



Include's smart benches combine IoT solutions and green technology | Photo source [Include](#)

SMART BENCHES CHARGE PHONES AND PROVIDE SECURITY

 COMPUTING & TECH

Startup Include builds smart, IoT-connected street benches that can be linked into smart city infrastructure

Spotted: Croatian startup [Include](#) has turned simple street benches and bike stands into Internet of Things (IoT) hot points. The solar-powered smart benches are more than “a bench with a mobile phone charger,” notes founder Ivan Mrvoš.

Include's smart benches, known as [Steora Urban +](#), combine IoT solutions and green technology. The benches are powered using solar panels. They offer free wireless Wi-Fi, 15 sensors, USB and wireless charging, street lighting and security surveillance. The benches also double as a platform for advertising, so they produce revenue.

The startup offers 11 products in two lines: the smart benches and [Monna](#) smart cycling points. It has already sold over 1000 smart benches in 260 cities across five continents. Its customers include international brands like [Deutsche Telekom](#), [Coca Cola](#), [Red Bull](#), [British Petroleum](#), [Nokia](#) and [Kia](#). Include recently raised over €1 million from investors on the blockchain-based [Funderbeam SEE](#) platform.

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Email: info@include.eu

Website: include.eu

Contact: include.eu/contact

Takeaway:

Include's smart benches and cycling points help make IoT and smart city infrastructure accessible. Accessibility, or bridging the digital divide, is a major challenge for smart cities. Include's technology could provide an easy entry point by targeting residents en masse. Springwise has recently spotted other innovations that aim to bring the potential of IoT to a wider audience. An Australian company is using IoT technology to help farmers track water data in remote areas, and a UK-based startup is using IoT technology to improve parking.