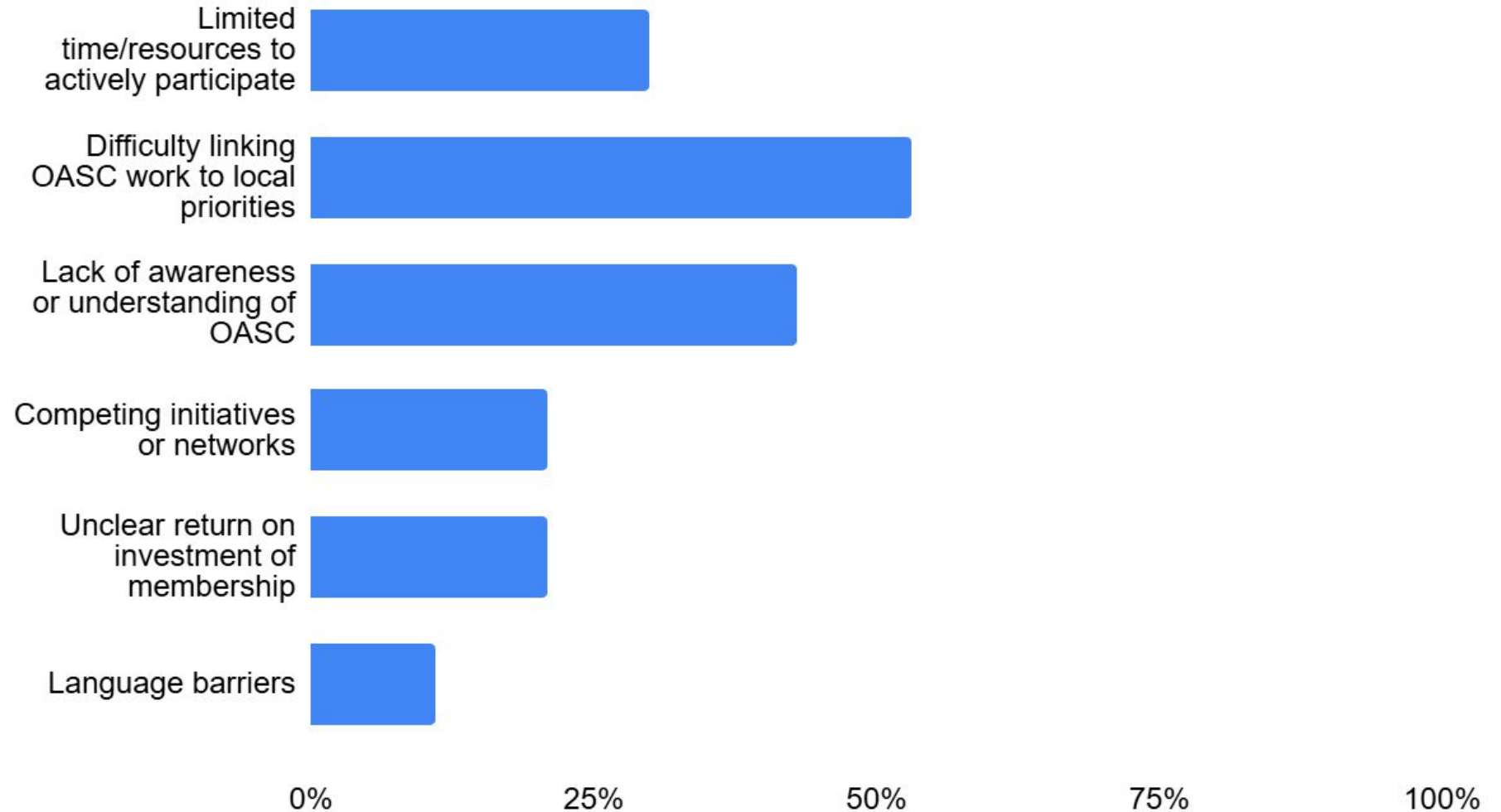
# Follow up to latest CoC meeting

Gathering membership input for the next OASC mission statement

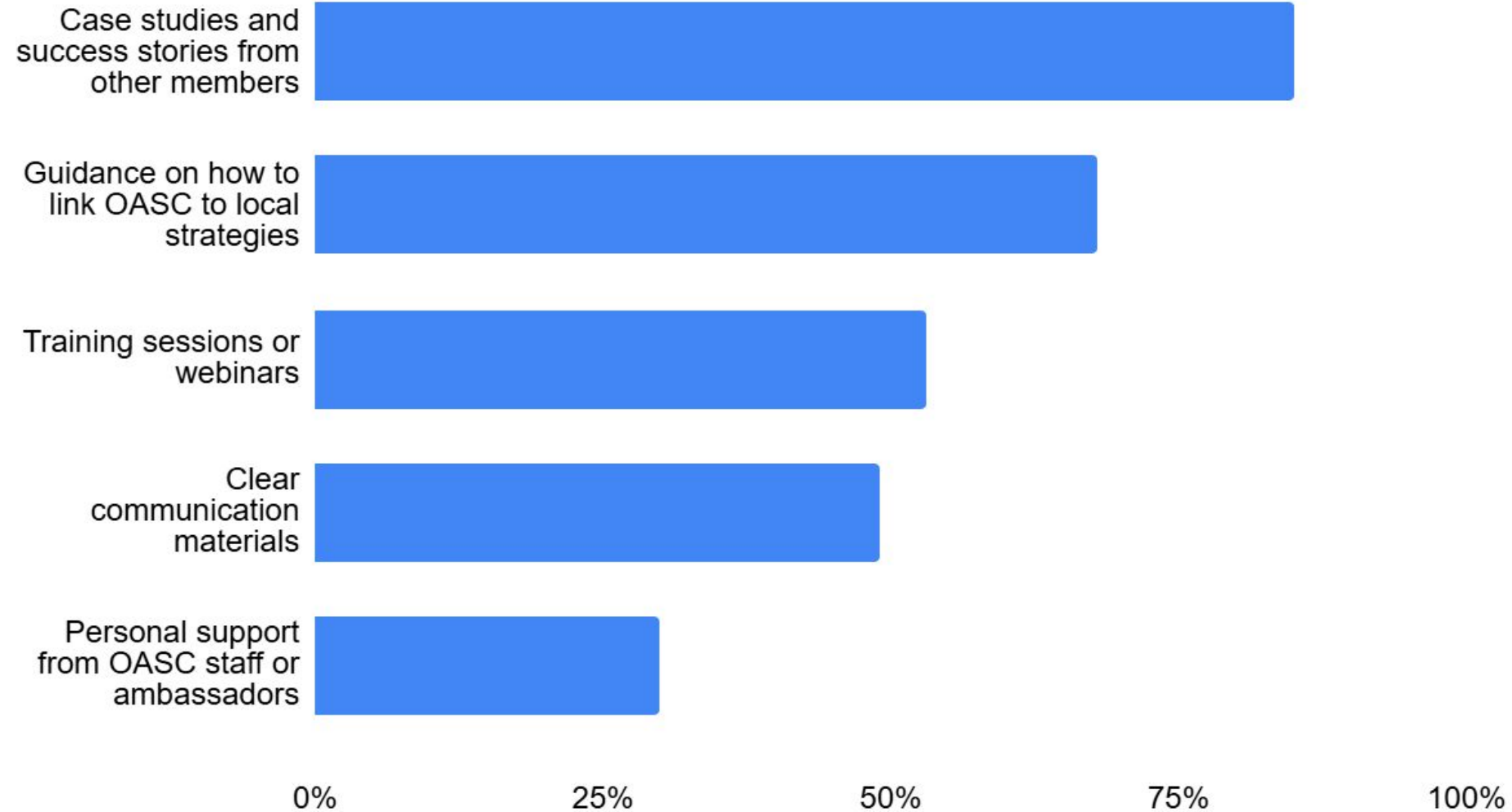
What **benefits of OASC membership** have you experienced for your organisation?



What **barriers** do you or colleagues experience to seeing the value of OASC membership?



What kind of **support or materials** from OASC would **help you better motivate and engage your colleagues?**



## (some initial) Reflections on member feedback



**OASC's core value is (so far) connection and enablement – and less authority or advocacy**

*The mission should lead with enabling collaboration, learning, and practical implementation, rather than policy power or formal influence. Policy and standards can remain part of the mission, but as means rather than the core promise.*

**There is a potential “value translation gap” between OASC and local priorities**

*The challenge is not relevance in principle, but relevance in practice. Members see value but struggle to explain it internally. The mission should explicitly state how OASC creates value at the local level. Language should bridge the global–local gap (e.g. “helping cities turn interoperability into local impact”).*

**OASC's mission should emphasize practical outcomes, not just collaboration**

*Members want OASC to be not only a network, but a source of actionable knowledge and proof of impact. The mission should include supporting implementation, capacity-building, and real-world use and avoid abstract language; emphasize doing, applying, delivering.*

**The mission should speak in the language of members**

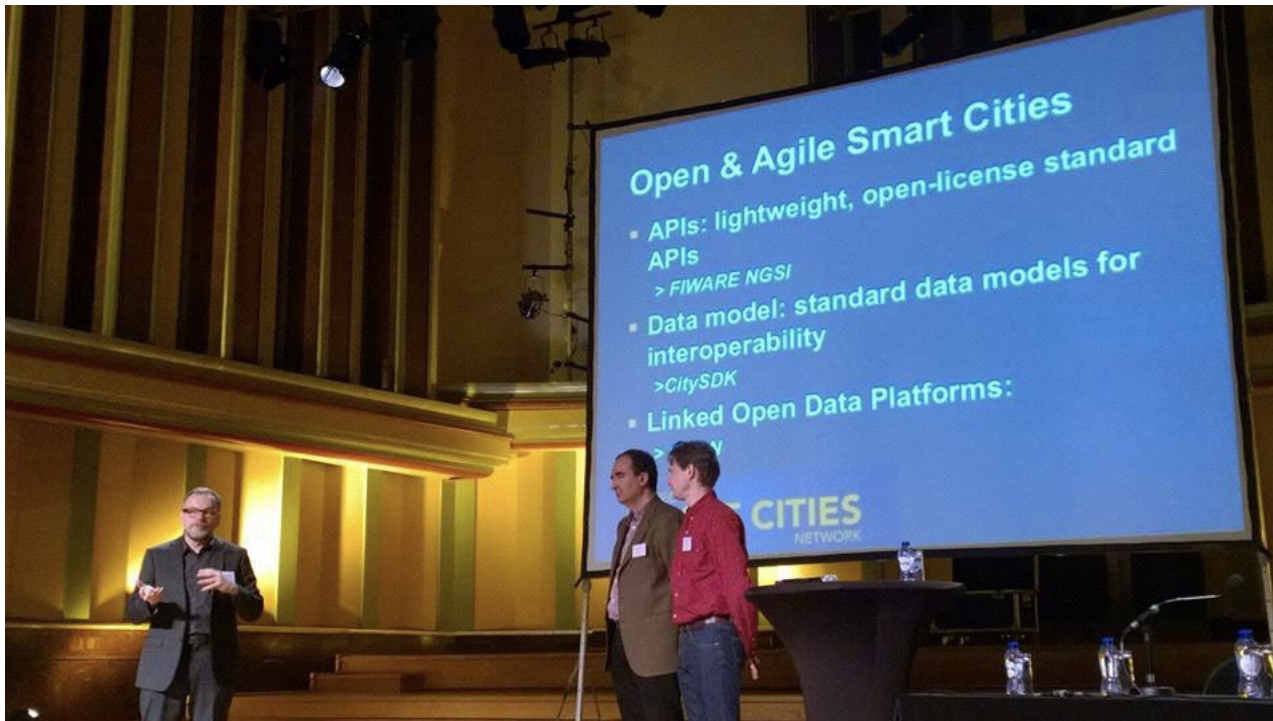
*Members express needs, challenges and perspectives in operational, pragmatic terms. The mission should use plain, member-centric language and avoid institutional or abstract phrasing to reflect how members already describe value.*

# CoC and OASC mission statement

w/ Karl-Filip Coenegrachts

## The vision of the OASC initiative is...

...to create an open smart city market based on the needs of cities and communities. Cities need interoperability and standards to boost competitiveness by avoiding vendor lock-in, comparability to benchmark performance, and easy sharing of best practices. They also need solutions that can be implemented with respect for local practices and job creation.



**Vision  
January 2015**

## Purpose of OASC

OASC is a global network of cities whose common purpose is to make an effort to improve the quality of life within their cities through innovation and technology, and in doing so interact with each other on multiple levels.

This non-profit association has the ambition to build an international network of cities focused on the development of a platform for data and services, in order to become so called 'smart' cities.

OASC focuses hereby, in contrast to other city networks, on the implementation of certain technology and provides therefore access to real-time/streamed and historical data, discussion platforms and citizen participation. OASC aims to play a leading role, as a not-for-profit association, regarding innovation and experiments.

Furthermore, OASC will try to support cities when implementing new technologies where needed and will hereby provide all necessary infrastructure.

## Mission December 2017



## The Mission and Vision of OASC

We are a global network of communities that assists local administrations of all sizes in their digital transformation.

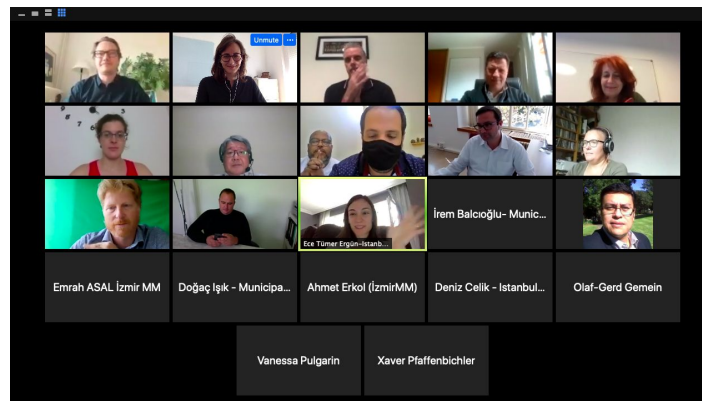
We work with our members, partners and independent experts to create sustainable impact for our communities via their digital tools and systems.

We focus on interoperability, or how to combine datasets from different sources.

This facilitates the seamless sharing and re-use of digital, data-driven solutions and helps to avoid vendor lock-in, to reduce costs and resources and improve efficiency.

We do this via open standards (Minimal Interoperability Mechanisms) and APIs (application programming interfaces).

## Mission and Vision 2020



## WHAT

We are a **global network of communities** that supports local and regional administrations of all sizes and digital maturity levels in their digital transformation journey. We work with our members, partners and independent experts to create sustainable impact for our communities via their digital tools and systems.

We focus on **interoperability** (technical, semantic, organisational and legal):

- the ability of organisations and individuals to interact towards mutually beneficial goals and the delivery of services in cities and communities,
- through the exchange of data, information and knowledge,
- enabled by aligned processes and digital technologies,
- taking into account privacy and security issues.

## WHY

This facilitates **seamless sharing and re-use of digital, data-driven solutions** and helps to **avoid vendor lock-in**, to **reduce costs and resources**, improve efficiency and the ability to use technology to solve local and global societal challenges.

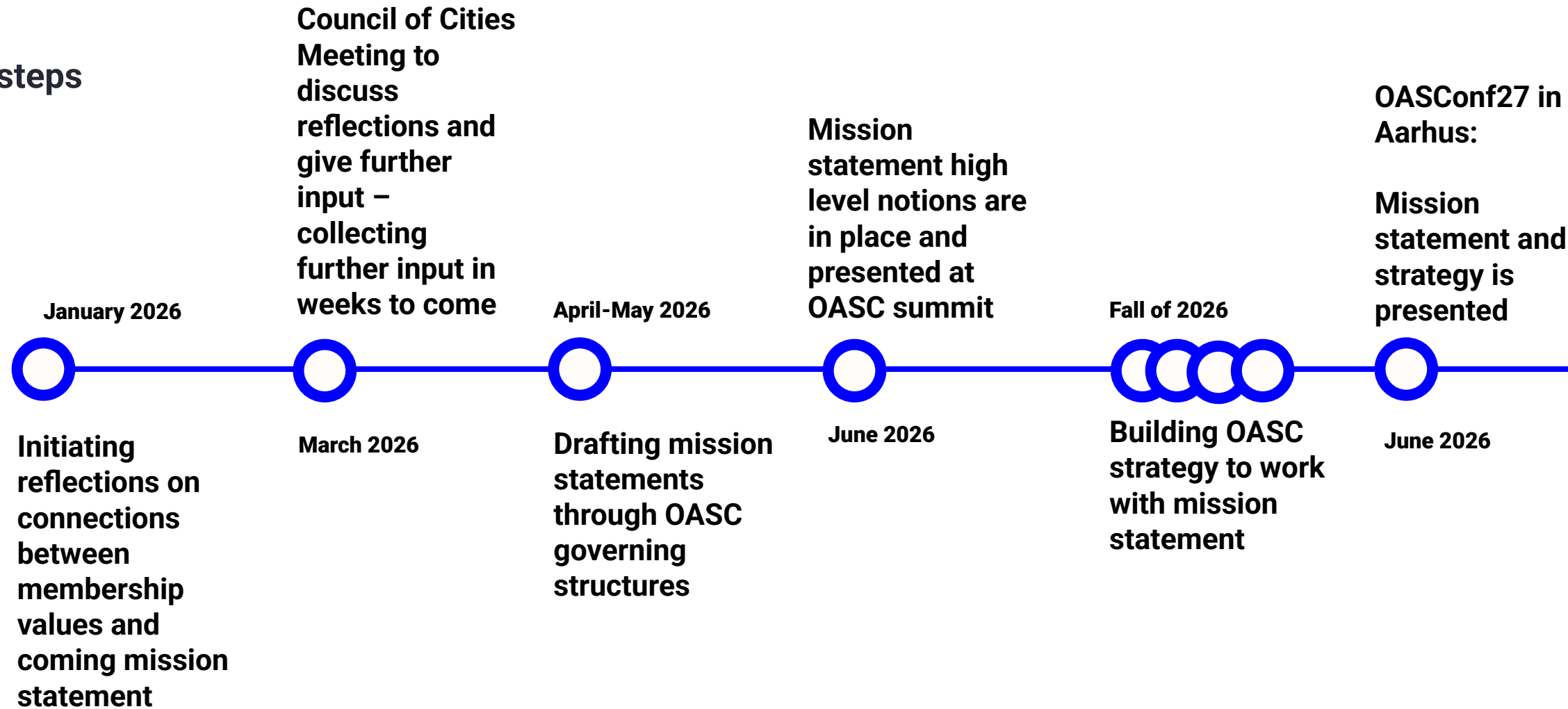
We do this via **MIMs** (Minimal Interoperability Mechanisms), **open standards** and **APIs** (application programming interfaces).

We provide interoperability and digital transformation policy **guidance, training and capacity building, knowledge sharing and advocacy opportunities** and **access to (funded) innovation projects** to our members.

## HOW

# Mission statement 2024

## Next steps



# OASC taskforce updates

**OASC members joining forces to share and reflect on common challenges that cut across cities and communities**



# OASC Taskforce #1: Citizen Engagement. Challenges and learnings from civil society in digital solution design

Led by City of Aarhus (DK)

Supported by OASC

Participating cities:

Tampere (FI), Riga (LV), Eindhoven (NL), Ajdovscina (SI), Torino (IT),  
Aarhus (DK)

## PEER-PEER LEARNING METHODOLOGIES

### TIMELINE: OASC TASK FORCE - CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT



PRESENT. COMMENT. DISCUSS. RELFECT. CONCLUDE. REPEAT.



## "WE" IS THE CONNECTION BETWEEN INTEROPERABILITY AND CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

**Who** are "we"?

**How** can "we" be engaged in different successful ways?

**What** do "we" need, are challenged by and offer as perspectives for digital solution design?



**Standards are the best way of doing things  
– that we can agree on**



Citizen  
engagement  
is not as easy  
as it looks like  
(in pictures)

Mutual  
support  
through  
exchanges on  
practical  
experience



**TEN-TATIVE**

**CON-CLU  
SION:**

**TAMPERE**

**Move from one-off participation to targeted, continuous dialogue that creates real value for citizens.**

**Strengthen trust by making data use transparent and turning citizen input into visible results.**

**Ensure innovation remains usable and inclusive by grounding advanced technologies in everyday needs.**

**TEN-TATIVE**

**CON-CLU  
SION:**

**AJDOVSC  
INA**

**Design participation around youth realities by using familiar platforms, schools, and peer-led channels rather than creating new ones.**

**Make impact visible and credible so young people can clearly see how their input influences decisions and outcomes.**

**Connect digital engagement to real-life transitions (education, jobs, housing) to ensure participation feels relevant and worthwhile**



## What's next?

Talk to us during the  
coffee break  
Or follow up with an  
email:

Søren (jsolu@aarhus.dk)  
Ivy (ivy@oascities.org)

### Key lessons

- Abundant existing tools at the local level
- Lack of knowledge of their existence
  - local successful stories

### Objective of next phase

Bridge existing solutions with existing challenges

### Next step

Upcoming info session to share the initial vision of this next phase



Coming up  
with new  
solutions to  
citizen engagement

Gathering  
what is already  
out there.  
Assessing what fits  
digital  
transformation the best