Title:

Feasibility criteria for the designation of Intergenerational Contact Zones. A proposal

Authors:

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Abstract:

Intergenerational Contact Zones (ICZ) are a relatively recent concept pertaining to spaces and the opportunities they provide for interaction between generations. This paper puts forward a series of validated criteria with which to assess the feasibility of intergenerational spaces that could potentially be designated ICZ. To develop these validated criteria, a consensus-building process following the Delphi method was carried out. This approach minimizes uncertainty and aids the decision-making of the participants, who in this case were 11 international experts. Statistical procedures were used to analyze quantitative information gathered in the process to ensure that the combination of assessments resulted in a unified and mutually accepted set of criteria. The 16 criteria presented herein do not constitute a closed list but rather a proposal based on expert consensus that it is consistent with the different dimensions explored. Overall, these criteria can help to advance ICZ applications and conceptual clarity.

Keywords:

Intergenerational Contact Zones, Delphi Method, Feasibility Criteria, Intergenerational Practices.

Contribution to the field:

- This paper underlines the value of Intergenerational Contact Zones as facilitators of contact, exchange, learning and community participation, to the benefit of the different generations involved.
- The novelty of our study is that it develops, using the Delphi method, a proposal of specific feasibility indicators or criteria to be used in the designation of Intergenerational Contact Zones.
- The paper analyzes the contributions of 11 international experts in the field who were selected using carefully chosen criteria.
- Given the possible divergences in the interpretation of the concepts used in this project, the paper includes a glossary of terms that defines and delimits them.

Introduction

Western societies are increasingly characterized by the coexistence of diverse generations, driven by rising longevity and mobility. However, the interactions within these multigenerational communities do not necessarily lead to effective or significant relationships between generations. Intergenerationality, in consequence, signifies a

commitment to establishing interpersonal connections as well as enhancing societal participation and active citizenship among all age groups (Barone, 2023).

A recent concept emerging from the evolving understanding of intergenerationality is “Intergenerational Contact Zones” (ICZ), first introduced by Leng Leng Thang (2015). This concept highlights the role of physical spaces in facilitating contact and knowledge transfer among different generations. In this regard, the ICZ concept embraces the generation and regeneration of community life in spaces such as parks and recreational locations, educational environments, residential settings and family life, and has applicability in diverse national and international contexts (Kaplan et al., 2020). They also address the need for integrating intergenerational place and program (IP) development, underscoring the essential link between ICZ and intergenerational programming (Sánchez et al., 2021).

Generally speaking, intergenerational programs are understood to be periodic or ongoing activities, of a more or less formal nature, that are enriching for both young and old (Katz & Kaplan, 2022). But to approach the topic of IP as it is addressed in this paper, it is essential that the concept of space also be considered. ICZ provide a conceptual vehicle for thinking about intergenerational engagement in terms of “space” (Kaplan et al., 2020). They are therefore connected to environmental design and also to community planning and development, a nexus that leads to a different understanding of intergenerational relations and practices from psychological, social, pedagogical and institutional perspectives. In fact, ICZ constitute, in this respect, exceptional tools for raising awareness, starting with the contributions they make to combating prejudice (Lau, 2023) and to the development of new forms of “intergenerational learning” (Polat et al., 2019; Villas-Boas et al., 2019) and “intergenerational equity” (Christian et al., 2014; Jarrott et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2023).

Authors are increasingly pointing to the need to pay attention to spaces as key elements that can play a particularly important role when they are designed in an intentional manner, with theoretical foundations that promote the natural and positive connection between generations, to generate strategies and synergies to the benefit of all involved (Hake, 2017; Handler, 2018; Ma et al., 2020; Maslovsckaia et al., 2021; Meeks, 2022; Norouzi et al., 2023). Creating opportunities for mutual development requires interdisciplinary collaboration. This orientation is consistent with what some researchers have called "intergenerational and age-friendly ecosystems" (Fang et al. 2023: 17; Gonyea and Hudson, 2015).

The conditions for building new opportunities for mutual recognition are based on the realization of different interests and cultural diversity and, at the same time, agreement on common and shared ground rules (Carrera, 2022).

Inclusive urban open spaces (Urban Open Space, UOS) should cater to different age groups, integrating multifunctionality and diverse perspectives in activity design (Sundevall and Jansson, 2020; Holland, 2015; John and Gunter, 2016).

From this interpretation, inclusive space is about designing services and environments usable by all, regardless of age or ability, known as "universal design" or design for all

(Burton and Mitchell, 2006). This approach enhances social relations and quality of life by reducing social exclusion (Emlet and Moceri, 2012).

It is not enough to create spaces with universal design characteristics. The real question lies in how to design spaces that truly respond in an inclusive way to the attitudes and needs of the people using the space (Ma et al., 2020), that promote intergenerational exchange and foment a sense of belonging and participation among all the population groups, through collaboration and intergenerational engagement (Thang & Kaplan, 2013). Spaces should be intentionally constructed to make such possibilities visible (Comber, 2013: 370).

In short, the importance of bringing together different generations in pursuit of individual, group, community and social benefits is closely related to the creation of focal spaces designed expressly to foment meaningful interactions. Not only must these spaces be adapted to the needs of multiple generations, but they must also be conceived to favor interactions between them. Thang and Kaplan (2013) go even further, with their use of the terms “space” and “place.” Place encompasses a psychological component defined by emotion and the sense of belonging to the space.

In this respect, the work of Sánchez et al. (2021) highlights the positive contributions made, within this space, by regular ongoing intergenerational contact as opposed to occasional contacts. Continuity can strengthen affectional bonds, as well as the feeling of familiarity and, as a result, spontaneity. In effect, physical proximity can lead to the probability of bringing people of different generations together, but it does not in itself generate intergenerational engagement. So, it is not just a matter of reducing distance (although doing so is necessary, of course) but also of creating policies and spaces that help reduce the psychological and social distance between generations, allow for negotiation of how shared spaces can be perceived and used (Davet, 2022) and that contribute to a sense of “intergenerational solidarity” (Jiménez-Roger & Sánchez, 2023; Maulod et al., 2023). From merely “being together” we progress to the idea of “interacting together”, which permeates the relations and thus facilitates contact and the benefits of working together with intentionality.

Along the same lines, it is important to differentiate between multigenerational spaces and intergenerational spaces. As indicated by Katz & Kaplan (2022), community planning with an intergenerational perspective leads to the creation of age-integrated community environments designed to offer spaces and opportunities for various generations not only to gather in the same place — this would be multigenerationality —, but also to interact, establish relationships and, if they wish, participate with each other in community activities. The "age-friendly" communities/cities movement illustrates the intersection of multigenerationality and intergenerationality, focusing on social inclusion and participation across generations (WHO, 2007; Fang et al., 2023; Kaplan et al., 2017).

Having reached this point, two important questions must be underlined. First, the fact that an intergenerational space exists does not mean that meaningful intergenerational activities or programs designed for this purpose also exist. For this reason, the aim of this paper is to propose specific criteria with which to assess the feasibility of spaces potentially considered

ICZ. Second, the criteria presented below do not constitute a closed list, but rather a proposed framework for intergenerational design that has been the object of careful reflection and discussion and is consistent with the concepts commented above. Most importantly, the criteria have been developed with the knowledge that the key lies in giving agency to the people involved (practitioners and participants of different generations) and in being flexible, always trying to understand and respond to their concerns and needs. Ultimately, it is the inhabitants of these spaces who are the true architects of intergenerationality.

Objective and method

In relation to our study objective,[1] establishing a set of feasibility criteria to assist in the conceptual crystallization and utility of different types of ICZ, a refinement protocol based on the Delphi method was used under IRB approval by the Committee on Ethics at the University of Granada (#2870/CEIH/2022). This method reduces uncertainty and facilitates consensus-based decision-making on the topic addressed, while ensuring anonymity and enabling participation from geographically dispersed experts (Jeste et al. 2010). It also allows for statistical processing to ensure all expert responses are considered in the final result.

Given the multidisciplinary nature of ICZ, it was necessary to include experts with diverse profiles. We sought the collaboration of international experts in the field who, when met at least three of the following five criteria when invited to participate:

1. Research: Conducted research in the field of intergenerational studies.

2. ICZ management: Managed intergenerational spaces.

3. Experience: Possessed a minimum of 4 years of experience in the intergenerational field.

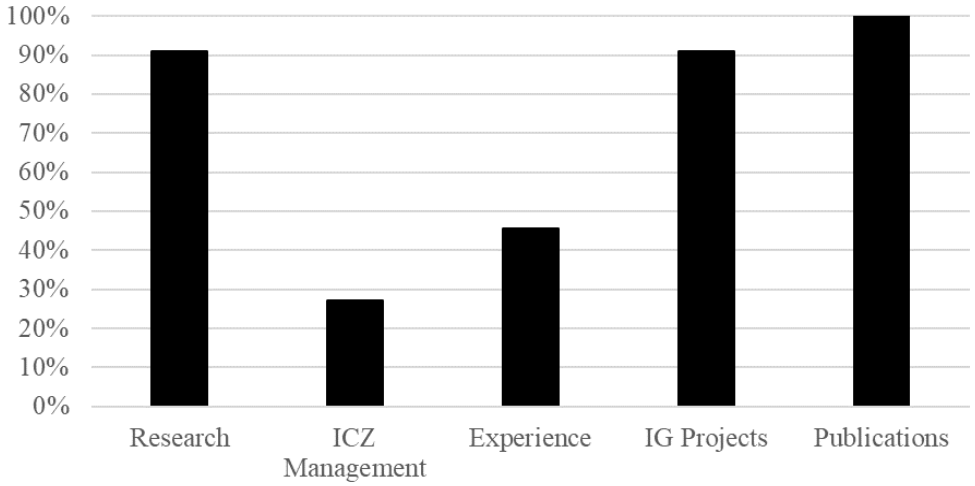
4. Intergenerational projects: Participated in and/or facilitated intergenerational programs.

5. Publications: Authored publications on intergenerationality.

Ultimately, the expert group consisted of 11 persons, each with an average of over 16 years of experience in the intergenerational field. Figure 1 shows the percentage of participating experts meeting each of the criteria required for inclusion in the study.

[1] This paper presents some of the results of research carried out within the project "Combating age segregation and discrimination in Andalusia. Design and validation of Intergenerational Contact Zones and programs." The purpose of this project is to better understand the current situation with regard to age-based segregation and ageism in the region of Andalusia (Spain) and to obtain validated information that allows for a closer analysis of such phenomena, in order to develop realistic and appropriate interventions in this area.

Figure 1. Percentage of experts meeting each criterion.



Once the experts had been selected, they were sent a list of basic feasibility criteria to assess intergenerational spaces potentially designated as ICZ. The methodology involved each expert completing a self-administered questionnaire, in which they selected one of four levels of agreement for each criterion and provided an explanation for their choice in an open-ended question. This questionnaire was completed in two rounds, both conducted via email. In the first round, all experts completed the questionnaire within 2 weeks, while the second round required four weeks to complete.

This initial proposal of criteria was discussed in detail within the +CINTER project working group. As a result of this internal review process, the original 11 criteria were revised and expanded to a total of 18 (Table 1). Some of the initial criteria were subdivided into more specific items that more accurately addressed the research objectives and would facilitate subsequent application.

Table 1. Initial and final versions of the criteria developed for first submission to the group of experts.

Initial version
1. They are spaces that already host people of different generations (intentionality and confluence) 2. They have environments that are adapted and sufficiently equipped to promote interaction between generations (availability and interaction) 3. They are active, lively spaces where intergenerational activities take place on an ongoing basis, not just occasionally (continuity) 4. They are spaces that permit and promote the exchange of actions and ideas by the different generations involved (exchange, cooperation, reciprocity) 5. The space gives visibility to all age groups to ensure that they form part of a single community (visibility)

6. The spaces are integrated into the community and the community identifies with them (community integration, visibility)
7. The spaces host group activities proposed by the community itself, which is involved in the planning and takes active part in them (autonomy)
8. Information about the role of these intergenerational spaces is provided to families, young people, adults, etc. by the spaces themselves (dissemination and transfer)
9. These spaces receive institutional support, in terms of financing, to continue to serve as intergenerational spaces (institutional support and interest)
10. These spaces have access to specialized professionals that facilitate and promote intergenerational relations (professionalization)
11. They are spaces in which the actions and tasks that take place among generations are designed in advance and intentionally (intentionality)

Final version

1. Intentionality. The space already welcomes and accommodates people of different generations
2. Affordance. The space is sufficiently equipped to facilitate and promote interaction between different generations
3. Adaptation. The space provides enough flexibility for participants to modify elements (and their positions) in the space in ways that reflect program objectives and participants' needs and interests
4. Choice. The space gives participants a choice regarding the extent to which they want to engage in intergenerational activities, allowing for informed decisions on whether and how to enter and leave the space
5. Continuity. The space is conducive to multiple and continued meetings and interactions over time
6. Relationship focus. The setting is designed in such a way that it provides space, opportunity and quality time for participants to get to know one another and form meaningful relationships
7. Exchange, cooperation, reciprocity. The space is conducive to the exchange of actions and ideas by the different generations involved
8. Visibility. The space makes it easy for all age groups and generations to see, and be seen by, others so they can all feel part of the same community
9. Psychological sense of community. The space is reflective of, and evokes, a shared psychological sense of community held by inhabitants of that space from different generations
10. Community integration, visibility. The space is connected to and integrated into the surrounding community and conveys a sense of acknowledgment of local cultural heritage and values
11. Autonomy. The space hosts collective activities organized by the community, which is involved in the planning and management of the space
12. Dissemination, involvement. Intergenerational practices and programs held at the space are made known to families, youth, adults, etc. in the community, who can easily learn of the existence of the space and how to access it and get involved

13. Institutional support and interest. The space has institutional support (e.g., financial support) enabling it to be maintained as an intergenerational space
14. Professionalization. The space has access to specialized professionals who facilitate and promote intergenerational relations
15. Intentionality. In this space actions and tasks between generations are planned in advance and with intentionality
16. Spontaneity. This space is designed to function in ways that are conducive to different generations connecting in informal, spontaneous ways where the social interaction develops on its own
17. Environmental cues. This space provides environmental cues (e.g., signs, artwork, photos, activity calendars, the posting of rules and regulations, and other items) that convey information and reflect norms and expectations with regard to the nature of intergenerational engagement considered appropriate for this setting
18. Cultural diversity. This space reflects and promotes the values of multi-cultural awareness and understanding.

Source: authors.

To facilitate assessment by the experts of the 18 criteria finally submitted to them, an evaluation protocol was created, organized around four themes:

1) Clarity: The criterion is easy to understand;

2) Relevance: The use of this criterion to evaluate the feasibility of an ICZ is justified;

3) Conceptual appropriateness: The criterion is directly and unambiguously related to the concept of ICZ;

4) Delimitation: The criterion is well-defined and distinct from other criteria.

Each one of the 18 criteria had to be evaluated in relation to these four items using a 4-point scale: 1 (poor), 2 (fair), 3 (good), and 4 (excellent). This scoring protocol enabled the research team to perform a statistical analysis of the points of views of the experts and thus determine the degree of consensus reached. The experts were also asked whether each criteria should be maintained or discarded and to provide any additional feedback. This allowed for a more nuanced and integrated understanding of their views beyond mere statistical analysis.

After reviewing several recent sources on establishing consensus using a 4-point Likert scale (Ab Latif et al., 2016; Gassmann et al., 2021; Leiste, 2020; Mao et al., 2020; Taylor, 2020; Waggoner et al., 2016), it was determined that the consensus criteria of Mao et al. (2020) were the most suitable. In Mao's work, like this one, the aim was to design a prototype of a tool, a task equivalent to that of developing a list of feasibility criteria. This approach was deemed more appropriate than that of Lak et al. (2020), which focused on developing a conceptual framework for resilient urban design using an 11-point Likert scale.

Consequently, consensus for each item and criterion was considered achieved when the median score was 3 or higher on a 4-point scale, the interquartile range was less than 1, and the level of agreement for scores of 3-4 was at least 70%.

Results

Results were obtained after the panel of experts responded to two rounds of questionnaires. The second questionnaire was a revised version of the first, modified to reflect the emerging consensus. Table 2 shows the results of the first questionnaire, completed between 2-13 March 2023.

Table 2. Results of the validation of feasibility criteria for the designation of ICZ (1st round).

CRITERIA	CLARITY			RELEVANCE			CONCEPTUAL APPROPRIATENESS			DELIMITATION			Remain on the list?		
	Median ≥3	Interquartile range ≤1	Level of agreement 3-4 ≥70%	Median ≥3	Interquartile range ≤1	Level of agreement 3-4 ≥70%	Median ≥3	Interquartile range ≤1	Level of agreement 3-4 ≥70%	Median ≥3	Interquartile range ≤1	Level of agreement 3-4 ≥70%	Yes (f)	No (f)	DK(f)
1	3	1	81.82	4	1	90.91	4	0	90.91	3	1	81.82	10	1	0
2	4	2	54.55	4	0.5	100	4	0.5	81.82	3	1	81.82	8	0	3
3	3	1.5	63.64	4	1	90.91	4	1	81.82	4	1	81.82	8	0	3
4	4	1	81.82	4	1	90.91	4	1	90.91	4	0.5	90.91	8	0	3
5	4	1.5	72.73	3	1	90.91	3	2	63.64	3	1.5	72.73	6	1	4
6	4	1	90.91	4	0	100	4	0	90.91	4	1	81.82	10	0	1
7	3	0.5	81.82	4	0.5	100	4	0.5	90.91	3	1	78.73	8	0	3
8	4	1	100	4	0.5	100	4	0.5	100	4	1	81.82	9	0	2
9	2	1.5	45.45	4	1	81.82	4	1	100	3	1	81.82	9	0	2
10	4	1.5	72.73	4	1	90.91	4	1	81.82	4	0.5	81.82	9	0	2
11	3	2	63.64	3	1	81.82	3	1	90.91	3	1.5	72.73	5	1	5
12	4	0.5	100	4	0	100	4	1	100	4	1	100	11	0	0
13	4	1	100	4	1	90.91	4	0.5	90.91	4	0	90.91	9	0	2
14	4	0	90.91	4	1	90.91	4	1	81.82	4	1	100	7	0	4
15	4	1	81.82	4	0.5	81.82	4	1	81.82	4	0.5	81.82	7	1	2
16	4	0.5	90.91	4	0	100	4	0	100	4	1	81.82	11	0	0
17	4	1	81.82	4	1	72.73	4	1	81.82	4	0.5	81.82	8	2	1
18	3	1	81.82	3	1	90.91	3	1	81.82	4	2	63.64	7	0	4

Source: authors.

After a thorough review of both qualitative and quantitative data, it was decided that two of the criteria from the initial proposal would be eliminated. Specifically, taking into account the data in Table 2, Criteria 9, 10 and 11 were reformulated into two criteria. The experts noted that "sense of community" was a recurring theme in several criteria, leading to low scores for their delimitation and clarity. The quantitative analysis corroborated this observation, resulting in the decision to eliminate Criterion 11 ("autonomy"). Likewise, Criterion 18 ("cultural diversity") was removed due to low scores, particularly in terms of its delimitation (see 'Interquartile range' and 'Level of agreement').

One of the criteria generating the most interesting reflections was Criterion 14: "The space has access to specialized professionals who facilitate and promote intergenerational relations [professionalization]". While all experts agreed on the necessity of this criterion, they suggested improving its delimitation. They also expressed concern about the concept of professionality potentially excluding volunteers who, regardless of specialized credentials, are eager to learn and influence the space's utilization and evolution. Based on

these recommendations, this criterion was reformulated for the second round, now listed as Criterion13 in Table 3 below. The remaining criteria were revised to enhance their clarity and distinctiveness, avoiding unnecessary overlaps.

The revised proposal with 16 criteria was submitted to the same experts for a second round of evaluation between June 4-28, 2023.

Table 3. Criteria developed for second submission to the group of experts.

1. The space already welcomes and accommodates people of different generations **[intentionality]**
2. The space has the resources and infrastructure needed to facilitate and promote interaction between different generations **[the possibility of interaction is evident]**
3. The space is flexible in that it allows participants to modify the elements and resources (including location), according to their needs and interests **[adaptation to diversity]**
4. The space is conducive to participants choosing the extent to which they wish to engage in intergenerational activities, allowing them to make informed decisions on whether and how to enter and leave the space **[choice]**
5. In this space it is possible to carry out intergenerational actions over a long period of time **[continuity]**
6. The setting has been designed in such a way that participants have both the space and the opportunity to form meaningful relationships with one other **[relationship focused]**
7. The space is conducive to the exchange of actions and ideas between the different generations involved **[exchange, cooperation, reciprocity]**
8. The space makes it easy for all age groups and generations to see one another, so that they can all feel like part of the same community **[identity and visibility]**
9. The space is connected to traditions and cultural legacies, and it acknowledges the values of the community to which it belongs **[community connection]**
10. The space is open to the community and members of the community are involved in planning activities and using the space **[community involvement]**
11. The intergenerational practices and programs carried out in the space are made known to the community's families, youth, adults, etc., who are aware of this space and know how it can be accessed **[community awareness]**
12. The space has sufficient institutional support (e.g., financial and/or social support) to be sustainable as an intergenerational space **[institutional support]**
13. The space has a team of people specialized in the intergenerational field who promote and facilitate intergenerational relations **[specialization]**
14. The space is conducive to intergenerational actions being designed and planned intentionally and in advance **[intentionality]**
15. The space allows and encourages the different generations to interact in a spontaneous and informal manner **[spontaneity]**

16. The space includes elements (e.g., photographs, posters, games...) that indicate the type of intergenerational interaction that is considered appropriate for this setting **[environmental cues]**

Source: authors.

Their responses were analyzed again following the same procedure as in the first round. The results (Table 4) indicate a significant increase in the degree of agreement during the second and final round.

Table 4. Results of the validation of feasibility criteria for the designation of ICZ (2nd round).

CRITERIA	CLARITY			RELEVANCE			CONCEPTUAL APPROPRIATENESS			DELIMITATION			Remain on the list?		
	Median ≥3	Interquartile range ≤1	Level of agreement 3-4 ≥70%	Median ≥3	Interquartile range ≤1	Level of agreement 3-4 ≥70%	Median ≥3	Interquartile range ≤1	Level of agreement 3-4 ≥70%	Median ≥3	Interquartile range ≤1	Level of agreement 3-4 ≥70%	Yes (f)	No (f)	DK(f)
1	4	1	90.91	4	0	100	4	0	100	4	0.5	90.91	10	0	1
2	4	0.5	90.91	4	0	100	4	0	400	4	0	100	11	0	0
3	6	1	81.82	4	1	90.91	4	1	90.91	3	1.5	72.73	9	1	1
4	4	1	90.91	4	0.5	90.91	4	0.5	90.91	4	1	90.91	9	1	1
5	4	0	90.91	4	1	90.91	4	1	90.91	4	0	100	8	0	3
6	4	0.25	90.91	4	0	100	4	0	100	4	1	81.82	11	0	0
7	4	1	90.91	4	1.5	100	4	0.5	100	4	0.5	81.82	9	0	2
8	4	1	90.91	4	0	100	4	0	100	4	1	81.82	10	0	1
9	4	0	100	4	0.5	81.82	4	0.5	100	4	0.5	81.82	10	1	0
10	4	1	72.73	4	0	100	4	0	100	4	0.5	100	10	0	1
11	4	0.5	90.91	4	1	90.91	4	0.5	90.91	4	1	81.82	9	0	2
12	4	0	90.91	4	0	100	4	0	100	4	0	90.91	11	0	0
13	4	1	100	4	1	100	4	1	100	4	0	81.82	7	0	4
14	4	0.5	90.91	4	0.5	81.82	4	0.5	81.82	4	0	81.82	8	1	2
15	4	0	81.82	4	0	81.82	4	0.5	90.91	4	0.5	81.82	9	1	1
16	4	1	100	4	0.5	90.91	4	0.5	90.91	4	0	100	9	0	2

Source: authors.

The evaluation of this second round, besides further delimiting and clarifying each of the criteria, gave rise to reflection on some of the concepts that seemed to generate distinct interpretations among the experts. As a result, it was decided to create a glossary of terms to better define and delimit the criteria, ensuring they were easy to understand (Table 5). The glossary included definitions for the following concepts: spaces, resources, persons involved, community, surrounding community, sufficient, specialized persons and pertinent.

Although it was not necessary to modify Criterion 13 cited above, the feedback of some of the experts in this second round led us to define and clarify the concept of specialized persons in the intergenerational field.

Table 5. Glossary of key terms in the feasibility criteria of ICZ.

CONCEPT	CLARIFICATION
Space	When we speak of space, we are not referring to a kind of located container (e.g., a place in a territory) in which inert materials and living

	beings may coincide (e.g., the sidewalk of any street). Rather, we think of space as the experience that living beings have when we feel we are situated in a place with which we somehow enter into a relationship. Thus, a space can be physical or virtual, natural or constructed, but what it cannot fail to be is relational, for it exists thanks to the interweaving of beings and (material and symbolic) objects. The physical/online meeting room where an age-diverse group of people involved in a common project or purpose meet on a weekly basis is an example of an intergenerational space.
Resources	Any human, material, technical or financial elements that may actually be used to facilitate and promote integration between the different generations.
Persons involved	Persons who share the space and are committed to facilitating and promoting integration between the different generations.
Community	Set of people connected by values, ideals, interests, who share a sense of (community) identity.
Surrounding community	The community located in the immediate area.
Sufficient [institutional support]	It fulfils what is necessary to contribute to the sustainability of the space.
Specialized people	People with proven experience and specific dedication in the intergenerational field.
Pertinent	Adequate or congruent features with the intended purposes, form and function of the Intergenerational Contact Zone.

Discussion

In designing and validating feasibility criteria for ICZ, obtaining and analyzing the opinions of experts in the field was essential. To achieve this, the Delphi method was employed with a group of experts in the field.

The final list of criteria resulting from this consensus-building process is presented below. We contend that it is applicable to efforts aimed at assessing the feasibility of spaces being considered for designation as ICZ. Each criterion consists of a statement followed by a square-bracketed condensed expression of its distinctive principle.

1. The space receives and welcomes people of different generations [intentional/natural sense of welcome].

2. The space has the equipment, resources and infrastructure needed to facilitate and promote interaction between different generations [space is conducive to interaction].
3. The space is flexible in that it allows the persons involved to adapt the resources (moving them around if necessary), according to their needs and interests [adaptation to diversity].
4. The space is conducive to the people involved choosing the extent to which they wish to engage in intergenerational activities, allowing them to make informed decisions on whether to enter or leave the space and how to do so [choice].
5. The space allows and encourages intergenerational actions to take place over time [continuity].
6. The space is conducive to interaction and exchange between the different generations involved [exchange, cooperation, reciprocity].
7. The space provides opportunities for the people involved to form meaningful relationships [relationship focused].
8. The space enables all age groups and generations to see each other and be seen, so they can all feel like part of the same community [identity and visibility].
9. The space is connected to the traditions and cultural legacies, and the relevant values, of the surrounding community [community connection].
10. The space is open to the surrounding community and members of this community take part in planning activities and making use of the space [community involvement].
11. The intergenerational practices and programs carried out in the space are made known to the community's families, young people, adults, etc., so that they are aware of the existence of this space and know how it can be accessed [community awareness of space].
12. The space has sufficient institutional support (e.g., financial and/or social support) to be sustainable as an intergenerational space [institutional support and interest].
13. The space has a team of specialized people who promote and facilitate intergenerational relations [specialization].
14. The space is conducive to intergenerational actions being designed and planned intentionally and in advance [planning].
15. The space allows and encourages the different generations to interact in a spontaneous and informal manner [spontaneity].
16. The space includes elements (e.g., photographs, posters, games...) that indicate what type of intergenerational interaction is considered pertinent [environmental cues].

Conclusion

Having developed these feasibility criteria for the designation of ICZ, the next step is to gather the opinions and reflections of people working in intergenerational spaces — including those who help plan, design, build, maintain, modify, and evaluate such spaces — regarding the applicability of these criteria. The process is thus far from over. It is important to note that these criteria do not represent a definitive, closed list but are the result of the preliminary research described in this paper. The criteria still need to be adapted and tested in various settings intended to be conducive to intergenerational encounters and engagement to determine their practical utility for program (and place) planners and managers as well as those who inhabit such settings.

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Disclosure statement

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