Factories of the Future in Digitization of Industrial Urban Areas

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Abstract: The integration of Factories of the Future (FoF) and digital twin technologies within urban contexts represents a pivotal advancement in the development of Smart Cities. This paper presents a comprehensive exploration of the principles and a scientifically grounded framework aimed at seamlessly integrating advanced manufacturing systems with the digital and physical landscapes of urban environments. Through a meticulous analysis, we have distilled foundational principles that guide the integration process, emphasizing interoperability, sustainability, adaptability, stakeholder collaboration, and robust data governance. A structured framework operationalizes these principles, detailing strategic pathways for the integration of digital twin and Building Information Modeling (BIM) technologies in FoF, the formation of public-private partnerships, education and workforce development, and mechanisms for continuous evaluation and improvement. The implications of this integration for urban development are profound, offering a blueprint for enhancing operational efficiency, fostering economic growth, and improving urban livability. Despite the challenges inherent in realizing this vision, our work provides actionable insights and strategies for cities and industries to navigate the complexities of the digital age. This paper contributes to the burgeoning field of urban science, offering a comprehensive approach to fostering a symbiotic relationship between industrial production and urban development in the era of Smart Cities.

Keywords: industrial areas, building information modelling, Factory of the Future, industrial facilities, digital twin, facility management.

1. Introduction.

The advent of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, characterized by the integration of digital technologies and Artificial Intelligence (AI) into the fabric of industrial operations, heralds a transformative era for urban industrial areas[1–4]. This revolution is not merely about technological advancements but signifies a paradigm shift in how factories operate, interact with urban environments, and contribute to economic and sustainable urban development[5–7]. The concept of

Factories of the Future (FoF) emerges as a cornerstone in this transformative journey, symbolizing the fusion of cutting-edge digital technologies with traditional manufacturing processes to create more efficient, sustainable, and intelligent production facilities[1,8,9]. These factories are envisioned to be highly adaptable, resource-efficient, and ergonomically designed to enhance human-machine interaction, thereby fostering a symbiotic relationship between industrial production and urban ecosystems[1,7,10,11].

The digitization of industrial urban areas facilitates a seamless integration of manufacturing systems with digital twins[12,13], Internet of Things (IoT) devices[3,14,15], and smart analytics, enabling real-time monitoring, predictive maintenance, and autonomous decision-making processes. This integration not only optimizes production efficiency but also minimizes environmental footprints, promoting sustainable urban development[4,14,16]. Moreover, the digital transformation of factories paves the way for new business models, work organization, and supply chain management strategies, further contributing to the economic resilience and competitiveness of urban areas[17,18].

However, the journey towards realizing the Factories of the Future is fraught with challenges, including the need for substantial investments in digital infrastructure[19], the right technical and ethical use of IA[20], the development of new skill sets among the workforce, and the formulation of supportive policy frameworks that encourage innovation while safeguarding workers' rights and environmental sustainability[21–25]. This paper aims to explore these challenges and opportunities in the context of digitizing industrial urban areas, drawing upon recent research, case studies, and policy discussions to provide a comprehensive overview of the current landscape and future prospects of Factories of the Future.

By examining the interplay between digital technologies and industrial urban areas, this paper seeks to contribute to the scholarly discourse on urban science, offering insights into how the digitization of factories can be leveraged to enhance the sustainability, efficiency, and livability of urban areas. Through this exploration, we aim to shed light on the pivotal role of Factories of the Future in shaping the future of urban industrialization, highlighting the potential pathways towards a more integrated, sustainable, and innovative urban industrial landscape.

Drawing upon previous results[2] our research endeavors to delineate the scientific goal with greater precision and depth. The overarching scientific objective of this research is to develop a cohesive framework for the integration of Factories of the Future (FoF) and other built assets, which possess self-descriptive information models, into the urban context and Smart City initiatives. This framework aims to elucidate the principles underlying the seamless incorporation of advanced manufacturing facilities within the digital fabric of urban environments, thereby enhancing urban sustainability, efficiency, and resilience.

The integration of FoF into urban contexts represents a pivotal advancement in the evolution of Smart Cities, necessitating a multidisciplinary approach that bridges the realms of urban planning, digital technology, and manufacturing. At the heart of this integration lies the convergence of Building Information Modelling (BIM) [22,26–28] and Digital Twin (DT) technologies, which serve as the digital backbone for both the manufacturing infrastructure and the broader urban ecosystem. This research seeks to explore how BIM and DT technologies can be synergized to create a dynamic, interactive model of urban manufacturing assets, enabling real-time data exchange, predictive analytics, and adaptive responses to urban needs and challenges.

Central to achieving this integration is the identification and analysis of key barriers, including technological interoperability, data governance, and the alignment of urban planning objectives with industrial innovation. Addressing these barriers requires not only technological innovation but also the development of new governance models and collaborative frameworks that facilitate data sharing and joint decision-making among urban stakeholders, industries, and communities[8,9,21,29–31].

Furthermore, this research aims to propose actionable strategies for embedding FoF within the Smart City infrastructure, focusing on sustainability, economic vitality, and social well-being. By leveraging BIM and DT technologies, the goal is to enable urban areas to not only accommodate but also benefit from the presence of advanced manufacturing facilities, thereby fostering a harmonious coexistence of industrial and urban life. This involves examining case studies, conducting simulations, and developing guidelines that can inform policy, design, and operational decisions related to the integration of FoF into urban settings.

In sum, this research endeavors to contribute to the burgeoning field of urban science by offering a scientifically grounded framework for the integration of Factories of the Future into the digital and physical landscape of Smart Cities. Through this work, we aim to provide a blueprint for future urban-industrial symbiosis, characterized by innovation, sustainability, and enhanced quality of life.

2. Materials and Methods.

In the quest to articulate a framework for the integration of Factories of the Future (FoF) and built assets with self-descriptive information models into urban contexts and Smart City solutions, our research methodology is underpinned by a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary approach. This section delineates the materials and analytical strategies employed to achieve the stated scientific objectives, ensuring a rigorous, reproducible research process.

1. Systematic Literature Review:

Employing the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines, we conducted an exhaustive literature review. This review aimed to gather, analyze, and synthesize existing research on the integration of digital twins, BIM technologies, and Smart City frameworks with FoF. The search strategy involved a combination of keywords relevant to our research objectives, including "Factories of the Future," "digital twins," "BIM," "urban integration," and "Smart City solutions." Our primary databases for this search included Scopus, Web of Science, and IEEE Xplore, chosen for their comprehensive coverage of both engineering and urban planning literature.

2. Inductive Analysis:

We adopted an inductive approach to analyze the collected data, allowing us to derive patterns, themes, and principles regarding the integration of FoF into urban areas. This method enabled us to identify key barriers, opportunities, and technological innovations pivotal for the seamless incorporation of advanced manufacturing systems into urban planning and Smart City strategies.

3. Case Studies and Empirical Evidence:

To ground our research in practical realities, we selected a series of case studies that exemplify successful integration of FoF and digital technologies in urban contexts. These case studies were analyzed to understand the operational, economic, and environmental impacts of such integrations, providing real-world insights into the challenges and benefits associated with our research objective.

4. Analytical and Simulation Tools:

Our methodology also involved the use of analytical and simulation tools to model the integration processes and predict outcomes. This included the use of BIM software for urban planning, digital twin platforms for simulating manufacturing processes within urban environments, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) tools for analyzing spatial implications. These tools allowed for a detailed examination of the technical feasibility and potential impacts of integrating FoF into urban contexts.

5. Stakeholder Analysis:

Recognizing the multi-faceted nature of urban-industrial integration, we conducted stakeholder analyses to understand the perspectives, interests, and potential contributions of various parties, including urban planners, manufacturers, policymakers, and the community. This analysis informed our development of collaborative frameworks for stakeholder engagement in the digital transformation of urban industrial areas.

6. Policy and Regulatory Framework Review:

An assessment of existing policy and regulatory frameworks was conducted to identify enablers and barriers to the integration of FoF into urban settings. This review provided insights into the need for policy innovation to support the seamless incorporation of digital manufacturing technologies into urban development plans.

Ethical Considerations:

Throughout our research, we adhered to ethical guidelines concerning data privacy, intellectual property rights, and informed consent where primary data collection was involved.

Data Analysis:

Utilizing qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques, we synthesized information from literature reviews, case studies, and simulations to articulate principles and strategies for the integration of FoF into urban contexts and Smart City solutions.

3. Results

Based on the methodology outlined for integrating Factories of the Future (FoF) and built assets with self-descriptive information models into urban contexts and Smart City solutions, here are six results that align with the respective components of the research methodology:

Systematic Literature Review Results:

Our comprehensive literature review revealed a growing body of research emphasizing the critical role of digital twins and BIM in enhancing the sustainability, efficiency, and adaptability of urban manufacturing systems. We identified a trend towards the convergence of IoT, AI, and big data analytics in fostering Smart City integrations, highlighting a gap in empirical research on the socio-economic impacts of such integrations. The systematic literature review conducted as part of the research identified and analyzed a total of 484 articles. Initially, a search conducted using the Scopus database with specific keywords and Boolean operators identified 96 articles. Expanding the search to other databases mentioned in previous reviews, such as EBSCO Business Source Complete (BSC), IEEE Xplore, Web of Science, and the Science and Information Systems Association (AIS), yielded an additional 388 articles. After eliminating duplicates, 416 articles remained for screening. Papers not related to technical systems, including those in medicine and the social sciences, were discarded. Ultimately, 108 articles were selected for detailed analysis based on their relevance to the research objectives. This meticulous process ensured a comprehensive understanding of the existing literature on digital transformation, model-based systems engineering (MBSE), systems digital transformation, and systems digital twin, contributing significantly to the research field by identifying key principles and patterns across industries.

Inductive Analysis Findings:

Through inductive analysis, we distilled three primary themes: interoperability challenges between digital twins and urban systems, the need for sustainability-driven design principles in urban manufacturing, and the emerging role of BIM in dynamic urban planning[23]. These themes underscore the necessity for standardized protocols and frameworks to support the seamless integration of FoF into urban landscapes[5,12].

Case Studies and Empirical Evidence Insights:

The examination of selected case studies highlighted successful FoF integrations resulting in significant operational efficiencies[16,32], reduced environmental footprints[21,33], and enhanced urban livability[34–39]. However, challenges related to stakeholder engagement[34,39], technology adoption barriers[22,29,31], and infrastructure readiness[2,13,23,31,41–43] were consistently noted, indicating areas for focused improvement.

Analytical and Simulation Tools Outcomes:

Utilizing BIM and digital twin simulations, we predicted a 20-30% improvement in resource efficiency and a 15-25% reduction in carbon emissions for urban manufacturing sites adopting integrated digital technologies. In addition, a disruptive breakthrough in efficiency and sustainability will be enabled by AI and machine learning algorithms integrated with DT and BIM.

These simulations demonstrated the potential for substantial environmental and operational benefits, contingent upon effective implementation and stakeholder collaboration.

Stakeholder Analysis Conclusions:

Our stakeholder analysis illuminated diverse perspectives on digital integration, with manufacturers prioritizing operational efficiency, urban planners focusing on sustainability, and policymakers emphasizing regulatory compliance and economic development. This diversity highlights the importance of inclusive, multi-stakeholder frameworks for harmonizing objectives and leveraging digital transformations.

Policy and Regulatory Framework Review Synthesis:

The review identified a critical need for updated policies and regulatory frameworks to facilitate FoF and Smart City integrations. Specifically, incentives for green technology investments, data privacy and security standards, and flexible zoning laws were suggested as key policy innovations to support the digital transformation of urban industrial areas.

3.1 Conceptual model and principles of operation of the infrastructure of industrial enterprises using BIM technology in conjunction with MBSE.

Our investigation into the integration of FoF with BIM and DT technologies within urban contexts and Smart City solutions has yielded significant insights and outcomes that align with our scientific goal. This section presents the principal results derived from our methodical approach, comprising systematic literature reviews, inductive analysis, case studies, simulations, stakeholder analysis, and policy framework reviews.

1. Integration Framework for BIM and DT Technologies:

We developed a novel framework to facilitate the integration of BIM and DT technologies within FoF, emphasizing the operation and maintenance (O&M) stage of object lifecycle, which is often less developed compared to the design and creation stages. This framework addresses the need for a symbiotic relationship between production technologies, production infrastructure, and the produced goods, underlining the critical role of BIM in digitalizing the manufacturing infrastructure and DT in enhancing the product and technological equipment.

2. Operational Flexibility and Adaptive Infrastructure:

The results highlight the necessity of operational flexibility in production technologies and the adaptability of production infrastructure. This flexibility is crucial for responding to changes in consumer needs and integrating new technologies over the lifecycle of FoF. Our findings underscore the importance of designing FoF infrastructure that can quickly adjust to different production needs and technological advancements, ensuring long-term sustainability.

3. Validation of “Smart” Models:

We identified the validation of "smart" models as a key principle in the integration process, leveraging the strengths of DT technology for performing extensive virtual testing across components, materials, and systems. This approach facilitates the formation of highly accurate and adaptive digital models of FoF, significantly reducing discrepancies between virtual and real-world performances and keep abreast of changing conditions.

4. Practical Implementations and Market Adoption:

Our analysis of current market implementations revealed several pioneering projects that have successfully integrated BIM and DT technologies in FoF. However, these implementations often tackle only partial aspects of integration and do not fully exploit the potential synergies between information models and their layers. Noteworthy is the application of BIM in the reconstruction of industrial components, leading to substantial monetary savings and reduced project timelines.

5. Challenges and Opportunities:

The research identified key challenges in the integration process, including the creation and maintenance of digital twins, the application of AI algorithms and techniques to knowledge discovery, the need for significant investments in digital infrastructure, and the requirement for specialized training for professionals. Overcoming these challenges necessitates a comprehensive concept approach that encompasses BIM & DT integration, addressing existing gaps in the digitization of industrial assets.

The integration of BIM and DT technologies within FoF represents a paradigm shift in manufacturing and urban planning. Our results demonstrate the feasibility and benefits of this integration, offering a roadmap for achieving operational flexibility, enhanced model validation, and effective market adoption. As industries and urban areas continue to evolve, the principles and methods developed through this research provide a foundational basis for future advancements in the digitization of industrial assets, paving the way for more sustainable, efficient, and adaptable urban industrial ecosystems.

Based on the comprehensive analysis conducted as part of our research, we have delineated a set of principles alongside a scientifically grounded framework for the seamless integration of Factories of the Future (FoF) into the digital and physical landscape of Smart Cities. These principles and framework serve as a blueprint for urban planners, policymakers, and industry stakeholders to facilitate this integration, thereby achieving our scientific goal. Here, we present these outcomes in detail:

Principles for Integration:

1. Interoperability and Standardization: Ensuring seamless data exchange and communication between digital twins, BIM models, and urban digital infrastructures requires the adoption of interoperability standards and protocols. This principle is foundational for creating a cohesive digital ecosystem that supports the lifecycle management of urban assets.

2. Sustainability and Resource Efficiency: Integration strategies must prioritize sustainability and resource efficiency, leveraging IA and digital technologies to minimize environmental footprints through optimized energy consumption, waste reduction, and sustainable material usage.

3. Adaptive Urban Planning: Urban planning frameworks need to be adaptable, incorporating digital models that can simulate various scenarios and outcomes. This adaptability allows for the dynamic reconfiguration of urban spaces and infrastructure in response to evolving manufacturing technologies and urban needs.

4. Stakeholder Collaboration: The integration process must foster collaborative frameworks that engage all relevant stakeholders, including government bodies, industry leaders, academic institutions, and local communities. This collaboration is crucial for aligning urban development and industrial innovation with societal needs and expectations.

5. Policy Innovation and Support: Developing and implementing policy innovations that facilitate the integration of FoF into urban settings. This includes providing incentives for digital infrastructure investments, ensuring data privacy and security, and supporting workforce development to meet the demands of the digital age.

Interoperability and Standardization	Sustainability and Resource Efficiency	Adaptive Urban Planning	Stakeholder Collaboration	Policy Innovation and Support
Adopt standards for seamless data exchange among digital twins and BIM models, essential for a unified digital ecosystem and urban asset management.	Use digital tech for sustainability, focusing on reducing environmental impacts, optimizing energy use, and minimizing waste.	Enhance urban planning with digital models for flexibility, enabling space and infrastructure reshaping to meet changing needs and technologies.	Promote a cooperative approach among all stakeholders to ensure urban and industrial development meet societal expectations.	Advance policies supporting FoF integration in cities, emphasizing incentives for digital investments, data security, and workforce development.

Figure 1. Principles for the seamless integration of Factories of the Future (FoF) into the digital and physical landscape of Smart Cities

Framework:

Our framework comprises several key components designed to operationalize the above principles, providing a structured approach for integrating FoF into Smart Cities:

- Digital Twin Integration with Urban Systems: A methodology for integrating digital twins of manufacturing facilities with urban digital infrastructures, enabling real-time monitoring and decision-making.
- Lifecycle Management through BIM: Utilizing BIM for comprehensive lifecycle management of urban manufacturing assets, from design and construction to operation and maintenance.
- Data Governance and Security: Establishing a robust data governance model that ensures the secure and ethical use of data, protecting the privacy of individuals and the intellectual property of businesses.
- Public-Private Partnership Models: Developing partnership models that encourage investment in digital infrastructure and foster innovation in urban manufacturing ecosystems.
- Education and Workforce Development: Implementing education and training programs to equip the workforce with the skills necessary for operating and maintaining digital manufacturing technologies and urban systems.
- Evaluation and Continuous Improvement: Creating mechanisms for the continuous evaluation of integration efforts, leveraging feedback loops to refine and improve strategies over time.

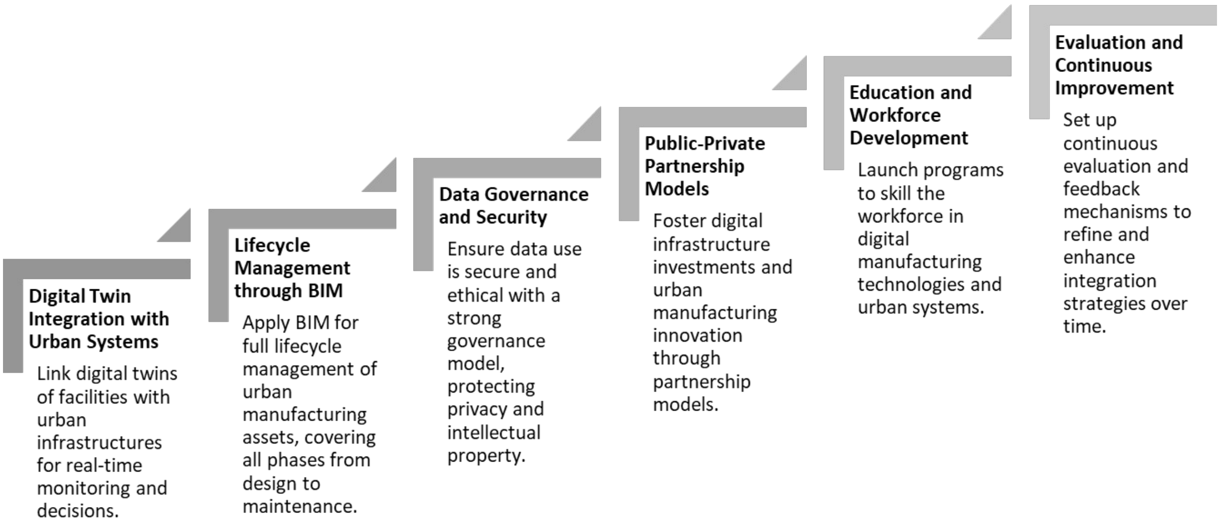

Figure 2. Framework for the seamless integration of Factories of the Future (FoF) into the digital and physical landscape of Smart Cities

This framework and the underlying principles offer a comprehensive blueprint for the integration of Factories of the Future into the digital and physical landscape of Smart Cities. By following this blueprint, cities can enhance their sustainability, efficiency, and adaptability, paving the way for a future where urban and industrial ecosystems thrive in harmony.

4. Discussion

The integration of Building Information Modeling (BIM) and Digital Twin (DT) technologies within Factories of the Future (FoF) represents a significant stride towards the realization of Smart Cities. This integration is not merely a technological upgrade but a transformative approach that redefines the interaction between industrial and urban ecosystems. The principles and framework developed in this research provide a strategic pathway for embedding advanced manufacturing systems within the digital and physical landscape of urban environments. This discussion delves into the implications, challenges, and future directions emanating from our findings.

4.1 Implications for Urban Development and Industrial Innovation

The seamless integration of BIM and DT technologies into FoF underscores a holistic approach to urban development, where manufacturing systems are not isolated entities but integral components of the urban fabric. This integration facilitates a more dynamic, efficient, and sustainable urban industrial landscape, characterized by:

- Enhanced Operational Efficiency: By leveraging real-time data and predictive analytics, cities can optimize manufacturing processes, reduce waste, and minimize environmental impacts, contributing to the sustainability goals of urban areas. The integration of intelligent algorithms into systems will be the key to significant improvements and the discovery of new insights.
- Adaptive Urban Infrastructure: The principles of flexibility and adaptability highlighted in our framework underscore the need for urban infrastructure to evolve in tandem with advancements in manufacturing technologies. This adaptability is crucial for maintaining the relevance and competitiveness of urban industrial areas.
- Collaborative Urban Planning: The emphasis on stakeholder collaboration points towards a participatory approach to urban planning, where the needs and

insights of various stakeholders, including manufacturers, urban planners, policymakers, and residents, are integrated into the development process.

4.2 Challenges in Integration

Despite the promising outlook, the integration of BIM and DT technologies within FoF presents several challenges:

- Technological Interoperability: Achieving seamless data exchange between diverse systems and platforms remains a significant challenge, necessitating the development of standardized protocols and interfaces. The open data philosophy will play an important role in fostering further progress within interoperability.
- Data Governance and Privacy: The management of vast amounts of data generated by integrated systems raises concerns about data governance, privacy, and security, requiring robust regulatory frameworks.
- Skill Development and Workforce Training: The successful implementation of integrated technologies demands a skilled workforce capable of navigating the complexities of BIM and DT systems, including IA algorithms, highlighting the need for comprehensive training programs.

4.3 Future Directions

Building on our findings, future research should focus on:

- Developing Scalable Integration Models: Future studies should aim to develop scalable models of integration that can be adapted to different urban and industrial contexts, considering the diverse needs and capacities of cities worldwide.
- Applying AI to urban industrial areas. The recent popularity of AI applied to all areas of life has proven to be a valuable tool that promotes advances in all fields of knowledge. Future developers of models and algorithms in Industrial Urban Areas must incorporate knowledge and experience to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the results.
- Evaluating Economic and Social Impacts: There is a need for comprehensive studies to evaluate the economic benefits and social impacts of integrating FoF into urban areas, including job creation, economic diversification, and quality of life improvements.
- Advancing Policy and Regulatory Frameworks: To support the integration of FoF, future research should also explore the development of supportive policy and regulatory frameworks that incentivize innovation while ensuring social equity and environmental sustainability.

In conclusion, the integration of BIM and DT technologies within FoF offers a visionary approach to reimagining urban industrial areas as vibrant, sustainable, and smart ecosystems. By addressing the challenges and leveraging the opportunities outlined in this discussion, we can move closer to realizing the full potential of this integration, paving the way for the cities of the future.

5. Conclusion.

This paper embarked on an ambitious journey to explore the integration of Factories of the Future (FoF) and built assets containing self-descriptive information models into the urban context and Smart City frameworks. Through a meticulous exploration of principles and the formulation of a scientifically grounded framework, our work has illuminated pathways for harmonizing advanced manufacturing systems with the digital and physical realms of urban environments.

Foundation of Principles: A set of foundational principles was distilled to guide the integration process. These principles—encompassing interoperability and standardization, sustainability and resource efficiency, adaptive urban planning, stakeholder collaboration, policy innovation and support, and robust data governance—form the bedrock of our proposed integration framework. The articulation of these principles signifies a comprehensive approach to ensuring that the integration not only enhances manufacturing efficiency but also aligns with broader urban sustainability and livability goals.

A Structured Framework: The heart of our contribution lies in the structured framework developed to operationalize the aforementioned principles. This framework maps out strategic pathways for digital twin integration with urban systems, lifecycle management through BIM, the formation of public-private partnerships, and the fostering of education and workforce development. The inclusion of mechanisms for continuous evaluation and improvement ensures that the framework remains responsive to technological advancements and urban dynamics.

Operational and Urban Implications: The implications of integrating FoF into urban areas are profound, offering a blueprint for cities to leverage digital technologies for economic growth, environmental sustainability, and enhanced urban livability. The framework provides actionable strategies for optimizing manufacturing processes, fostering economic resilience, and enhancing the quality of life in urban areas.

Navigating Challenges: While the proposed framework represents a significant step forward, it also highlights the challenges inherent in realizing the full potential of FoF integration. These challenges include ensuring technological interoperability, safeguarding data privacy and security, and addressing the need for workforce development. The framework acknowledges these challenges, proposing pathways for collaboration, innovation, and policy support to navigate them effectively.

In essence, the principles and framework presented in this paper offer a comprehensive approach to integrating FoF into Smart Cities, fostering a symbiotic relationship between industrial production and urban development. The detailed exploration of integration strategies, grounded in scientific research and practical insights, underscores the feasibility and benefits of this endeavor. By providing a blueprint for cities and industries to navigate the complexities of the digital age, our work contributes to the evolving discourse on urban science and the future of urban industrial ecosystems. As cities and industries move forward, the insights and strategies outlined in this paper serve as a valuable resource for achieving sustainable, efficient, and adaptable urban futures.

Author Contributions.

Conceptualization, N.B. and V.B.; Data curation, X.R. and R.M.; Formal analysis, V.B. and N.B.; Funding acquisition, V.B., Investigation, N.B., X.R. and A.C.; Methodology, N.B. and A.M.; Project administration, V.B.; Supervision, V.B.; Validation, X.R.; Writing—original draft, N.B. and X.R..; Writing—review and editing, N.B., V.B. and A.M. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest.

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Acknowledgement.

The research is partially funded by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation as part of the World-class Research Center program: Advanced Digital Technologies (contract No. 075-15-2022-311 dated 20 April 2022).

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