

## **Discover a secret garden, observe the sun, ride in a robot bus – Helsinki Day programme offers a record number of activities**

Helsinki Day has been celebrated for 60 years already. The programme has been created by local residents and this year it highlights topical themes such as responsibility and climate change.

Helsinki will be filled with a festival atmosphere on the city's birthday, 12 June, with over a hundred individual events spread out across dozens of districts and neighbourhoods. The programme includes art and music, sports and exercise, guided tours, workshops and garden parties. All of the events are free of charge and open to all.

“This year's programme includes lots to do also for senior citizens. No less than three of the city's service centres are participating by organising, for example, theatre performances and festivals for elderly people. The programme also highlights the themes of responsibility and climate change,” says **Marianne Saukkonen**, Executive Producer from the Helsinki Event Foundation.

The environmental theme will be seen throughout Helsinki: people can play a climate change game on their phones by the Töölönlahti bay, surplus food will be reutilised at a picnic in Lapinlahti, and kids can build machines to improve the world at City Hall.

### **Event continues to grow year after year**

Helsinki Day has expanded with each year, offering an increasingly diverse programme along the way. While the event is coordinated by the City of Helsinki, the programme itself is designed by local residents. Helsinki Day is all about the people of the city, so the programme offers something for everyone – from theatre orienteering to traditional games and 1920s-style public exercises to robot bus rides.

“Helsinki Day is a communal and participatory festival that involves dozens of local associations, businesses and residents. It encourages people to do things and experience them together. The day also nurtures local pride among residents while introducing our districts and neighbourhoods to visitors,” Saukkonen says.

As in previous years, a jury of local influencers awarded production grants to almost twenty Helsinki Day events on the basis of applications. The members of this year's jury were Pauli Saloranta, Teemu Lehto, Renaz Ebrahimi, Sonja Kailassaari, Mari Nieminen, Max TalviOja, Mirja Arajärvi and Marianne Saukkonen.

The programme for Helsinki Day, which has been held since 1959, includes such classic events as morning coffees with the mayor and award ceremonies for City Slang man and woman of the year and local athletes of the year. The day traditionally culminates with a free concert in Kaisaniemi Park featuring top Finnish artists.

*Helsinki Day is a programme of events that is organised annually on 12 June. Helsinki Day is coordinated by the Helsinki Event Foundation.*