Call for Applications
ARL International Summer School 2023

"A CONTESTED RELATIONSHIP?
Urbanisation & the Digital,
vs. Digitalisation & the Urban"
6 – 8 July 2023, Luxembourg

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The event is jointly organized by:

ARL - Academy for Territorial Development in the Leibniz Association
University of Luxembourg / Department of Geography and Spatial Planning

The ARL – Academy for Territorial Development in the Leibniz Association in cooperation with the Department of Geography and Spatial Planning at the University of Luxembourg is inviting applications for the ARL International Summer School 2023 on "A CONTESTED RELATIONSHIP? Urbanisation & the Digital, vs. Digitalisation & the Urban", which will take place from 6 to 8 July 2023 in Luxembourg (arrival scheduled for 5 July 2023). Advanced doctoral students from all disciplines are invited to apply. The summer school will be held in English. The deadline for applications is 19 March 2023.

THE ISSUE

This year, the Summer School is situated within recent debates and developments about what was initially called 'smart cities'. Judging from our observations, related urban policy frames have reached another level of sophistication, after having undergone uncritical praise and popular tech-hype by the 2010s (in what could be understood as a Phase 1), and the more recent practice of policy formulation, implementation and aiming for local impact (which could be considered a Phase 2). We are now looking forward to discussing subsequent events and outcomes in the complex, often contested relationship between urbanisation and the digital, and digitalisation and the urban, respectively.

These developments include the more subtle forms of how digital means and processes have become entrenched in urban practices, collective and individual. They comprise issues of surveillance and control (for example in urban domains, or at the workplace); components of infrastructure that provide the backbone of related systems (such as data centres); just-city frames that have risen in response to perceived digital divides in societies; or systems of provision in retail and services that tend to become hegemonic, if not totalitarian (such as Amazon.com). Various forms of governance are also involved here, not only at municipal levels, but also fostered by national and metropolitan governments, for example in strategies of smart specialization.

POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

In this context we invite contributions from doctoral students internationally and across a range of disciplines, such as geography, planning, urban studies and other social sciences and humanities. Our aim is to have a broad range of issues in the above topical contexts addressed, including but not necessarily confined to the following:

- The waxing and waning of digital interventions in urban-regional planning

- New relational geographies of digital infrastructures

- The rise of platforms as digital mediums of the urban and urbanization

- The role of big corporations (such as Google, Amazon, Facebook etc.) in urban-regional development

- The role of new digital products in conditions of crisis and emergency

- Virtual urban environments and imaginaries (e.g. Metaverse, social media)

- Governance and policy dimensions in urban and regional development

ABOUT THE ORGANISERS

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The **ARL – Academy for Territorial Development in the Leibniz Association** (Akademie für Raumentwicklung in der Leibniz-Gemeinschaft) is an independent, non-partisan institution for the spatial sciences under public law and is based in Hanover (Germany). The ARL offers knowledge-based analysis and advice on current sustainable spatial development issues. The ARL's network of eminent experts from science and practice carries out research and knowledge transfer activities within the Academy's joint working committees, thus offering important insights and findings for the future-oriented development of spatial structures and the political and planning measures necessary for shaping them. Moreover, with the [new interactive knowledge and communication platform](#), which is unique in this format, the ARL is making a significant contribution to the active shaping of the European Research Area in the field of spatial and planning science.

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Research and teaching in the domains of geography and planning at the **University of Luxembourg** take place in the **Department of Geography and Spatial Planning**, part of the Faculty of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences. Established in April 2006, the Department comprises a 45-person strong team, including professors, guest professors, junior and senior researchers, and doctoral students. Its research focusses on areas such as environmental economic geography, political geography, urban studies and planning, architecture, and geographical information systems (GIS).

The Department has also strong links to practice. It hosts the National Contact points for ESPON and the European Migration Network (EMN). It is the seat of the GR Atlas and participates in the Faculty's Key Area of "Migration and Inclusive Society" and is active member of the Centre for Border Studies of the UniGR (the University of the Greater Region). In terms of teaching, it runs a Master in Geography & Spatial Planning, a Master in Border Studies, and a Master in Architecture. The Department also offers the certificate program "Formation Continue en Aménagement du Territoire", that certifies future planners in Luxembourg.

THE VENUE: UL CAMPUS BELVAL

The Summer School will take place on the University of Luxembourg's Campus Belval in Esch-sur-Alzette. Situated on a former ironworks site in the south of the Grand Duchy, the campus is part of a dynamically developing urban district hosting various public research organisations, commercial office buildings, residencies as well as shops, bars and restaurants. The train station Belval-Université connects the campus with the capital city (30 minutes journey, every 15 minutes).

THE PROGRAMME

Our aim is to stimulate discussions, gain insights and develop new research questions around the subject of this year's summer school. Participants will have the opportunity to present their research and receive individual feedback from a number of participating international scholars. In addition, keynote speeches by distinguished academics in the field of spatial justice offer the opportunity to intensify the debate and develop further research ideas. The programme is complemented by a field trip and social activities.

PARTICIPATION

The summer school takes a critical and interdisciplinary approach to the study of Digital Cities. We invite applications from advanced doctoral students with a background in geography, urban and European studies, political sciences, sociology, spatial planning, public administration, social design, and related fields. We accept up to seven participants in a competitive application process. The ARL sponsors the accommodation and travel costs for all participants. A participation fee will not be charged. Selected participants are expected to submit an academic text (3000 to 4000 words) before the summer school (deadline: 12 June 2023). The text should synthesize the main aspects of the presentation that you are expected to give during the Summer School. As academic institutions, the organizers encourage academic publications and aim to compile a special issue in an international peer-reviewed journal on the theme of the summer school. Hence, participants are asked to afterwards develop their academic texts into an academic journal paper.

CONTACT & APPLICATION

Your application should include a motivation letter (max. 1 page), a short CV (max. 1 page) and an abstract of the presentation that you intend to present (max. 400 words). Selection criteria are thematic relevance (in relation to the overall theme of the Summer School) and the quality of the abstract. Please submit your application **by 19 March 2023.**

Email applications are particularly welcome. Please send your application (compiled in one PDF file) to lena.greinke@arl-net.de.

Postal address:

> ARL - Akademie für Raumentwicklung in der Leibniz-Gemeinschaft
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> Dr. Lena Greinke
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> Vahrenwalder Straße 247
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> 30179 Hannover, Germany

You will receive notification of acceptance by the end of April 2023.

For further questions, please contact Dr. Lena Greinke, lena.greinke@arl-net.de, Phone +49 511 34842-34.

We look forward to receiving your application!