



THE FOURTH INTERVIEW: AIJA

Riga's Local Community Activator

Why did you decide to embark on this IN-HABIT journey?

From the very beginning, IN-HABIT seemed to be a project that would make a real change and improvement in society in Riga. As a citizen of Riga, even though I do not live in Agenskalns, it is important for me that the city's neighbourhoods evolve. Ideas and good examples always spread further than the borders of small communities, so I hope that the change will also influence other neighbourhoods in Riga.

What is IN-HABIT to you?

Inclusive health and well-being for me is firstly safety, which can be achieved through improved infrastructure, educational work, and improvements in many levels of society. Secondly, it is the possibility to enjoy quality time and express myself freely. As I see it now, Agenskalns market is a place that not only works for food, but can also satisfy my need for inclusive health and safety.





Describe your neighbourhood and its main highlights.

My neighbourhood is called “Imanta” and it is near the Aģenskalns neighbourhood. It is further from the city centre, but I really feel at home there. I like that I can see the neighbourhood’s evolution, because every year it becomes more suitable for families, and new entertainment possibilities arise. But for holidays, I usually like to go to the countryside or to Aģenskalns, where you can feel the city’s history, enjoy events, and feel like you’re in a small town within the city, where everyone is familiar with each other and the vibe is great.

What has been done in your neighbourhood so far?

If we talk about Aģenskalns, Kalnciema quarter and Aģenskalns market are definitely the heart of the neighbourhood. Even before the project, a lot was done here in supporting local producers by helping them improve their businesses, and a significant contribution was also made in creating a cultural centre on the other side of the River Daugava, further from the historical city centre.

What is your favourite thing about meeting with local communities and citizens?

It is their passion and love for their neighbourhood. The passion is expressed in their need for never-ending development. It is amazing that people are willing to work for free for the whole community to not only make their own lives better, but also to help others to improve their daily lives within the neighbourhood. The other amazing thing is that you can really see the difference that a strong community can make: it has a great impact on the whole city, because it is visible that the initiatives from Aģenskalns are and will be replicated in Riga’s other neighbourhoods.