

Amsterdam Sharing City – a diverse collaborative economy ecosystem beyond the traditional examples

A sharing city embraces and monitors the collaborative economy as a means to a more socially, sustainably and economically resilient city.

Lately, Amsterdam has received a lot of attention for being a front-runner in monitoring, rather than banning, the sharing and collaborative economy in the city.¹²³⁴⁵⁶ Very often, the collaborative and sharing economy is equated exclusively to Airbnb and Uber, which are portrayed as very problematic for the city and its people. Every story has two sides, and although there are, and will be, challenges with any initiatives, there are also benefits and opportunities. Moreover, the collaborative economy has a much richer ecosystem beyond the typical examples of Uber and Airbnb. These two giants are making up a big part of the discussion, but surely, our scope has to be widened to include other platforms such as for example [WeHelpen](#), [Konnektid](#) and [Thuisafgehaald](#) (Share your meal).

What is the story?

Amsterdam Sharing City was an initiative to proactively approach the sharing economy in a constructive manner: not being blind to challenges but also not disregarding some very clear opportunities. Everything comes down to idle capacity and what we choose to do with the space, tools, stuff, skills and services in our city. Why do we choose to fill our streets with cars when we could easily fill them with parks, playgrounds and BBQ spots? Why not use [Snappcar](#) or [mywheels](#) as solutions? Why do we fill our houses with things that we use one time a month? Why don't we share the least used items through platforms like [Peerby](#)?

Amsterdam Sharing City was launched in 2015⁷, as an initiative by [shareNL](#), but really, a project that came together in collaboration with all the players in the field. Players such as startups, already working hard to develop the collaborative economy in Amsterdam, as well as the open-minded and hard-working City of Amsterdam. Read more about it [here](#). Initiating Amsterdam Sharing City, we quickly learned that the city had a broad and diverse ecosystem of companies, organizations, institutions, startups and individuals

¹ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/shelliekarabell/2017/04/06/the-sharing-economy-innovation-vs-regulation/#76baec782e59>

² http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/forget-uber-amsterdam-is-showing-how-to-use-the-sharing_us_58f60ed0e4b0156697225295

³ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/the-collaborative-and-sharing-economy-in-amsterdam_us_58ebb33be4b0145a227cb709

⁴ <https://www.inverse.com/article/29471-amsterdam-sharing-economy-world-leader>

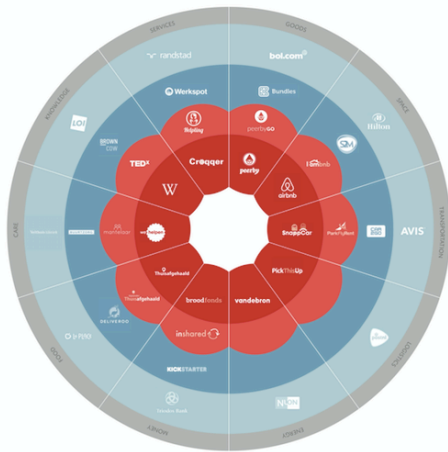
⁵ <https://apolitical.co/amsterdam-sharing-economy-social-impact/>

⁶ <https://pakwired.com/apps-helping-amsterdams-residents-share-cars-tools-skills-even-meals/>

⁷ <http://www.collaborativeconsumption.com/2015/02/04/amsterdam-europes-first-sharing-city/>

working with developing the collaborative economy. Particularly prominent was the number of startups already active in Amsterdam. In 2015, we put together the Collaborative Economy Ecosystem, and this is what it looked like:

Collaborative Economy Ecosystem¹⁰
Including Sharing Economy

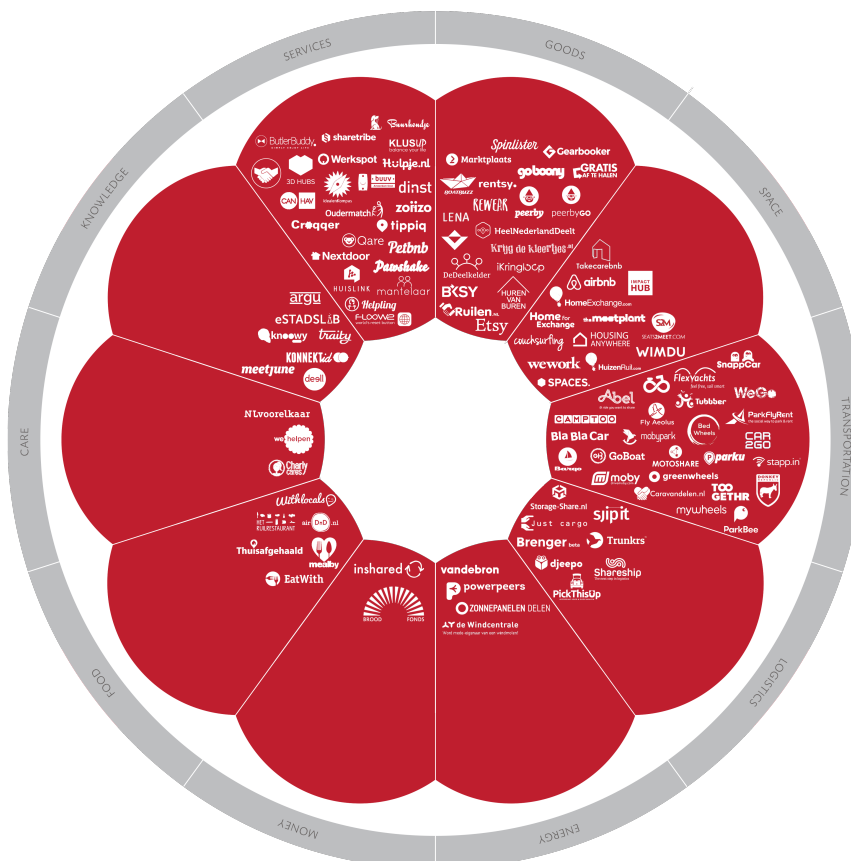


The red part represents the sharing and collaborative economy with a distinction between peer-to-peer and peer-to-business-to-peer platforms, and the blue part the traditional economy including business-to-peer, i.e. companies moving towards working more with the sharing and collaborative economy.

What has changed since?

Introducing the Amsterdam Collaborative Economy Ecosystem

This year, we compiled all startups and organizations in the collaborative and sharing economy in Amsterdam. Quite some startups as you can see. And the Ecosystem gives a clear overview of which markets are crowded with initiatives while others still have plenty of room to grow.



Observe that we are not making a distinction (yet) between peer-to-peer and peer-to-business-to-peer in this version⁸.
Are we missing a startup? Get in touch with us!

What about the traditional economy?

The next step is to include the traditional economy in the Ecosystem. The distinction between business-to-peer and business-to-consumer demonstrates which companies and organizations have started to embrace the new economy versus the ones that are still in their starting gear (or the ones stubbornly putting their heads or heels in the sand). Startups in the sharing and collaborative economy field should not be seen as competitors. Instead, they should be seen as platforms that, in collaboration with, enable companies and organizations to start embracing the disruptive economy. As [Pieter van de Glind](#), co-founder of shareNL, said, many startup platforms will be the first stopping point of the new technologies-high-speed-train (taking on board Blockchain, IOT, AI and Robots for example). If companies are not already in touch with the startups AND the collaborative economy, they are going to miss the train to the future. ShareNL has started exploring these technologies in connection with the collaborative economy through a series of free [meetups](#). The next one will explore the Internet of Things, and for the ones who can't join a meetup, we also host [online seminars](#) and masterclasses on the topic.

Including the whole playing field - from startups to companies to governments

The Collaborative Economy Ecosystem is a tool for bridging the gap in between the Traditional and the Shared/Collaborative, and to build suitable business models for all players in the field.

'The sharing economy is not a question of banning or authorizing, but of monitoring and seizing opportunities where possible.' – [Sharing Economy action plan, Amsterdam](#)

The Sharing City concept has continued raising interest around the world. The sharing of goods and services among citizens and local businesses benefits the local economy, improves social cohesion and boosts sustainability and the overall quality of life. On the other hand, there are challenges too. The blurring line between public and private activities may lead to friction between different stakeholders and forces cities to reconsider policies and regulations (i.e. taxation, licensing and zoning). A growing number of cities from all continents are placing the collaborative economy at the center of their overall strategy. Many of those cities have the ambition to become a sharing city: a city that unlocks new opportunities and solves urban challenges by facilitating and applying the collaborative economy. The [Sharing Cities Alliance](#) provides cities with

⁸ <http://www.collaborativeconsumption.com/2015/06/01/the-rise-of-the-peer-to-business-to-peer-marketplace/>

best practices from around the world and facilitates city-to-city learning. The Sharing City Alliance is officially launching in May during the [Sharing Cities Summit](#) ('Share 2017') hosted by New York City's Deputy Mayor, Alicia Glen. Do you think your city should do more with the sharing economy? Visit the [Sharing City Alliance](#) website.

Do you want to learn more about the sharing economy? Visit the [shareNL](#) website to find out how.