



## Event Details

### Title of Event

Public Space in the New Urban Agenda: New Research Findings, Strategies, and Tools

### Organization Details

**Organization:** Ax:son Johnson Foundation

**Organization Country:** Sweden

### Summary

"Cities of opportunity" - this year's theme of the World Urban Forum - reminds us how cities facilitate connections between diverse people and resources, and thereby generate opportunities for all to develop and prosper in economic, health and cultural dimensions. Public spaces are emerging as the essential urban platform on which these connections between people and resources develop. New research shows that public spaces are supplemented by, but not replaced by, other more private forms of contact, which tend to reinforce already existing connections. By contrast, public spaces play a role in "propinquity and serendipity" which are emerging as key drivers of innovation and opportunity. Cities for all, by definition, must offer public space (including streets and other spaces) for all. In this session we will ask, what is the role of public space in fostering innovation, creativity, and opportunity for all? What is its role in promoting resilience and climate adaptation, and delivering on the other goals of the New Urban Agenda, as well as the Sustainable Development Goals? What are the tools and resources that are available to achieve these goals? The New Urban Agenda contains nine paragraphs describing the importance of public spaces. Among the benefits identified are social interaction and inclusion, human health and well-being, economic exchange, cultural expression, improving resilience of cities to disasters and climate change, physical and mental health, household and ambient air quality, reducing noise, promoting attractive and livable cities [and] human settlements, and prioritizing the conservation of endemic species. These benefits are all the more important in an age of rapid urbanization, growing climate stresses, surging informal settlements, threats to the well-being of vulnerable populations including migrants, growing urban inequality in many cities, and increasing trends of urban sprawl and fragmentation, resulting in the degradation or loss of public space. Yet these challenges demand better-quality public space and public space systems, as the New Urban Agenda makes clear. The adoption by acclamation of the New Urban Agenda by all 193 member countries of the United Nations stands as a landmark achievement. Now implementation must bring the best research findings into practice, through networking, pilot projects, and sharing of effective tools and strategies. This session, paired with another session (per guidance of Fernanda Lonardonni), will explore new research findings, strategies, and tools, while the second session (submitted separately) will examine research into practice for pilot projects. Both will tap extensive networks.

### Other Organization name

Centre for the Future of Places at KTH Royal Institute of Technology, UN-Habitat, HealthBridge, The Journal of Public Space, Mansueto Institute for Urban Innovation, Public Space Research Group at CUNY, others TBC.

**Prospective moderator, speaker(s) or panelist(s)**

	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Organization</b>
1	Luis	Bettencourt	Panelist	Mansueto Institute for Urban Innovation, University of Chicago
2	Edward	Glaeser	Panelist	Harvard University
3	Setha	Low	Panelist	The Graduate Center, City University of New York
4	Laura	Petrella	Panelist	UN-Habitat
5	Michael	Mehaffy	Moderator	Ax:son Johnson Foundation
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				