

WUF11 SESSION CONCEPT NOTE

AKADEMIA ROUNDTABLE

Exploring the innovative contributions of academia to urban sustainable development

1. Key Words:

Digital innovation for learning, triangular cooperation, strategic partnerships, higher education, evidence-based policy decision

2. Objectives of the Session:

The roundtable has several objectives:

1. Showcase the impact of innovative research programs on urban policy making
2. Uncover how digital innovation for learning and capacity building can help to improve access to educational resources by scaling up academic programs and creating new partnership opportunities.
3. Share concrete initiatives and opportunities for North/South, South/South (triangular cooperation) in academia to accelerate the implementation of global frameworks and agendas.

3. Summary:

The World Urban Forum (WUF) serves as a platform for demonstrating the importance of academic engagement in the promotion of urban sustainability. WUF allows higher education institutions to showcase transformative examples of educational and research programmes, as well as their support to urban stakeholders.

This event brings together representatives from academic institutions around the world to discuss the role of academia in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, specifically SDG 11 and components of SDG 4, in line with the global frameworks for urban sustainability and education.

Important global agendas continually underscore the need for innovative research that serves as the catalyst for evidence-based, well-informed and impactful policies. This event aims to foreground the role of innovation in research and higher education in achieving this.

An opportunity for discussion around access to educational resources has been accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic. North/South inequalities in the world academic system can be counteracted with the help of triangular cooperation and a focus on learning offers. Meanwhile, trusted research outcomes are critical in policy debates for enhancing the capacity of all stakeholders involved.

Digital innovation for learning offers an opportunity to upscale educational and capacity-building efforts and multiply effective North/South, South/South collaboration and knowledge sharing.

Exchanges between researchers and higher education institutions will help to uncover successful practices and outcomes in the academic world.

The academia roundtable will provide a platform for exchange amongst academic entities and other stakeholders in their efforts to trigger policy changes in urban development practice through evidence-based and innovative approaches. Similarly, it will provide an exciting space to discuss the latest urban trends that impact upon the transformation of cities for a better urban future. It will encourage collaborative actions and partnerships across the academic community, stretching to include governments, private sector and non-governmental organizations.

4. Guiding Questions for Discussions:

- **What innovative methods can academia use to influence evidence-based urban policy decisions?**
 - Links: evidence-based decision making; data
- **How is digital innovation for learning being leveraged by academia to contribute to urban sustainable development?**
 - Links: digital innovation for learning
- **How can triangular cooperation be foregrounded in the work of academic institutions, particularly in sharing and developing higher/professional education curriculum and programmes?**
 - Links: triangular cooperation

5. Expected Outcomes and Impact:

- Enhanced understanding of urban trends, practice and innovations in research
- Improve access to learning resources with digital innovation
- Increased coordination among stakeholders promoting innovation in urban settings
- Strengthened synergies between SDG4 and SDG11
- Foregrounding knowledge exchange in triangular cooperation
- Scaling up of good practices

6. Session Format:

	Time	Moderator
Opening remarks	5 mins	Raphaëlle Vignol
Panel 1: Transforming our cities for a better urban future, innovative research that informs policy making		
Intervention 1 Intervention 2 Intervention 3 Intervention 4	35 mins (5 x 7 mins)	Tbc- Paulo Silva (GPEAN)

Intervention 5		
Discussion	14 mins	
Panel 2: Higher education and life-long learning for urban sustainability: opportunities for innovations and partnerships		
Intervention 1	42 mins (6 x 7 mins)	Tbc- Raphaelle Vignol
Intervention 2		
Intervention 3		
Intervention 4		
Intervention 5		
Intervention 6		
Discussion	14 mins	
Closing remarks	10 mins	Tbc- Eduardo Moreno