

BIG CITIES – SMALL CHANGES: Thinking Creatively Through Urban Infrastructure

Tuesday 20 February 2018

Venue: British Academy
10-11 Carlton House Terrace, London, SW1Y 5AH

PROGRAMME

- 08:30 – 09:00 Registration
- 09.00 – 09.20 **Welcome & Opening Remarks**
Professor Ash Amin CBE FBA, Foreign Secretary & Vice-President, British Academy
Professor Caroline Knowles, British Academy Programme Director – Cities & Infrastructure
- 09:20 – 10:35 **Violence & Vulnerabilities**
Chair: *Dr Suzie Hall, Director, Cities Programme, London School of Economics and Political Science*
- Speakers:
Professor Stephan Feuchtwang, Emeritus Professor of Anthropology, London School of Economics and Political Science
Paula Morais, Researcher, Bartlett School of Planning, University College London
Dr David Dodman, Director, Human Settlements, International Institute for Environment and Development
Professor Gabriel de Santis Feltran, Professor of Sociology, Federal University of São Carlos
- The violent eruptions of disasters like earthquakes, mudslides and floods call for particular responses and urgent interventions. Equally disruptive in more subtle ways, and more difficult to respond to, are everyday forms of violence in poverty, in dispossession, and in routine sexual violence. Are eruptions and routines incompatible ways of thinking about and responding to the violence and difficulties of urban life? Do they make conflicting demands on urban infrastructure? Or are they compatible pressures for change even if they compete for resources? Both have lethal consequences – so how might we think about and prioritise different scales and manifestations of violence and vulnerability in different places? Can smart city initiatives help?*
- 10:35 – 10.55 Tea / Coffee Break

10:55 – 12:10

Living in Displacement

Chair: *Professor Penny Green*, Professor of Law and Globalisation, Queen Mary University of London

Speakers:

Professor Sam Codjoe, Director, Regional Institute for Population Studies, University of Ghana

Mohamed Fouad, Assistant Professor of Practice, American University of Beirut

Samuel Getachew, Journalist

Robert Hakiza, Executive Director, Young African Refugees for Integrated Development

Displacement no longer describes only short-term circumstances, but the long-term prospects of a growing number of the world's population, who live and die in different kinds of displacement. From new, aspiring, urban migrants to the desperate manoeuvres of asylum seekers, large sections of the world population live on the move, and must navigate evolving and unfamiliar circumstances. What challenges do these circumstances present in provision of (fixed) urban infrastructures? How should we think about health care, food security and shelter in shifting circumstances? Can human mobility offer new resources rather than hinder basic infrastructure provision?

12:10 – 13:10

Lunch

13:10 – 14:25

Knowledge & Change

Chair: *Professor Sir Alan Wilson FBA FRS*, Chief Executive, Alan Turing Institute

Speakers:

Dr Ammara Maqsood, Lecturer in Anthropology, University of Manchester

Dr Sobia Ahmad Kaker, Lecturer in Sociology, Goldsmiths University of London

Professor Adriana Allen, Professor of Development Planning and Urban Sustainability, University College London

Dr Alice Sverdlik, Researcher, Human Settlements, International Institute for Environment and Development

Kai Weise, President, International Council on Monuments and Sites (Nepal)

What methods of generating new knowledge are the most effective in practice? What do problem-based approaches entail? Can they be made more effective in improving urban lives? What difficulties arise in working across disciplines and how might they be overcome? How do academic researcher/activist collaborations work best? What can go wrong? What are the best ways to access local knowledge? What are the potential tensions and benefits of working with local activists and citizen researchers?

14:25 – 14:45

Tea / Coffee Break

14:45 – 16:00

Possibilities & Small Changes

Chair: *Professor Ash Amin CBE FBA*, Foreign Secretary & Vice-President, British Academy

Speakers:

Dr Kalpana Vishwanth, Co-Founder, Safetipin

Professor Michael Keith, Centre Director, COMPAS, University of Oxford

Professor Jorge Peña Díaz, Architect and Professor of Urban Design,
CUJAE University
Sara Ortiz Escalante, Coi-lectiu Punt 6
Sam Liebmann, Filmmaker
Lee McKarkiel, Filmmaker

Meaningful social change is often a long-term process, yet research projects are expected to produce rapid tangible improvements in people's circumstances. How can projects operate most effectively with short time lines? What counts as change? Are small changes good enough? How can they be built on? How can improvements in the infrastructures of the streets and the architectures of everyday life be made more visible?

16:00 – 16:20

Closing Remarks

Professor Caroline Knowles, British Academy Programme Director –
Cities & Infrastructure