

RSA Research Network on
Smart City-Regional Governance for Sustainability

CALL FOR PAPERS

First Conference

**Smart City-Regional Governance for Sustainability
– Experimental Smartness –**

6-7 October 2016

Leibniz Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development, Dresden/Germany

This call invites papers for the first conference of the new Regional Studies Association (RSA) Research Network on **'Smart City-Regional Governance for Sustainability'**. The conference focuses in particular on 'experimental smartness' with the aim of exploring practical examples of how 'smartness' is approached by both policy makers and academia. This choice of focus addresses one of the primary aims of the RSA Network – to investigate meaning and practice of 'smartness' in city-regional governance. For this purpose, the notion of 'smartness' is understood here as revolving around finding a preferred balance between the competing quests for urban international competitiveness, national economic development, societal and territorial cohesion as well as environmental protection and addressing climate change.

This competition between competing, often seemingly conflicting, goals is placed here under the discursive umbrella of 'sustainability' as the overarching political and policy-defining discourse. Sustainability, in turn, is conceptualised for this purpose as addressing more than the often pre-eminent focus on climate-related challenges and policies. Instead, the goal of this Network is to identify local approaches to finding and applying 'best-effective' – however defined – policies that promise to reconcile diverse and competing interests, and allow to formulate political agendas and practical policy making – whether targeting political-economic, societal or environmental sustainability concerns and priorities. In city-regions, these contestations and necessities for reconciliation are particularly complex – and, with their dense and intense interdependencies, pose formidable political and practical challenges. Yet, at the same time, this makes city-regions and their governance a fascinating and rewarding arena for investigating the many meanings of 'smartness'.

The Dresden conference explores **'experimental smartness'** as the central topic. This revolves around the propensity of city-regions to try out new ways of doing things – also with established 'old' structures and policy tools. Experimental smartness includes for the purpose of this conference theme collecting examples of cutting-edge practices to serve as an empirical basis for conceptual discussions. Specific, individual examples of experimental rationalising and policy-making in *smart* city-regional governance are examined. Relevant examples could include adoption of innovative and novel approaches to dealing with the complexity and seeming inherent contradictions of 'sustainability' as both political discourse and policy practice. Based on this, academics and practitioners are invited to **submit papers that address** examples of innovations in city-regional governance, including politics and planning with regard to:

- *Digital/informational smartness* – using information and communication technologies, e.g. to mobilise or involve local civil society, or even adopt and implement 'new' mechanisms of governance;
- *Institutional smartness* – the role of institutions in framing, facilitating and/or implementing 'smartness'. This involves new ways of formulating policies, and responding to public political discourses, within and between institutions, as they engage with one another as well as other, non-institutionalised actors, and, in the process, develop and adopt novel ways of operationalising them and monitoring outcomes;

- *Spatial Smartness* – innovative use of, or engagement with, territory. This includes the projection of ‘soft’ or ‘virtual’ spaces as part of collaborative forms of governance (as in ‘new regionalism’), e.g. city networks, trans-border engagement or international representation and lobbying, and the interrelationship of those with established ‘hard’ territorial entities of power and governmental-administrative responsibility.

Submission of Abstracts

Abstracts should be around 300 words long and submitted by the deadline of **5 June 2016** via the conference website: *RSAN-SmartGov-Events.ioer.info*

Timeline

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| 5 June | Deadline for sending in the abstract via the conference website. |
| 22 June | By this date contributors will be informed whether their paper has been accepted. Start of registration. One week later a preliminary programme will be sent to the contributors. |
| 18 August | Deadline for notified presenters to register. This also applies to those who would like to participate without presenting a paper. One week later the final programme will be made available. |
| 6-7 October | Conference dates |

Location and Organisation

The workshop is hosted by the Leibniz Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development, Dresden/Germany. We are doing our best to avoid any registration fees. Only if absolutely necessary, a small contribution to catering costs could be required. Full registration via the conference website is required between 22 June and 18 August to secure a place and have the abstract included in the final conference programme. For further information and enquiries please contact the organisers on: *RSAN-SmartGov-Events@mail.ioer.de*. Thank you.

Further information on the hosting institute can be found under: *www.ioer.de/1/home/* and on our RSA Research Network under: *www.regionalstudies.org/research*

Travel and Accommodation Bursaries

Thanks to the support of the Regional Studies Association, we are able to offer two travel bursaries of up to €300 each to contribute towards travel and accommodation costs. Eligible to apply are: any student, early career or associate (retired) member of the RSA, as well as members working in a Band B, C or D country. If you are eligible and wish to apply, please add a paragraph to your abstract submission, in which you state your intent to apply and briefly (100 words max) explain why you are eligible for such a bursary. Please note: The closing date for bursary applications is also **5 June 2016**. For further enquiries about the bursary, please contact the conference e-mail shown above. Thank you very much.

Core Group of the RSA Research Network

Organisers of event series: Dr *Gerd Lintz*, Leibniz Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development (Germany); Prof *Bas van Heur*, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Brussels (Belgium); Prof *Yonn Dierwechter*, University of Washington, Tacoma (USA); Dr *Tassilo Herrschel*, University of Westminster (UK). Further members: Dr *Igor Calzada*, University of Oxford (UK); Dr *Stefano Di Vita*, Politecnico di Milano, Milan (Italy); Prof *Iwona Sagan*, University of Gdańsk, Gdańsk (Poland); Prof *Ethan Seltzer*, Portland State University, Portland (USA),

*Further information on the Regional Studies Association and details on how to join is available at the Association website: www.regionalstudies.org
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