

TRAVEL GRANTS

Our aim is to make the conference a truly inclusive event. Some of our partners, particularly those from least developed and developing countries (LDC) may not be able to attend due to lack of resources. Therefore, the organisers would like to support participants from LDC¹ to widen the inclusiveness of the conference. However, the funds available are limited and the selection criteria will be based on the relevance of each participant to attend the conference as well as the regional distribution among beneficiaries. The participants ought to have their daily responsibilities within the urban scope and therefore be suitable participants to the conference. Furthermore, we will encourage gender balance in the selection of participants.

To apply for the LDC participant grant, please submit the following information to the secretariat (see address below):

1. CV of participant
2. Organisation
3. Contacts (telephone, fax, postal address and email)
4. Justification for participating (not more than 100 words)

Please submit the application no later than 1 April 2005 to the following address or email: Conference secretariat. Life in the Urban Landscape, Formas. P.O. Box 1206, SE - 111 82 Stockholm, Sweden. Phone: +46 (0) 8 7754000. Fax: +46 (0) 8 7754010. E-mail: info@urbanlife2005.com

¹ See definition and LDC list of 50 countries:
<http://www.un.org/special-rep/ohrls/lcd/lcd%20criteria.htm>

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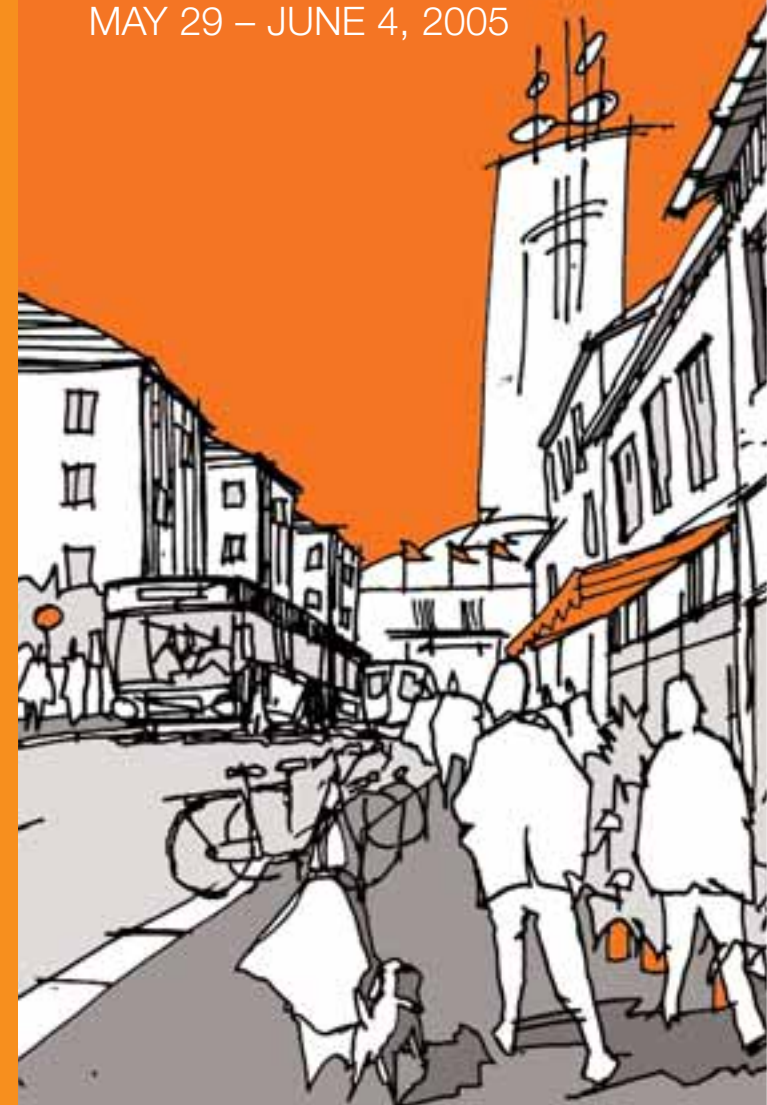
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LIFE IN THE
URBAN LANDSCAPE

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR INTEGRATING URBAN KNOWLEDGE & PRACTICE

GOTHENBURG, SWEDEN
MAY 29 – JUNE 4, 2005



Urban life and urban culture have always been at the heart of civilization and economic development. Cities all over the world are facing great challenges attempting to meet the dynamic and contradictory trends of today. With the globalisation of economy and environmental systems on the one hand and individualisation of everyday life and politics on the other, we see new urban landscapes and processes coming into being.

In times of rapid change there is an obvious risk of a city losing its soul. Local history, identity and culture clashing with new populations, influences and life-styles are raising questions about the competitive, attractive and exciting city. At the same time there is tremendous pressure on cities to be ecologically sound and socially balanced. The new context is unfamiliar for many of us, and with an unclear balance of responsibilities, mandates, resources and power we face the risks of following every trend uncritically or getting stuck in complacency or wishful thinking. Therefore, we need to develop new approaches that can accommodate uncertainty and change.

WITH THE CONFERENCE LIFE IN THE URBAN LANDSCAPE WE WISH TO STIMULATE INNOVATIVE URBAN PROFESSIONALISM AND KNOWLEDGE SUPPORT CREATIVE AND RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP IN CITIES CONTRIBUTE TO THE EVOLUTION OF CO-OPERATIVE AND CROSS-BORDER APPROACHES TO URBAN DEVELOPMENT WORK AND URBAN LEARNING

We welcome urban professionals, policy makers and researchers from all continents to explore the emerging field of urban knowledge and to meet for informed debate and mutual learning together. Participants from any professional or educational background; engineers, biologists, geographers, architects, historians etc are all invited. We expect around 500 highly committed participants and we welcome contributions to the programme from all kinds of experience.

The conference gives possibilities to pick up results from other international conferences in the field such as the meetings of the UN Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD 13), UN-HABITAT's World Urban Forum 2004 and the UN-HABITAT Governing Council to be held in April 2005. It also coincides in time with the decision process for the EU Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment. Accordingly, the outcome from the conference can serve as input to forthcoming conferences, e.g. CSD 14 and UN-HABITAT's World Urban Forum 2006 in New York and Vancouver respectively.

PROGRAMME

The main conference will take place at the Museum of World Cultures over four days, May 29th – June 2nd, with side events on June 3rd - 4th. Focus will be on the co-operative work, the integration of systems, sectors and actors in urban development and the interlinkages between the various systems, actors and levels of governance. The programme is structured around four main themes, with a combination of plenary sessions, parallel workshops and debates.

OPENING SESSION:

WHY ARE WE SO CONCERNED ABOUT CITIES AND LIFE IN THE URBAN LANDSCAPE?

The question Why? will be the guiding question for the opening session. Why are we so concerned about cities? Why life in the urban landscape? Why urban knowledge? This will set the scene for the four main themes, which more relate to the questions what? how? and who?

FIRST MAIN THEME:

THE BIG ISSUES

The urban landscape is where global, national and regional strategies get "on the ground" and meet every-day life and the more design- and technology- oriented activities at the local level. Global trends and top-down policies meet the local agenda and bottom-up initiatives and movements. Macro-trends are often seen as driving forces for urban development, but the local micro-trends, aggregated and accumulated, are correspondingly driving forces for the urban development and in the longer term for global development. In this theme we will explore what happens when the global and the local meet, when macro- and micro-trends interact, and how cities can correspond and adapt to the often paradoxical messages and consequences.

SECOND MAIN THEME:

THE CITY ISSUES

How can the urban environment be a 'good living environment' and what constitutes urban qualities? How can we state or even measure what is urban quality? This main theme relates to the city as a place to live, the various quality agendas, set in different contexts such as economic performance of cities, quality of urban life in socio-cultural terms, eco-efficiency, etc, and how they relate to each other. How do we manage conflicting agendas or goals in urban planning and development practice? How can we make use of extensive "shopping lists" of urban sustainability goals or quality indicators, from each sector or field of expertise? The theme relates to such

issues as urban safety and security, built environment and urban heritage, urban health, urban design, urban public space including green space, housing and neighbourhood design, accessibility and mobility, etc.

THIRD MAIN THEME:

THE PROCESSES AND ARENAS OF CHANGE

In the pursuit of quality and sustainable development, the city's interface with politics and governance has increasingly become a lively and active arena of policy change and action. Decentralization and democratization have emerged to become one of the defining issues of the 21st century in many developed and developing countries across the world. It has led to real and in some cases symbolic shifts and transfers of power and finances between central and municipal governments, national governments and cities. Has the decentralized environment led to more efficient and effective delivery of public services? What are the new roles for the city? What are the conditions and strategies for good local governance? How do we actively engage the community and promote active citizen responsibility and ownership? Discussion and analysis of these questions and the conditions, policies and events of the processes and arenas of change will enhance our sensitivity to new and creative ways of governing and delivering better city life.

FOURTH MAIN THEME:

THE ACTORS AND THE ROLES THEY PLAY

Shifts of power between the private and public spheres and within the public sector at different levels, as well as changing values and lifestyles, are generating a need for new steering systems, partnerships and professional roles. How can cities become more innovative and creative in their development work? People from various fields of expertise and representing various perspectives need to collaborate, and many of the solutions can be found in the interfaces between those different sectors and scientific fields. Partnership has been a guiding principle for the last decade, and so has the concept of governance, but recently these concepts have been more scrutinised in research. Keywords in this session are actors and networks, partnerships and collaboration, competence, education and training.

CLOSING SESSION:

NEXT STEPS – URBAN KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE

The closing session will have the role of concluding and taking a view of continuing the lessons learnt beyond the conference. It provides a forum for reiterating and reinforcing the agenda for knowledge sharing and partnerships in implementation, and allows for the exploration of the discourses, theories and practices that underpin life in the urban landscape.

CALL FOR PAPERS – DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACTS OCTOBER 15TH 2004 FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, VISIT OUR WEBSITE: WWW.URBANLIFE2005.COM