

# Invitation

## RC21@Leeds Open Sessions / Events / Activities

The University of Leeds is hosting the annual RC21 International Urban Studies conference on campus next week, Monday to Wednesday **11-13 September 2017**. This is the biggest annual gathering of critical urban scholars in human geography, sociology, politics and related disciplines. Around 700 delegates from 50 countries will be on campus attending multiple parallel sessions and plenaries.

As part of these events, the Organising Committee has also planned a number of Open sessions, events and activities which any member of the university or local public is free to join. These mostly take place in the **Conference Exhibition Hall** which is adjacent to The Edge Sports Centre, or **in other locations** as listed. The Exhibition Hall is also where to find the further information desk about these events or the conference as a whole. Please contact Adrian Favell (a.favell@leeds.ac.uk) for further info if you are interested in any of the events listed.

A number of events are sponsored by the University of Leeds Research Themes on Cities. These **Cities@Leeds** events are hosted by **Gary Dymski** and **Phillip Purnell** (co-directors of the Global Challenges research network on CITIES), with the Parisian regulationist economist, **Pascal Petit**. These events are coordinated by **Faye McAnulla** and **Adrian Favell**, and take place during conference Coffee Breaks and Lunches in the Exhibition Hall.

In addition to these events, a number of specially commissioned **Discussion** sessions or Open Events / Activities have been organised. The following is a sequenced list of all **Open Sessions / Events / Activities** available during the conference.

### Monday, September 11

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11:00 – 11:30 / Exhibition Hall

**Launch of the Research Hub Cities@Leeds**, facilitated discussions that connect research themes and ideas that emerge from visitors' suggestions as well as expertise at the University. Participants can pull up a chair and "drop in" at any time during the live events

13:15 – 14:15 / Exhibition Hall

Opening Discussion of the **Research Hub Cities@Leeds**. **Gary Dymski** and **Pascal Petit** discuss the research agenda on **Rethinking Global Urban Justice: Economic Crisis and Inequalities**. Please bring your lunch and join us in the Hall

14:15 – 16:00 / Exhibition Hall

**Discussion: Early Career Researchers – Getting Published** with Tom Dark, Manchester University Press. A discussion on the practicalities of putting together a publishable research proposal and negotiating with publishers

16:00 – 16:30 / Exhibition Hall

Second Discussion of the **Research Hub Cities@Leeds**. **Pascal Petit** and **Gary Dymski** lead a discussion on **Rethinking Global Urban Justice: Economic Crisis and Post-Growth Culture**

16:30 – 18:00 / Exhibition Hall

**Discussion: Leeds Migration Research Network**. Co-founders of the University's very lively critical migration studies network – **Gabriella Alberti**, **Chris Forde**, **Rosa Mas Giralt**, and **Hannah Lewis** (now a member of the University of Sheffield Migration Group) – lead a discussion on the migration research / activism interface in the North of England. Organisers will summarise and reflect upon the engagement of scholars in these networks with local migrant organisations, including recent organised events, and the challenges faced in the current local and national politics of migration. Some of the issues revolve around the 'impact' oriented pressure for researchers to provide 'facts' about migration and its costs/benefits, as well as difficulties with resources and finding space for both critical work and practical dialogue.

## Tuesday, September 12

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10:45 – 11:15 / Exhibition Hall

Third Discussion of the **Research Hub Cities@Leeds**. Led by **Ersilia Verlinghieri**, University of Oxford, on **Rethinking Global Urban Justice: Sustainable Cities and Resilient Transport**

11:15 – 13:00 / Exhibition Hall

**Book Launch. Urban Geopolitics: Rethinking Planning in Contested Cities**. Authors **Jonathan Rokem** and **Camillo Boano** with discussant **Alex Schafran**. Published by Routledge

Moving away from loosely defined urban theories and contexts, this book argues it is time to start learning from and compare across different 'contested cities'. It questions the long-standing Euro-centric academic knowledge production that is prevalent in urban studies and planning research. The book brings together a diverse range of international case studies from Latin America, South and South East Asia, Eastern Europe, Africa and the Middle East to offer an in depth understanding of the worldwide contested nature of cities in a wide range of local contexts. It suggests an urban ontology that moves beyond the urban 'West' and 'North' as well as adding a comparative relational understanding of the contested nature that 'Southern' cities are developing.

13:00 – 14:00 / Exhibition Hall

Fourth Discussion of the **Research Hub Cities@Leeds**, on **Rethinking Global Urban Justice: Inclusion of Minority and Religious Ethnic Groups**, with **Ghazala Mir** of the Inclusive Cities Network

13:15 – 14:00 / Roger Stevens Lecture Theatre 20

**Journal Launch: Radical Housing Journal**. Published by PM Press

RHJ is an orientation, a praxis for doing research and action, which will speak both to academics and non-academics, grassroots activists, practitioners and policy-makers concerned with the annihilation of housing worldwide and active in responding to such a concern. It is not, in this sense, a traditional self-referential academic journal but a cross-cutting publication which aims to mobilise the attention and related action of different constituencies. RHJ will welcome contributions from activists, however defined in their theoretical and practical stances, which recognise themselves in its ethos. It will be explicitly anti-racist, feminist and trans-disciplinary in nature. All original contributions will be peer-reviewed at no cost to authors. The Journal will be organised around two Collectives (Editorial and Extended), which will be horizontally structured. We are currently looking for people with energies and ideas to help us create the RHJ. If you are interested, please join us at the RC21, where we will present our Manifesto, say more about the Journal, and gather your thoughts and feedback! If people are interested and can't make the meeting, that they can email us to stay in the loop: [collective@radicalhousingjournal.org](mailto:collective@radicalhousingjournal.org)

14:00 – 15:45 / Exhibition Hall

**Discussion: Leeds Centre for Sustainable Cities**, with **Chris Hill**, Development Director of the Trust, and **Paul Chatterton**, Professor of Urban Futures at the University of Leeds

There is a major opportunity to establish the UK's leading centre for the research and application of sustainable cities right here in Leeds. We are calling it the 'Leeds Centre for Sustainable Cities' and in its first iteration could be located at Abbey Mills (and also St Anne's Mill) in Kirkstall at the heart of a 200 acre 'Sustainability Park - stretching from the new station at Kirkstall Forge right to the city centre. Kirkstall Valley Development Trust is in negotiations with Leeds City Council about acquiring this building. The possibilities of the Centre and the Park are numerous - the codelivery of undergraduate and masters teaching, public engagement, sustainability focused conference facilities, office and research space for sustainability firms and practitioners, showcasing, demonstrating and leverage in resources for university research across for example sustainability, low carbon technologies, food production, flood resilience, sustainable housing, behaviour change, local energy systems, rapid transport. The Centre for Alternative Technology ([www.cat.org.uk](http://www.cat.org.uk)), local community groups and councillors are already involved. See [www.kvdt.org.uk/centre-for-future-cities](http://www.kvdt.org.uk/centre-for-future-cities). This open session will explore the aspirations and realities of creating such a Centre. If you can't make the session but would like to be involved, contact Paul Chatterton - [P.Chatterton@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:P.Chatterton@leeds.ac.uk)

15:45 – 16:15 / Exhibition Hall

Fifth Discussion of the **Research Hub Cities@Leeds**. Topics to be decided by conference participant suggestions

## Tuesday, September 12 (Continued)

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16.45 – 18.30 / Conference Auditorium 1

**Plenary Talk. Urban Justice from the Grassroots: Lessons From Leeds.** Chaired by Sara Gonzalez and Paul Routledge, with invited participants and audience from the city of Leeds. Sponsored by the Leeds Social Science Institute. Doors open at 16:30 and close at 18:30

This session will feature campaigners and community groups from Leeds working on the ground to achieve urban justice. The session will focus on initiatives from the grassroots, run by and for citizens in Leeds to tackle the major problems that the city faces such as housing, food security or the well being of refugees. Despite Leeds being a growing city and a centre for financial services it has high rates of inequality between different types of groups of residents and neighbourhoods. Local authorities in the UK are increasingly struggling to deliver local services due to cuts imposed by the ongoing austerity programme. Leeds has rich history of innovative, diverse and compassionate grassroots initiatives and the aim of this session is to celebrate and showcase some of them and discuss how best work together to achieve a more just city.

The session will feature campaigners from the following organisations (subject to changes):

- **Real Junk Food Project**, started in Leeds but has now become a global network. They divert surplus edible food destined for waste and make it accessible for human consumption through “pay as you feel cafes”.
- **Leeds Tidal**, works to support, coordinate and grow global activism in Leeds. It acts as a hub for networking, training and resources for campaigns on a diversity of in Leeds.
- **Chapelton Co-Housing Project**, is an initiative to build 33 households by and for residents of the Chapelton neighbourhood of Leeds.
- **Asylum Matters!**, a network organisation providing on the ground support to asylum seekers and campaigning for better policies locally and nationally
- **Leeds Hands Off Our Homes**, a campaign group fighting against housing austerity and promoting public housing

**Non-Conference Attendees Please Note: This is an open and free event but requires registration:**  
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/urban-justice-from-the-grassroots-lessons-from-leeds-tickets-36686527391>

## Wednesday, September 13

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10:45 – 11:15 / Exhibition Hall

Final Discussion of the **Research Hub Cities@Leeds**. **Roxana Barbulescu** leads a discussion on **Rethinking Global Urban Justice: Hate Crime in Northern Cities**

11:15 – 12:45 / Exhibition Hall

**Discussion: Liquid Cities? Exploring Zygmunt Bauman’s Contribution to Urban Studies.** Distinguished social theorist and longtime Professor of Sociology at University of Leeds, Zygmunt Bauman passed away aged 91 earlier this year. The founding director of University of Leeds Bauman Institute, **Mark Davis** leads a discussion with colleagues from the School of Sociology and Social Policy about Bauman’s legacy to the field.

14:00 (Train from Leeds) / 15:00 – Evening (Walk) / Meet at Hebden Bridge Station

**Walk: Hedben Bridge with Adrian Favell.**

Hebden Bridge is a small former factory market town in the Calderdale Valley about half way between Leeds and Manchester. Adrian Favell will lead a walk to visit the town and surrounding country, and talk a bit about the history, geography and peculiar sociology of this much talked about place. The basic plan is to take in Hebden Bridge and the surrounding villages for approx 2 hours, including Old Town, Pecket Well and Heptonstall, and be back down in Hebden Bridge before 6pm. We may then go for some food and drinks at The Trades Club. Or you can plan to be back in Leeds by about 7pm at the earliest. There are also trains back until late. This is a serious walk involving hills, off-road, and country paths. You need good outdoor shoes to wear, and we will take the weather as it comes (i.e. wet weather gear could come in handy). Please let registration know if you are interested in joining this walk (about 10 people max) or email ([a.favell@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:a.favell@leeds.ac.uk)) for further info.

## Wednesday, September 13 (Continued)

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14:00 / Meet at Organic Garden behind Roger Stevens Building

### **Campus Walking Tour: Justice Through Narrative Reempowerment: An Artistic Exploration of African History and Heritage through Local Yorkshire Connections**

This is a 1 hour, 45 minute guided tour around the University of Leeds main campus. Formally known as the Leeds Black History Walk (LBHW), the aim of this tour is to reclaim hidden transatlantic narratives through local history, serving as a tool of public empowerment since 2009. Part history lecture, part theatre performance, and part architecture discussion, the specially adapted session will present conference themes of global, urban, and justice from a Leeds and Yorkshire perspective, while encouraging attendees to explore connections with their own work. The objective of this session is to demonstrate the importance of narrative re-empowerment as a social intervention strategy in challenging dominant untruths. From a methodological standpoint, this session highlights the viability of theatre as a means of de-colonising knowledge production and exposing audiences to alternative narratives linking local history to global humanity. Attendees will share in discussions of social interaction within urban spaces through physical analyses of the University of Leeds landscape revealing intercultural narratives touching the United Kingdom, America, Africa, and the Caribbean.

25 people max / Note a first run of this tour is also happening on Tuesday at 14:00 starting from the same location. **Additional charge payable directly to the guides (suggested donation £5-£10).** More information is available here: <https://vimeo.com/175170218>

15:00 – 16:00 / School of Geography Seminar Room 7.36

### **Workshop: Radical Municipalism: Between movement and party?** Hosted by **Plan C**.

This workshop will bring together researchers attending the RC21 conference with urban activists to discuss and critically engage with the 'radical municipal' movements that are occurring on a global scale. New electoral platforms such as Barcelona en Comú, Ciudad Futura (Rosario), and Massa Critica (Naples) have been trying to productively transform and open up the relations between social movements and local government, aiming to build new models of radical democracy at the municipal level. Through conducting experiments in governance driven by grassroots movements, these examples are destabilizing inherited distinctions between the state and its citizenry. While these 'citizens platforms' and 'movement-parties' vary significantly according to their local conditions, they share a common vision of using the scale of the city to further an alternative to capitalist social relations, one based on 'the right to the city' and on need instead of profit. The workshop will look to share these experiences, and ask what it means for organising systemic social change in the UK. We're interested in discussing questions such as:

- Does the urban/municipal scale provide a unique site for social movements to apply leverage, both within and outside of the state?
- Does the urban/municipal scale provide a unique site for social movements to apply leverage, both within and outside of the state?
- Contrary to our inherited assumptions, could existing state institutions be used as part of a radical politics of autonomy?
- Is it possible for movements to be active within institutions without being institutionalized? Can we be active in electoral structures without compromising our principles or succumbing to the state's coercive and paternalistic structures?
- How can we build new non-state institutions and models of governance that enable us to produce and defend the urban commons, as alternative spaces to the capitalist market within which we collectively self-organise to solve our needs in everyday life?
- What kinds of institutional and regulatory frameworks would they need? What are the opportunities, and what are the dangers, of recognizing the urban commons through the existing state?

The workshop will be led by **Bert Russell** and **Tim Joubert** from Plan C. Plan C is a national political organisation experimenting with new forms of organisation and shared political visions which are appropriate to our present predicament. We want to reclaim collective wealth and to create and expand our collective power. We are interested in working with others who want to join us on this journey. We have groups in Manchester, Leeds, London, Birmingham, Brighton, Teesside, Thames Valley, and Glasgow. See [www.weareplanc.org](http://www.weareplanc.org)

## All Days

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### Publishers' Exhibition

A Publishers' Exhibition also takes place in the **Exhibition Hall**, and is open to all during regular conference hours. We are delighted to announce this, a first for RC21. The exhibition includes several of the leading international urban studies publishers. Please come along to the Exhibition Hall to meet with editors and publishers to discuss your publishing ideas and recent publications from these leading presses. A special advice session on publishing for early career researchers with Tom Dark of Manchester University Press has also been organised at the Research Hub in the Exhibition Hall on Monday, September 11, 14:15 – 16:00 (see above)