

The School of Architecture
Bezael Academy of Arts and Design, Jerusalem

In collaboration with:
Jerusalem Urban Design Center, Israel100 Initiative,
UN-Habitat UNI Consortium on Densification



International Conference on Urbanism and Urbanization

May 8-10, 2023 | Bezael Academy of Arts and Design, Jerusalem

Keynote Speakers:

Joan Busquets, GSD, Harvard | Marcel Smets, ORG | Lawrence Barth, AA London
Barbara Aronson, Shlomo Aronson Architects | Frank Van Der Hoeven, TU Delft

Urbanism* has long been considered a complex and time-consuming form of practice, challenged today more than ever by a global condition of an unsettling instability, first and foremost manifested by climate change and over the last three years highlighted by the global outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, political unrest, and global migrations.

New acts of design and planning such as tactical urbanism, placemaking and scenario planning have emerged as an immediate response to a new and uncertain truth. At the same time, these approaches threaten to jeopardize the raison d'être of the field, and its capability of addressing complex environmental, social, spatial and cultural challenges. The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 11, "Sustainable Cities and Communities" as well as UN Habitat's New Urban Agenda and the UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape provide a global framework of challenges for the future city. Taking on these challenges can provide us with new ways of operating and maneuvering, intervening in, and projecting spatialities of a more resilient, sustainable, and fair future, emphasizing the perspective of people and culture within the urban realm. This conference calls to explore and deepen them in a 'Decade of Action.'

Inspired by Rosalind Krauss' essay "Sculpture in the Expanded Field," (1979) which challenged the definition of sculpture in the postmodern art world, "Urbanism in the Expanded Field,"* explores the boundaries of today's practices of urbanism. Using the term "urbanism" rather than "urban design" or "urban planning" provides an opportunity to overcome the dissensus between two related yet often conflicting fields of expertise. Urbanism is a broader and more encompassing set of practices at multiple scales of operation from the local to the global, a cross-disciplinary approach moving beyond the fields of architecture, design, geography, economics, sociology among others.

The conference proposes to expand the field of urbanism not only beyond the existing fields of expertise but also beyond the commonly accepted territory of the city. It brings forward different forms of "urbanism," found beyond the city's borders, sometimes temporary and different from familiar definitions of what is called "urban", and not always following the rules or even dogmas of the accepted discourse of "good urbanity". It raises the question whether urbanism can exist in open landscapes, low densities, informal configurations, temporary gatherings, dispersed networks and infrastructural endeavors.

Cities and urban conditions in Israel and their surroundings will be our reference point for addressing these questions, both as extreme examples of expanding the field, but also perhaps as a precursor for future extremities to be expected in other parts of the world. We propose to consider this fleeting moment in time and space as a case study and platform for understanding larger trends around urbanism, densification, ecosystems, and the infrastructures that connect them.

We invite researchers, policy-makers, practitioners, students and teachers to share their experiences and join us in an attempt at disrupting the common understanding of concepts such as "city," "settlement," "village," and "suburb", with innovative thinking. We seek an urbanism that is resilient, responsive, porous and permeable - one that can invert the late-capitalist tendencies of perpetual into an ever-expanding conception of the "urban" and its mechanisms of sustainable growth.

** Referring to urbanism as a field of practice and research commonly used in the French and Southern European tradition of planning and designing cities.*

Discussion Tracks (Spheres of Engagement)

1 Shifting Densities

SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

With intense population growth in many regions, new urban densities will need to be addressed. As Israel's population is set to double in the coming decades, there is a concerted effort to generate as many housing units as possible, almost at all costs - economic, environmental, political, and spatial. It is clear, however, that long-term solutions must address processes of densification and intensification beyond "population growth" alone. How do our land management mechanisms grow and evolve? How do we "densify" not only housing units but also infrastructure, open space, and land use? What are the different "forms" and typologies of density and are there optimal sizes? In this track we propose to leverage the opportunities and mitigate the threats of densification in new and innovative ways, including digital technologies, that engage with the relationship of urban form with governance, social structures, natural ecosystems, resources, energy and environmental concerns. This track will examine the socio-cultural dynamics of compactness on equity, segregation and inclusion.

2 The Global Infrastructure Crisis

SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure

SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

SDG 13: Climate Action

SDG 15: Life on Land

Urbanization - on a global and local level - of cities and metropolitan regions, built of increasingly larger and more complex megastructures have put an enormous strain on infrastructures; transportation networks, supply chains, and waste disposal (human and otherwise). This has sent the already imbalanced relationship between the built and the un-built environment in a far more radical direction. The city increasingly consumes its surroundings across numerous verticals - waste containment, natural resources, and mobility. The existing way of planning infrastructure cannot meet the needs of the very densely populated urban agglomeration. Can cities and metropolitan areas transform themselves into self-containing and supplying organisms? Can their dependencies be ones that have a net positive impact on their surroundings? Which technologies and processes can enable such a transition? What are the appropriate scales for planning and intervention for planning infrastructural solutions?

3 Recalibrating Life on Earth

SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy

SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

SDG 13: Climate Action

SDG 14: Life Below Water

SDG 15: Life on Land

In the paradigm shift from Anthropocene towards a Post-Anthropocene, urbanism can be considered the most invasive and impactful human footprint which requires reconsidering when understanding its increasing portion in the overall terrestrial matter. Therefore, in designing our environment, rather than submitting to the negative effects of technological advancement we could rethink the way in which new ecologically aware methods of design and building can re-link culture to nature. Ultimately, the realization of a possible knowledge of nature through nature-based solutions and through technologically advanced versions of inhabitation, labor and leisure opens up new territories for exploration. In which way will the field of urbanism need to expand its fields of expertise to issues of recalibrating food production and distribution, health infrastructure, water management, energy networks? Can this provide equal opportunities and access for humans and other forms of life?. In this track, we propose to look at ways in which spatial sustainability, urban-rural linkages and blue.green.grey systems may provide for a more balanced approach.

4 Permanent Instabilities

SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

SDG 13: Climate Action

SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

The local conditions in which the built environment in Israel was designed and planned can be characterized by a permanent condition of instability. This lies in direct contrast with the practices of urbanism that attempt to stabilize and maintain systems of cohabitation. This tension is now amplified by a global condition of an unsettling uncertainty, manifested by processes of extreme climates, natural disasters, rapid population growth, political unrest, unstable governments, shifting demographics, pandemics, and more. A tradition in handling uncertainty gives the country a comparative advantage on the urban front. Its interventions in space provide a useful reference point for urbanists considering risk preparedness, the future of cities and the systems of governance through which they are created - social, economic, environmental, and spatial.

5 The Eclectic Urban Field

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

SDG 13: Climate Action

SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

The contemporary mechanisms of erasure/construction/erasure, of both built and unbuilt environments have prevented social, economic, and natural forces from generating or enhancing local meaning. The resulting urban field is a patchwork of historic fabrics and carte-blanche socialist and post-modernist planning. It 'stretches' the significance both of urbanism as vertical and of landscape as horizontal and supports a condition of human environments as composed of a wide range of moments, pockets, patches, islands and clearings in a constantly shifting, interlocking and sometimes conflicting set of urban worlds. How can the historic fabric re-integrate itself with new identities? Throughout the 20th century, great progress was made in creating structures and promulgating principles to guide urban and landscape conservation, but as the 21st century proceeds, society is challenged by new far-reaching changes at the regional scale such as shifting demographics, digital transformations and climate change. Confronted with such a fast-changing context, historic urban landscapes require new tools and methodologies to address the future of heritage and historic urban fabrics at the local, metropolitan and regional scale. In contexts where the territorial dynamics and socio-political contexts become fluid, multicultural, and multi-ethnic, in a world where classic 'integration' or 'assimilation' policies are no longer straightforward processes, we are challenged to rethink our ways of operating in urban histories in conflict.

The content of this track will expand on the discourse of Historic Urban Landscapes of [Heriland](#) and [Heritopolis](#).

Call for Papers and Projects

We are seeking papers and projects that investigate various aspects of urbanism, urbanization, densification, and de-urbanization related to the conference theme as described above. The academic committee, taking into account the relation to the themes, will select papers and projects to be presented during the seminar, and will invite respondents in consideration of the subject to which they are most closely related. The language of the papers and presentations will be English. **We extend a warm invitation to researchers and practitioners working in and studying Jerusalem to submit works that are relevant to the content of each of the five discussion tracks.**

Please send your abstract or project proposal by Feb 15, 2023 to urbanfield@bezalel.ac.il

1) Papers: Researchers interested in presenting a paper should submit an abstract of maximum 500 words. Paper presentations that will be shared and discussed through joint working sessions and panel discussions may include theoretical work, but also case studies.

Each abstract should include the following information (font Times New Roman, 11pt):

- Full Name
- Affiliation
- email Address
- **For PhD students:**
 - thesis supervisor
 - expected date of thesis defense
 - working title of the dissertation
- Whether you will be submitting a full (4000-5000 words) or short (2000-2500 words) paper
- Abstract (500 words max)
- Main Bibliographic References (up to 5)

We invite full papers that present a coherent piece of research or dissertation chapter, as well as short papers that address methodologies, research questions or articulate a starting point for (graduate level and doctoral) research. Both full (4000-5000 words) and short (2000-2500 words) papers will be organized in corresponding thematic sessions. The conference proceedings will be used towards a peer-reviewed conference publication following the conference.

2) Projects: In addition to papers, we invite projects (urban projects, built or unbuilt, by practitioners in the field, student work, course work) , ranging from operational practices to speculative and theoretical questionings. These can be presented in written, built, coded, drawn, figured, imagined, filmed, videoed, modeled or in any other format (do not hesitate to consult with us for any exotic format or idea!).

Each abstract should include the following information (font Times New Roman, 11pt):

- Full Name
- Affiliation
- email Address
- **For students:**
 - name of teacher/promotor/thesis supervisor
 - expected date of final project presentation
 - working title of the project
- project presentation up to 5 slides, and not more than 15 MB
- project description (300 words max)
- if relevant, bibliographic references (up to 5)

Scientific Advisory Committee:

Dr. Fatina Abreek-Zubeidat (Tel Aviv University)
Prof. Lawrence Barthe (AA London)
Prof. Chiara Chavalieri (UC Louvain)
Dr. Rachel Gottesman (Bezalel)
Dr. Noah Hysler Rubin (Bezalel)
Prof. Elissa Rosenberg (Bezalel)
Prof. Marcel Smets (KU Leuven)
Dr. Frank van der Hoeven (TUDelft)

Steering Committee:

Prof. Arch. Els Verbakel
Arch. Daniella Possek
Arch. Ytav Bouhsira
Dr. Yoel Siegel
Oz Fishman

Deadline for Abstracts/Projects	Feb 15, 2023
Notification of Acceptance	Feb 28, 2023
Deadline for Full Papers	April 15, 2023
Conference	May 8-10, 2023

Preliminary Program:

May 8	Arrival and Welcome, Opening
May 9	Conference Day 1
May 10	Conference Day 2, Closing

Our Partners



The Urban Design Center, Jerusalem

<https://www.judc.org>

The Jerusalem Urban Design Center is a research body and an arena for the exchange of knowledge and open discussion in the fields of architecture, planning and urban design in Jerusalem.

The Center constitutes a platform for engaging urban planning institutions, academia, civil, cultural and social agencies, professionals and the general public, with current planning and design topics and endeavors. Thus, the Center strives to establish conditions for in-depth investigations and discussions and for deeper learning and and for innovation and professional excellence.

The Center operates under the auspices of the Jerusalem City Architect, and is located in the Model House in the main municipality building. The Center welcomes requests for collaborations and for hosting events which are compatible with its missions.



UN Habitat - Densification

<https://unhabitat.org/>

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) is mandated by the UN General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities. UN-Habitat is the focal point for all urbanization and human settlement matters within the UN system. UN-Habitat works with partners to build inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and communities. UN-Habitat promotes urbanization as a positive transformative force for people and communities, reducing inequality, discrimination and poverty. UN-Habitat works in over 90 countries to promote transformative change in cities and human settlements through knowledge, policy advice, technical assistance and collaborative action.

Partners

UN-Habitat, TUDelft, Konkuk University, University of Rwanda

Local Client

The Ministry of Construction and Housing, Israel

On Densification:

How do we mitigate the negative impacts and maximize the opportunities of densification in a manner that will enable new forms of urbanization to be sustainable balancing urban and rural linkages in addressing climate change/ extremes. The high concentration of people in limited space can create the conditions of conflict and crime, increased poverty, high costs of housing, traffic congestion, high levels of pollution, destructive urban renewal, and eradication of environmental resources. In contrast, by taking advantage of the concentration of many people in close proximity, higher-density urban living has the potential for creating centers of economic development, multi-use spatial functions, multi-modal transportation/mobility, polycentric development providing for resilience, quality educational and academic institutions, and diversity of career paths, becoming great centers of creativity. In the wake of COVID-19 the symbiotic relationships between urban and rural within the metropolitan, regional and national contexts will need to be reassessed.



The Ministry of Construction and Housing

https://www.gov.il/he/departments/ministry_of_construction_and_housing/

The Ministry promotes the construction of residential buildings in Israel throughout the process: land location, planning, land marketing, infrastructure development, provision of public institutions and public open spaces, and finally - land registration. The Ministry also works to speed up construction time and improve construction quality in Israel through industrialization, encouragement of business entrepreneurship, and assimilation of modern construction technologies. The Ministry is also responsible for the enforcement of construction standards and the prevention of construction failures. To carry out its duties, the Ministry of Construction and Housing operates units of various types: professional headquarters, support headquarters, and districts (North, South, Haifa, Jerusalem, and Center).

The Ministry's Goals Include:

- Increasing the supply of housing units through new construction in the short, medium, and long term
- Planning and marketing housing solutions for first-time home buyers through affordable housing plans
- Providing a quality and satisfactory response to those entitled to public housing and disadvantaged populations
- Social and physical strengthening of neighborhoods as part of the neighborhood re-rehabilitation project
- Accelerated promotion of projects in the field of urban renewal (regeneration)
- Maintaining a high level of service and performance of the Ministry.

ISRAEL.100 Israel100

<https://israel100.org/en/>

Israel100 is an academic initiative involving local government bodies, professional organizations, government officials and representatives of the civil society. The initiative promotes environmental quality and quality-of-life at large, for decades Ahead. Israel100 presents an interdisciplinary perspective that is strategic, practical and sustainable. It celebrates the rich variety of places, communities, and individuals in Israel, and brings it forward as a lever for creating a cross-country network of social and environmental resilience, justice, prosperity and cultural wealth.



Heriland -

<http://www.heriland.eu>

The overriding aim of HERILAND is the empowerment of a new generation of academics, policy makers, practitioners, professionals and entrepreneurs. This new generation must devise and guide transdisciplinary, cross-sectoral and mainstreamed planning and design strategies for regenerating European heritage and landscape, foster social inclusiveness, and create socially, economically and environmentally sustainable future landscapes.

Partners

- TUDelft
- Centre for Sustainable Habitat, Amritsar
- Kadir Has University, Istanbul
- Urban Lab, Bartlett School, UCL
- Polytechnic University of Milan
- Strelka, Moscow;
- Regional Plan Association, NYU
- Université de Paris-Est-Créteil-Lab'urba
- Federal University of Rio de Janeiro
- Konkuk University
- WHITR-AP, Tongji University, Shanghai

Heritopolis

<http://heritopolis.org/>

The MetroHUB initiative includes knowledge management and dissemination of information, sharing of experiences (on successful policies, strategies and projects), learning (among peers but also capacity building for key players at different (government) levels, from different sectors and including civil society, private sectors and academia); developing tools, policies and mechanisms for metropolitan development and applying innovative and proven strategies.

About Heritopolis:

A two-year study, leading to an international conference, which will address the role of urban heritage in planning the 21st century metropolis. The final conference will bring together distinguished leaders and visionaries, UN partners, including policy makers, urban planning agencies, experts, business leaders, academic institutions, researchers and civil society. It will provide a platform to stimulate exchanges and articulate innovative approaches to identifying, producing and promoting the role of heritage in the 21st century metropolis, as a tool to promote sustainable urban development goals. This will provide, inter alia, critical inputs for the reporting and monitoring of the UNESCO 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, the UN 2015 Sustainable Development Goals and the UN Habitat 2016 New Urban Agenda.