

RC21

Research Committee 21

Sociology of Urban and Regional Development,
International Sociological Association



RC21 CONFERENCE 2013

RESOURCEFUL CITIES

29-31 August 2013

CALL FOR STREAMS AND SESSIONS

The RC21 Conference 2013 will take place in Berlin, Germany, from August 29th to August 31st and is hosted by the Department of Urban and Regional Sociology at the Institute of Social Sciences and the Georg Simmel Center for Metropolitan Research at Humboldt University, in collaboration with the Free University and the Center for Metropolitan Studies at the Technical University.

At the conference papers will be organized into *streams of sessions* as well as individual sessions. This is a call for proposals for streams and *individual sessions*. The deadline for this call is 5th October 2012.

CONFERENCE THEME

Cities, in which most of us now live in the global North and the global South, can be seen as a structure of opportunities or a web of resources. The city provides individuals and groups with a specific context for the, often unequal, access to resources and chances for creating such resources due to the specific characteristics of heterogeneity and networked density of urban places. Resources are not simply roads to get ahead or get by. Such roads become relevant when they provide people with capabilities to live their lives according to the vision they have for themselves. In the meantime, opportunities to exclude, distinguish, exploit or protect existing power relations help some to keep resources away from others, thereby enhancing their own benefits of those.

Thinking about resourceful cities, there are two levels of analyses that we consider to be central for this conference.

On the one hand, there is the formal, visible structure of the city. This includes urban institutions, how they differ spatially and provide different qualities of resources to urban residents depending on the stratification of places within and between cities. Here, questions raise as to how urban inequalities in outcomes are linked to inequalities in accessing resources, depending on spatial segregation, or about social mix; whereas scholars have now abundantly argued that mixing does not mean mating, one can still ask to what extend mixing provides localities with a spatially grounded form of collective social capital that strengthens or changes the position of a neighborhood or a city in the stratification of places. It also points to themes of mobilities and resources and questions of environmental justice that are linked to the natural resources within cities and the differences here between cities and hinterlands.

On the other hand, there is a social infrastructure to the city, which is relatively invisible, either because it is taken for granted and hence overlooked, or it is ignored and rejected for its informality and marginality. The social infrastructure results from people going about living urban lives, and doing so with and in conflict with others, doing the city, or creating cityness.

The conference aims to cover both of these analytical lenses in its program. Seeing the city in this way, this conference calls for proposals for streams that focus on structural as well as cultural processes of in/exclusion as they find their foci in urban places, hence preventing any form of methodological nationalism and opening exciting perspectives for comparative research. After all, in/exclusion are processes that happen somewhere, and this somewhere is not just anywhere. By studying the urban, we can study inequalities as structural processes becoming visible as practices in concrete forms. This, then, forms the basic frame for this conference

Within this frame, we take seriously the approach of comparative urbanism, that comparative work that overcomes the traditional division of global North / global South seriously and avoids looking only from the global North to the global South as ‘different’. We hence strongly encourage stream organizers that include scholars from the Global North and the Global South as teams, and are particularly keen to create a global rather than Northern discussion at the conference, through papers from various regions of the world. Considering that urban studies should take ordinary cities much more seriously than we do, we are looking forward to session proposals that include strategies to discuss ordinary cities rather than the “usual suspects”.

STREAM THEMES

We invite proposals for sessions and streams of sessions for each of the following themes:

A — Capital forms and their spatial expression

Session proposals are invited that focus on urban social, cultural, economic and political capital and how place matters to these forms of capital and to their transferability. For example, how do various neighborhoods provide contexts for the formation of social networks, what foci for network formation can be found, and to what extent does this spatial clustering of various forms of capital create patterns of in- end exclusion?

B — Expressing inequalities, changing the urban form

Here we invite sessions on social mix and its consequences, especially with regard to other levels than interpersonal local networks, transformation processes of cities and neighborhoods in its commercial, social and residential formations and gentrification on the one hand or spatial expressions of marginalization on the other.

C — Rights, duties and entitlements in the city

Urban citizenship can be seen within the context of a social infrastructure as a provision to face durable urban inequalities, or a social infrastructure as a set of mechanisms of exclusion (gated communities, privatization of public services, gentrification). To what extent do urban settings create possibilities and limitations for local citizenship, and what challenges do citizens face in bringing their rights and entitlements into practice? In particular, how do poor people and people sans papiers manage to do so?

Urban citizenship comes, however, not just with rights, but also with duties: how do people enact their citizenship, what is happening to participation and what is the meaning of the city of the citizens when representative city politics seems to suffer from lack of interest?

D — Urbanity and everyday practices of in/exclusion

Here we invite session proposals that focus on public space and everyday interactions in public space as special forms of urbanity, interactions that are expressions of both inclusionary and exclusionary practices. For example, to what extent are cities of today, especially also cities divided by race, class or ethnicity, claimed through everyday practices to have

specific meanings rather than others, and how does place making become a field of contestation over the dominance of some racial, ethnic or class positions over others?

E — Inter-urban inequalities

In this stream, we look for proposals that take on the theoretical as well as empirical question of how cities find resources to position themselves in an urban geography, what the influence is of globalization and global flows of capital on such chances, and to what extent such inter-urban inequalities have been sharpened, and why.

F — Resilient cities

How do cities function as social structures and social infrastructures to enable residents to deal with the increasing urban inequalities and their spatial expressions? This points to questions of the relevance of urban social movements and other forms of activism, as well as to specific forms of capital of some groups, as in the case of ethnic capital, which help form niches or enclaves of resilience in an unequal city.

G — Cities in context of governance and government

For this theme, we invite streams on the embeddedness of cities in a web of multiscalar relations which influence the urban. How do cities as sites of resources, with their social structures and infrastructures, define their space to maneuver in a world that is multiscalar and forces us to think of the various levels at which government and governance matters to this space to maneuver?

TYPES OF SESSIONS WITHIN STREAMS

Sessions may take any one of the following forms, and streams of sessions may include different kinds of sessions. We encourage proposals that accommodate a variety of forms. These might include:

1. The well-known session of a maximum of 4 papers in a two-hour session, in which presentations by authors last for 10-15 minutes, followed by discussion, and papers are posted on line and distributed by the convenors directly to the paper presenters in their stream beforehand;
2. Discussion sessions of a maximum of four papers, in which one or more discussants summarize the findings of author's papers and formulate a statement with 1-3 points of discussion in ten minutes, for which all papers must be made available on-line beforehand and all participants in the session are expected to have read the papers in advance;
3. Round-table sessions in which a panel of perhaps four scholars is invited to discuss for 5-10 minutes a theme or question posed by the convenors beforehand, followed by a discussion around the table as well as with the other participants present.
4. Round-table sessions when a larger number of researchers spend 5 or so minutes presenting a summary of their paper
5. Poster sessions, when researchers can display a poster summarizing their research, perhaps in the venue where the stream is holding its sessions.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STREAM CONVENORS

1. Stream convenors are responsible for one or more sessions organised within a single stream (the total number of sessions will depend on the number of abstracts submitted).
2. Stream convenors participate in the selection process of abstracts submitted for presentation within their stream, and in allocating papers to different kinds of session as appropriate. Stream convenors will rank all abstracts submitted for the respective stream (the review will have to be done in the second half of February/mid-March 2013). Final decisions on the number of sessions per stream and the acceptance of papers will be made by local organisers considering the ranking of the convenors.
3. Stream convenors together with local organisers supervise the deadlines for full paper submission.

4. Stream convenors chair their respective session(s).

IMPORTANT

1. All streams and sessions have to be organised as open streams and sessions. No session shall be limited to members of an existing project network.
2. Stream convenors themselves shall not submit abstracts to their respective stream.
3. Only one abstract submission per participant is allowed. Exceptions are foreseen for co-authored papers.

WHAT A STREAM PROPOSAL SHOULD LOOK LIKE

A stream proposal must include:

1. A stream title.
2. A short description of the topic, including a description of the types of papers that you expect to receive (max 300 words). The stream content should reflect links to the conference topic and to the themes and should be oriented on one or more research questions.
3. Full contact details of the stream convenor/s (with a maximum of two convenors per stream): Name/s, affiliation, postal address, phone number (will not be made public), e-mail.

WHERE AND WHEN TO SUBMIT

Please send submissions to the following e-mail address: streams@rc21.org within **October 5th, 2012**.

The local organising team will send out information about the acceptance of proposals no later than **15 November 2012**.

The call for papers will be launched late **November 2012**.

IMPORTANT DATES

5 October 2012 = Deadline for stream proposals

15 November 2012 = Notification of selected streams

25 November 2012 = Call for papers

31 January 2013 = Deadline for abstracts submission

28 February 2013 = Notification of selected abstracts

1 March 2013 = registrations open (early bird)

30 June 2013 = Deadline for early bird registration and for some hotel options

15 June 2013 = Deadline for full paper submission

15 July 2013 = Papers online

29-31 August 2013 = Conference