

**Masters in Southern Urbanism at the African Centre for Cities:  
Applications for 2022 now open**



The African Centre for Cities (ACC) at the University of Cape Town invites applications for its Masters in Southern Urbanism (an MPhil specialising in Urban Studies).

Running since 2018, The MPhil seeks to address the knowledge vacuum generated by the multitude of environmental, economic and social crises manifesting in cities in the Global South due to rapid urbanization. “We see this moment as an unprecedented opportunity to question what we mean by urban scholarship, and rigour, in order to fashion alternative ways of being researchers and teachers,” says Professor Edgar Pieterse, Director of ACC. “However, this exploratory project demands a conscious effort to grow an ambitious cohort of black urbanists willing to equip themselves to build a new kind of urban studies, rooted in the realities and desires of the Global South.”

The minimum eighteen-month degree curriculum combines coursework with the completion of a minor dissertation. In year one, students complete the Masters coursework, which includes a compulsory City Research Studio, a choice of two of three interdisciplinary urban modules, and an urban-focused elective. In year two, students research and write individual minor dissertations based on their own fieldwork with dedicated supervision by the MPhil’s faculty team, ACC researchers and experts based at the programme’s host departments.

At the heart of the Masters is the City Research Studio, a four-part laboratory space where the students and faculty learn to walk, see, smell, touch, embrace, explore and reimagine the city through intimate engagements mediated by diverse fields of urban practice including fieldwork-based co-produced research and arts-based methods. Core seminar modules – *Urban Theory*, *Urban Everyday* and *Curating Urban Regulation* – engage and ground students in a mix of exciting theoretical debates central to contemporary southern cities. In addition, a broad selection of electives gives students an opportunity to engage with cities through particular disciplines and thematics in, for instance, geography, sociology, anthropology, architecture and planning.

The Masters is open to students who have completed four-year bachelor degrees and students with existing Masters degrees in various disciplines; previous qualification in urban studies, planning or geography is not a prerequisite. The programme has been designed to provide a rigorous theoretical and methodological foundation in interdisciplinary urban studies. It is intended as a bridgehead into PhD-level research, producing skilled researchers able to conduct compelling doctoral research, as well as an innovative and experimental learning platform for those aiming to enrich or launch their careers as practitioners equipped with the capacity of engaging and rethinking urban questions from a Southern vantage point.



Students of the first four cohorts have come from ten African countries, as well as India, Palestine, Germany and Italy, and their individual research projects range across topics and cities such as the politics of greenspaces in Cosmo City, Johannesburg, placemaking through street art in Cape Town, practices of informal trade in Accra, smart city imaginaries in Bhubaneswar, incremental home-making in Cape Town and Delhi, the lived experience of electricity supply disruption in Lilongwe, and the socio-political implications of alternative models of service provision in Khartoum.

We have four bursaries for South African students with the support of the National Research Foundation (NRF) and a small number of bursaries available for international students. Both of these are highly competitive, so students are encouraged to actively seek additional sources of funding.

The MPhil has been supported by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and its departmental homes are the Department of Environmental and Geographical Science and the Department of Architecture, Planning and Geomatics.

Please find attached the programme's current brochure and click [here](#) for more information. Should you have any questions, please feel free to get in touch with the course convenor, [Dr Anna Selmeczi](#).

**Application deadlines for 2022:**

**25<sup>th</sup> June:** for South African students applying for NRF bursary.

**31<sup>st</sup> August:** International students and South African students not applying for NRF bursary.