

- Call for Panels and Presentations –**Urban World(s): Spaces, People, Ideas****9th Interdisciplinary Conference of the DAAD-funded Centers for German and European Studies****9th – 11th of December 2020, Hotel Oderberger & GLS Campus, Berlin****Background**

“divina natura dedit agros, ars humana aedificavit urbes”

“It was divine nature which gave us the country, and man's skill that built the cities.”

Marcus Terentius Varro

Thirty years since the reunification of Berlin and Germany, one hundred years since the foundation of the Bauhaus school with its vision for modern and organic urban living spaces, and ten years since the 2008 economic crisis that saw American cities declare bankruptcy and the Occupy movement which prompted denizens to camp out in downtown areas for months: The recent and current commemorations show us the urgency of reflecting on the evolving relationship between citizens and their cities.

For the first time in human history, the world's population is predominantly urban. This trend will continue: the future of human beings seems to be embedded in the space of cities – and particularly in the space of gigantic mega-cities whose number and size are constantly increasing.

Cities are spaces of encounter, diversity and integration that allow and enable patterns of belonging beyond the nation (state). Metropolises are places of longing and melting pots for migrants, but they are also increasingly regarded as places of division and parallel societies. Their inhabitants often live, think and vote differently than the people in the countryside. Whether it's the city's ability to construct identities and cultures; the local origin of political power; the constitution of social cleavages; or the recent development as the smart city as a tool of surveillance – urban environments continue to influence almost all aspects of modern life.

Key Questions

The idea of cities and urban centers has long been that of a certain idea of European modernity. But can the European and Western type of the city, as the epicenter of the liberal order, still claim the status of a model? Is there a 'world model' of the polis or should we rethink this spatial, social, cultural and political form in its diversity? Cities also raise the question of models of spatial structuring: does the metropolis remain at the forefront of global society, diffusing or imposing its values of openness and circulation? Or do we witness a 'revolt of the periphery', as it seems to be expressed in the electoral geography of populism? What is the relationship between the city and non- or anti-liberal democracies? What particular relations does the metropolis have with mobility and migration, as well as with the construction and localization of memories? And what identity does the megacity have in

relation to other megacities but in opposition to the peripheries and the hinterland? What is an urban crisis? Are there unique forms of urban resilience? Are there issues of justice, law, and equality that are specific to urban environments? And how does a city even define itself in this age of 'urban sprawl' and 'suburbia'?

While statistics show us that the world is becoming increasingly urbanized, recent research from many fields invite us to examine and interrogate the city through different disciplinary and interdisciplinary angles, whether through its literary and visual depictions and cultural representations, through social analysis of its demographics and urban actors, through urban trends and future planning, and through philosophical, political, or legal enquiry.

Conference Theme

The city in global perspective will be the theme of the upcoming DAAD Centers Conference 2020. The conference "Urban World(s): Spaces, People, Ideas" takes urban life as its starting point, and invites submissions that examine the urban, in the broadest possible meaning of the word. An interdisciplinary conference in the truest sense of the word, we hope to critically examine the characteristics, roles, functions, changes, depictions, and perceptions of 'the urban'.

Participants are welcome to refer to the anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall and German reunification, the German Presidency of the Council of the European Union as well as Germany's non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council in 2020.

Target Group

The conference is dedicated to master students, PhD students and senior academics from all fields of social science and humanities active in the field of German and European Studies, especially at currently and formerly DAAD-funded Centers for German and European Studies.

We invite submissions from (i.a.) history, political science and International Relations, literature, cultural and memory studies, law, sociology, economics, education and geography, but also from urban planners, architects and artists dealing with cities and urban worlds.

Modalities – Submission of Proposals

We welcome proposals for panels/workshops/roundtables of groups of scholars and individual presentations to be selected by the conference's Advisory Board, which is made up of selected Centre directors and academics at Centres representing the worldwide centres network.

A. Panels/Workshops/Roundtables etc.

Proposals for panels/workshops/roundtables of groups of scholars should give the following information:

- a. The panel's/workshop's/roundtable's title
- b. A description of the planned format of approx. 50 words

- c. An abstract of the panel's/workshop's/roundtable's etc. theme of approx. 150 words
- d. Name, academic title and institutional affiliation(s) of each participant (i. a. including the Centre for German and European Studies)
- e. Titles of the participant's contributions plus abstracts for each contribution of maximum 300 words each and plus max. 5 bibliographical references each
- f. Name of the moderator/chair
- g. Name of the coordinator including contact details

Especially formats in which two or more Centers for German and European Studies and/or academics of various disciplines are cooperating are welcome!

B. Individual Presentations

The interdisciplinary panels will be made up of two to three presentations from academics with different disciplinary backgrounds. All panels will be moderated by experienced members of the DAAD Centres network.

Proposals for individual presentations should give the following information:

- a. Name, academic title and institutional affiliation(s) (including the Centre for German and European Studies)
- b. Title of the presentation
- c. Abstract of the presentation of maximum 500 words
- d. A short academic CV including maximum 5 bibliographical references
- e. At the actual panels, we kindly ask panellists to present a ten-minute summary
 - i. a. using 3 to 4 PowerPoint slides. Successful applicants will kindly be asked by DAAD to submit their finished presentations at least 3 weeks prior to the conference.

Please note what is new compared to former DAAD Centers Conferences: no written papers must be submitted.

Deadline for Submission of Proposals

The **deadline** for paper submissions and nominations for the poster presentations is **Wednesday, 19th of February 2020.**

Submissions should be e-mailed to the DAAD in one PDF file: zenko@daad.de

The DAAD will notify you most likely by mid-May whether the Academic Advisory Council has selected your proposal for the conference.

Conference Language

The DAAD Centres Conference 2020 will take a bilingual approach. **English and German** are conference languages; single panels/workshops/roundtables etc. will be entirely in English or German. A good at least passive knowledge of the respective other language is required. The DAAD actively supports multilingualism and the use of German as an academic language.

Financial Support

Upon request, the DAAD is happy to offer applicants whose proposal has been accepted financial support in the form of **conference grants**, subject to the availability of funds. **Conference grants include participation in the conference, travel and board** (breakfast, lunch, coffee breaks) and **accommodation** at the conference venue for the duration of the conference from maximum Tuesday evening to Saturday morning depending on the place of departure (including evening receptions on Wednesday and Friday evening, excluding Thursday evening meal).

Further information will soon be available at <http://www.daad.de/des>

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