

## REGIONAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION

### POLICY EXPOSITION (EXPO)

Handbook 2021

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## I. The Exposition (Expo) in brief

In 2017, the Association has launched a new policy research initiative worth £15,000 to successful teams aiming to connect the work of its members and wider communities to societal questions and policy needs.

It was proposed to call this new initiative an “Expo” taking the word’s meaning of a “comprehensive description and explanation of an idea or theory” for example, “a systematic exposition of the idea of biodiversity”.

The Association seeks a leading and impactful role for its community, to inform and influence policy and practice in creative and ambitious ways. The aim is to support Expos addressing issues that are important, current and having impacts for society. They will investigate how the communities of regional studies, regional science, urban studies and related fields can respond to new societal challenges and opportunities.

The Expos will deliver a policy focussed, clear and evidenced book for launch particularly within the relevant practice-based communities and to the academic community through the Association’s membership benefits and wider book sales.

The RSA provides funding of **£15,000** (or its equivalent in dollars or euros; for your information c. \$19,000; c. €16,800). This includes the cost of a book publication and launch for which £2,000 of the grant will be retained by the RSA. To support RSA Policy Expositions on topics related to the priority areas set out in the RSA Development Plan from time to time an open call will be made inviting the academic community to suggest suitable themes. Commissioning will be on the basis of two Expos per year to allow each to be carefully supported and managed and maximum value to be extracted from the outcomes.

Each Expo theme is advertised through a call for expressions of interest and will be awarded to teams setting out clear policy-related questions. Expos will run for up to 18 months and need to include a number of deliverables including calls for evidence and focus groups and would have tightly prescribed outcomes in the form of an article for the journal *Regional Studies*, *Regional Science* and a report in the form of a policy-oriented book for publication in a new *RSA Impact and Policy Book Series*. This book would normally be expected to be launched by the Association at an appropriate time and venue and will be given in print form to all RSA members (excepting those paying the Chinese Division rate) and in electronic form to all subscribers to the RSA journals pack. This gives each book a very substantial potential readership footprint. Additional copies will be purchased by the Association for distribution to the policy community directly.

The full Terms and Conditions governing the grant will be provided to successful applicants as part of the formal grant offer and will be based on the general terms and conditions set out below.

### **Prioritized research themes**

The Policy Expo programme responds to the aims of the Association. The Regional Studies Association’s Development Plan highlights the Association’s aims in the next planning period as:

- leading the regional research, policy and practice communities
- developing our members and support our community
- delivering high quality regional research
- influencing policy debate and practice
- innovating in publishing
- acknowledging excellence in our field

In line with many other funders, the RSA Board operates a number of schemes and in some of these it allows applicants to apply freely without thematic restriction and in others it requires them to contribute to the research priorities of the Association. In the case of application for a Policy Expo award, applicants will

respond to the appropriate call for expressions of interest. These will relate to the following priority areas set out in the Association's Development Plan and from time to time there will be free calls.

**1. Sustainable Cities and Regions**

- *urban and regional sustainability, risk management, low carbon and climate mitigation strategies, food, energy, water and environment and environmental resilience*

**2. Spatial Theory and Methods**

- *urban and regional theories, methodology, value change (including big and open data), visualization, spatial economic analysis*

**3. Territory, Politics & Governance**

- *territorial politics, governance, institutions, regionalism and regionalisation, city region building and metropolitan politics, devolution and localism*

**4. Regional and Urban Economies**

- *innovation, evolution, economic resilience, clusters, creativity, competitiveness, labour markets, work and welfare, migration, firms, sectors, global production networks and value chains.*

**5. Spatial Planning**

- *cities and city regions, strategic spatial planning, housing, transport, infrastructure and the built environment, place making approaches*

**6. Regional and Urban Policy**

- *cohesion, leadership, governance, public management, policy formulation and evaluation, place based approaches, smart cities and regions, urbanization and regional development*

**7. Sub-national identities & well being**

- *citizenship, culture, identity, lived differences, social capital, ageing, demography, community and wellbeing*

## **II. Applications for Funding**

### **Submission process and assessment criteria**

In making its selections the RSA Policy Committee will be seeking an expression of interest which identifies a clear set of policy questions with international, national and regional (sub-national) resonance on the invited themes. It requires that each team includes an early career researcher (someone less than 5 years from the date on their PhD certificate) and that the team is international (at least two countries/territories). The Committee appreciates expressions that are multi- and inter-disciplinary in scope and where the relevant policy and practice communities are clearly identified and the means of engagement with them articulated. In addition to the Expression of Interest the Policy Committee may require an interview with team members prior to making its decisions.

The Policy Committee's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

Applications are invited on the following themes:

**1. Pandemics: Regional Resilience and Regional Policy Responses**

2. **Social Innovation, Foundational Sectors and the Regional Economy**
3. **The Future of Work, the Gig Economy, and Inclusive Growth**

For more information, please see the **call for applications on page 13**.

The application should be on the application form and include the following:

- Applicant information details:
  - The name of the Chair (Principal Investigator) and up to four Nominated Members of the RSA Policy Expo
  - RSA membership number for each applicant
  - Postal address, telephone number and email for correspondence
  - Name of Higher Education Institution (HEI)
- Title of the Expo
- Project timings
- Resource allocation, proposed budget
- Details of the policy questions that the Expo will address and the relevant fields of policy and practice along with how they will be engaged in the work
- An outline of how this proposal might achieve societal impact
- An explanation of how the Expo will contribute to the fields of regional studies, regional science, urban studies and related fields
- A short CV (up to 3 pages each) for all Expo applicants

The application should be emailed to [policyexpo@regionalstudies.org](mailto:policyexpo@regionalstudies.org).

The submission deadline for the detailed application is **20<sup>th</sup> April 2021**.

#### **Assessment criteria**

- Incomplete applications or applications arriving after the closing date will not be considered
- All applications should demonstrate that RSA funds are sought for a clearly defined set of policy questions with international, national and regional (sub-national) relevance
- Applications should include an analysis of recent research and policy affecting the theme in effect giving a problem statement.
- Applications should discuss future scenarios and policy solutions of the theme based on assessment of existing policy responses
- Applications will be assessed on the basis of quality and potential policy impact and the deliverability of the proposed project
- The grant application and any subsequent agreement will need to be signed by both the grant applicant and the Expo Chair's higher education institution.

The full applications will be reviewed and assessed by the RSA Policy Committee and recommendations will be made to the RSA Executive Group for decision.

The decision will be taken by the RSA Board based on the recommendation of the Association's Policy Committee. The Committee will reach its decision based on refereeing by its members; additional referees will be sought where the subject area demands this. We regret that as a micro-research funder, and a registered charity relying on the volunteer labour of our members, the Association is not able to offer feedback on individual applications and correspondence will not be entered into.

## Expectations and obligations

Successful applicants will receive an award letter, which will act as a contract between the Expo Chair, which will be the Principal Investigator (PI) on the behalf of his/her team, PI's Higher education institution (HEI) and the RSA. The award letter and any subsequent agreement will need to be signed by both the grant applicant and the higher education institution (HEI). The latest application to the scheme and our RSA Policy Expo Handbook form part of this agreement. Any special clauses your award is subject to are listed in the award letter. If you have any queries about the conditions, you should raise them immediately, and prior to work commencing, as monies incorrectly spent may not be refunded.

Applicants must be members of the Association and remain in membership throughout the period of the grant and reporting period. Recipients of this grant must be an Individual, Early Career, Emeritus or Student member of the Regional Studies Association in any membership band - A, B, C or D at the time of application and remain a member until the end of the reporting period and acceptance of the end of award report, whichever is the latest.

Members in any territorial band may apply for grant funding. Applications from Corporate members are not eligible. For clarity, Corporate members may not apply for this award either as organisations, nor may individuals apply as representatives of Corporate members.

The grant holder will be expected to play an RSA ambassadorial role for the duration of the grant – this may include speaking about the grant scheme at RSA events, recording a video, writing short pieces for e-Zine Regions, the RSA Blog or the RSA website with appropriate photographs, graphs or figures; sharing across social media such as Facebook or Twitter; and by making other nonspecific contributions to the profile of the Association.

The two key deliverables from the Expo are:

1. **an article for *Regional Studies*, *Regional Science*** with the APC sponsored by the Association from the withheld portion of the grant (articles will be subject to peer review)
2. **a policy-facing book in the new *RSA Impact and Policy Series***. This would be a minimum **25,000** and **maximum 30,000** word policy-facing book. It could be in the form of a report or edited papers with an introduction and conclusion. It must include an executive summary highlighting the policy implications from the work, and it must be accessible to policymakers and practitioners. The RSA will provide advice on book templates to maximise policy impact. Expos will normally run for no more than 18 months from commissioning to submission of the book and RSR article for review

Each Expo is required to:

- establish a chair who would lead the Expo and act as a point of contact with the RSA (chair will be also listed as the Principal Investigator (PI) in the award letter)
- be global in scope and outlook, seeking to engage new communities as well as joining up existing connections. Where appropriate the Expos should adopt a multi and interdisciplinary approach as this will be welcomed
- compile an evidence base of a range of sources including academic, policy, web and grey
- review, synthesise and contribute to the literature on their topic. The outputs of each Expo should make a recognisable intellectual contribution to the field
- include a call for evidence among the RSA membership and wider community. The RSA office team would assist with publicising this to the membership and beyond
- run focus groups or special workshop/ webinar sessions (normally two) at RSA conferences, other agreed international and national events, and also hold online focus groups and engage communities through innovative uses of social media

- consult with up to 20 of the RSA's key stakeholders, such as DG Regio, other European Commission DGs, European Committee of the Regions, National Governments, UN Habitat, think tanks, practitioner bodies, other learned societies etc.
- undertake data analysis as needed, generate new data as identified in the research plan
- use case studies to illustrate key points, and also engage in comparative analysis
- The publication language is English
- Assist the RSA and Publisher team with the policy launch of the book and engage in social media, blog and other promotional activities to promote the book and article.

### Eligibility requirements

- All applicants for the RSA Policy Expo Grant need to be current paid up RSA members at the time of application and must remain in membership through the period of the research up to and including the point of acceptance of the final report and grant deliverables. (in any category except Corporate)
- Members should note that they are not permitted to hold more than one consecutive RSA research award at a time. For clarity, a member holding a Research Network award or an RSA Individual Research Grant (Early Career, MeRSA or FeRSA Award) may not apply for the Policy Expo until their existing reward has expired and all reporting requirements have been satisfactorily delivered and accepted by the Association.
- The RSA will allow applications from researchers on temporary contracts with a recognised HEI provided that evidence is supplied showing that the contract covers as a minimum the period of research and reporting period as defined in the application
- The award will be administered through the HEI which will normally be an institution with degree awarding powers or a national research institute.
- Half the sum of the award will be paid on signature of the contract and the remaining half will be paid on receipt and formal acceptance of the book and journal article (acceptance of both documents does not imply that they will be published but does release the second half of funding)
- Only one RSA Policy Expo award is possible per person.

### Non-Eligibility

You may not apply for this award if:

- You are a post-doctoral researcher supported by a senior investigator's funding
- You are a corporate member of the RSA. For clarity, corporate members may not apply for this award either as organisations and nor may individuals as representatives of corporate members
- You do not hold a current RSA membership

RSA Members should note that they are not permitted to hold more than one consecutive RSA research award at a time. For clarity, members holding a Research Network Grant, Policy Expo or Travel grant may not apply for the MeRSA until their existing award has expired and all reporting requirements have been satisfactorily delivered and accepted by the Association. Members are only permitted to have only one of the RSA Individual Research Grants (Early Career, MeRSA, FeRSA). For example, if you have held an Early Career grant you are ineligible for the MeRSA and FeRSA grants. For clarity, after successful submission of all deliveries for the Early Career, MeRSA or FeRSA award, a member may apply for the Policy Expo, Research Network, Travel Grant or Conference Bursaries. This is in the interest of enabling access to the Association's limited resources to as many members as possible and thus to support a multiplicity of scholars and their different approaches and topics of interest and is consistent with the Association's pluralist approach to regional studies.

### III. Reporting

The following reports and publications are required to comply with the grant scheme:

1. an article for submission to the journal *Regional Studies, Regional Science*. This journal is gold open access and the article processing charge will be covered from the £2,000 retained from the award by the RSA to promote and launch the report of the Expo. All submissions are subject to the normal refereeing process
2. a minimum 25,000 and maximum 30,000-word policy-oriented book including an executive summary for submission to the *RSA Impact and Policy Book Series*
3. an end of award report including a financial report within three months of finishing the project. The end of award report will include both a narrative and financial section. The financial report is expected to be completed by the HEI.
4. a short policy reflections report, 6 months after award end date

Additional relevant updates, in forms of brief reports, news items, pictures, pieces for the RSA Blog, RSA website, Facebook or Twitter and the members' e-zine – *Regions* are strongly encouraged and may be requested.

Information provided in any submitted report may be used in part (extract) or entirety to promote the Expo within the Association's publications but in all cases this will be in consultation with the Expo research and policy team.

Reports should be submitted using the appropriate form which can be downloaded from the Association's website at: <https://www.regionalstudies.org/funding/policy-expo-grant-scheme/>

### IV. Financial guidelines

Expo award holders may use the funding in conjunction with other funding provided that the results provided are discrete to the Regional Studies Association.

The RSA provides funding of **£15,000** (or its equivalent in dollars or euros; for your information c. \$19,000; c. €16,800). This includes the cost of a book publication and launch for which £2,000 of the grant will be retained by the RSA.

#### Eligible Costs

- Project costs (cost of travel and accommodation nationally and internationally and subsistence)
- Networking costs
- Teaching or research buy-out – limited to £5,000
- Research assistance
- Consumables – purchase of datasets, photocopies, microfilms etc. and any minor items that will be used during the course of the project
- Costs of deposit of digital material in a suitably accessible repository may be considered
- Cost of reproduction rights will be considered
- Up to £2,500 of the Grant may be used towards attending an RSA Conference (travel, subsistence and conference fees at the applicable country band fee) to run a policy workshop that will include acknowledgment of the grant.
- Writing fee to have the book written in easily accessible and policy facing English (NB the reporting and publishing languages are English)

## **Ineligible Costs**

Applicants registered with special needs may consult the Association about possible exceptions. Ineligible costs are:

- Institutional overheads
- Work space
- Payment to the researchers in lieu of salary or for personal maintenance at home
- Equipment including but not limited to computing, printing, cameras, telephones of any type, recording equipment etc.
- Software – of any description
- Subventions for direct production costs (printing, binding, distribution, marketing etc.)
- Books
- Childcare
- Insurance (this should be provided and evidenced by the relevant HEI)
- Translation and/or interpretation
- Gifts
- RSA membership fee

## **Claims**

The Regional Studies Association is a learned society and a registered charity. The funding for the RSA Policy Expo programme has been generated by the Association and its members. Award holders and their institutions are expected to comply not only with the terms of the scheme but also with the spirit of the scheme. If you and/or your HEI are not certain if an expense is eligible or not, please consult the Association prior to financial commitment. Expenses deemed as ineligible will not be covered.

A detailed budget should be submitted as part of the application form. The budget is a part of the research contract and applicants should expect to spend the money in accordance with what was set out in their application. Spending outside these parameters may not be reimbursed. Any budget changes should be communicated to the RSA in advance and are subject to approval. Claims may only be submitted for items listed in the application unless prior permission from the Association is granted for virement of monies to new headings.

## **Payment Schedule**

A first payment of 50% of the award will be made at the commencement of the grant with the second 50% being released on receipt and acceptance of the journal article and book manuscript. This acceptance does not guarantee publication but does release the funding. In case the Policy Committee finds aspects of the reporting process unsatisfactory, resubmission will be requested, and funds will be withheld until the reporting is acceptable.

If the applicant's HEI is outside the UK it should be noted that the award is awarded in British Pounds Sterling (GBP) and that the exchange rate risk must be assured by the HEI. Transfers will be made in GBP sterling at the prevailing exchange rate. Where transfers are made by bank transfer, the costs will be borne by the HEI.

## **V. Policy Expo – Road to publication – Summary process**

### **Call for applications**

- The Chair of the Policy Committee proposes a range of themes
- The RSA Board may also propose themes
- about the RSA Board will agree the topics for the call



- The Policy Committee and the Editor-in-Chief write the call for applications; or approach senior academics to draft the call for applications. The call outlines the key issues to be addressed
- The Board approves the call for applications and deadline
- The call and the handbook are published on the website

### Selection procedures

- The RSA promote the call, responds to any queries, publishes FAQ
- After the deadline has passed, the Chair of the Policy Committee and the Editor-in-Chief review the application against the basic eligibility criteria. If the application does not fulfil these criteria, it is desk-rejected
- The shortlisted applications are sent out to the panel of referees for review according to the theme
- Usually, there is the second round of the refereeing process for the best scored applications
- All applicants are notified – successful or not
- Successful applicants receive the award letter, which must be signed and returned by the principal investigator and his/her HEI

### Expectations and outcomes

- The team of the Policy Expo is expected to run the call for evidence among the RSA community (e.g. through an email (or the RSA newsletter) to the RSA members to ask for their contribution)
- To run a special session/ webinar to present their research and to collect any feedback
- An article for [Regional Studies](#), [Regional Science](#) with the Article Processing Charge (APC) sponsored by the Association from the withheld portion of the grant (articles will be subject to peer review in the normal way).
- A policy-facing book in the new [RSA Impact and Policy Series](#). This would be a minimum 25,000 and maximum 30,000 words policy-facing book. It could be in the form of a report or edited papers with an introduction and conclusion. It must include an executive summary highlighting the policy implications from the work and be accessible to policymakers and practitioners. The book has to be authored or edited by the team of the Policy Expo.
- All members of the Policy Expo need to be signed up/paid members of the RSA for the duration of the grant
- Policy Expo members should have individual Twitter and/or LinkedIn accounts.

### Publication of the book

Some tips/suggestions:

- This Expo book is not a standard academic publication and must be policy-facing i.e, it needs to be accessible for non-technical policy-makers at all spatial scales. This means that writing should be not overly technical/complex, but clear for a non-academic professional audience. It also needs to bring out the key policy points (our 'policy takeaways'). In doing so, this means – where appropriate - making use of bullet points, infographics, highlighting points in the text, visuals such as diagrams, case examples, graphs or even photographs (so long as we have permissions to re-use/publish them). You don't have to use all of these display methods, but include some to emphasise your key points.
- Throughout the book try to use shorter sentences and shorter paragraphs, and as far as possible avoid jargon. (Ask yourselves 'will a regional policy maker understand this?')
- You should have an Executive Summary at the start of the Book and followed by a Key Recommendations Section.
- In drafting chapters, make good use of infographics, case boxes text/explainers/figures and highlighted text (where necessary) etc. Remember though, when using highlighted text, each chapter will have a different colour code.
- When writing chapters, use references sparingly, and they should not be cited within the text – rather as an endnote, preferably at the end of each chapter.

- If possible, and where appropriate try to highlight key policy recommendations in imaginative ways (e.g. in a box/infographic) or at the end of the chapter
- Sparingly use direct quotes – but where these are included, put them in a separate paragraph with the large publishers quotations around them
- Include a Glossary of key terms – this will allow you to include some technical terms in the text and aids users.
- Once you've drafted your monograph/or even just a chapter, try to obtain user feedback from policymakers/practitioners (at different levels; regional/national/supranational) to see if they follow your ideas.
- Seek out Forwards from policymakers/practitioners and Cover endorsements

## VI. Recognition / Intellectual property / Knowledge transfer / Copyright

The support of the Regional Studies Association should be acknowledged in the normal way when any results are presented (reports, publications, presentations).

The project must be solely funded by the Association, but applicants may use this funding as leverage for further funding for future projects. The grant must be used to fund a discrete project which could for example, be a pilot study. The RSA reserves the right to be a named partner in future projects.

IP rests with the research team but they are expected not to unreasonably withhold permissions from the Association using the results to promote the work that has been funded and to raise the profile of the Association and to make members and others in the regional studies communities of policy and practice aware of the work.

All articles published in Regional Studies, Regional Science are licenced under the Creative Commons Licence CCBY and the Book would normally be covered by copyright but the option to use one of the Creative Commons licences exists.

Copies of any publications should be given to the Association. Receipt of the award should be acknowledged in all publications.

Where possible and appropriate the Association expects that datasets arising from the research will be deposited in a public repository and that the whereabouts of the dataset will be made known.

In addition to the formal end of award report, the RSA may require short contributions that may be published in any one or more of our membership publications - *Regions* and/or on the RSA website, blog, Twitter, LinkedIn or Facebook or through other channels, as appropriate and agreed with the grant holder.

The Association wishes to have the opportunity to support all its researchers and therefore if any events or promotions are to be organised as a part of the research, the RSA should be alerted so that they may assist with marketing.

### Knowledge Exchange

The RSA recognises and encourages knowledge exchange and actively supports partnership and other schemes that enable this. Recipients of the RSA Policy Expo award are encouraged to ensure that the outcomes of this research investment are used to the benefit of the community and should inform the Association where research materials including any data sets arising from the funding, are deposited.

### GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)

It is the HEI's responsibility to ensure that the research complies with all correct GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), the Data Protection Act and PECR (Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations).

## Copyright

It is the PI's and HEI's responsibility to ensure that the research and any publications are in line with the publisher guidelines – such as:

- An author must confirm that they have seen, read and understood the publisher guidelines on [copyright and author rights](https://authorservices.taylorandfrancis.com/copyright-and-you/) - <https://authorservices.taylorandfrancis.com/copyright-and-you/>
- Authors must follow the guide on how use third-party material in their work - <https://authorservices.taylorandfrancis.com/using-third-party-material-in-your-article/>

## Royalties

Please note that copyright in the book rests with the author(s) but that any royalty income remains with the RSA.

## VII. Ethics, misconduct and liabilities

Grants will normally only be awarded to higher education institutions (HEI) or recognized research institutions as grant holders will be subject to the research rules and ethics of their employing institutions. Applicants must be based within an eligible HEI. The grant will be administered through the HEI which will normally be an institution with degree awarding powers or a national research institute. The grant holders will be subject to the research rules and ethics of their employing institutions.

The RSA accepts no responsibility for the views or opinions expressed by the grant holder. It is the responsibility of the HEI to ensure that the research is organised and undertaken within a framework of best practice that recognises the various factors, including rigour, respect and responsibility, that may influence or impact on a research project. Grant holders will be required to comply with their HEI's ethics code and this will be referenced in the document signed off by the HEI.

It is the responsibility of the HEI to ensure that all necessary permissions are obtained before the application is sent to the Association and that the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the research are clear. The grant holder and the HEI are responsible for any matters arising out of the process of a grant holder's research, the institution holding the grant or from the results of the research.

It is the responsibility of the HEI to ensure that the research is organised and undertaken within a framework of best practice that recognises the various factors, including rigour, respect and responsibility, that may influence or impact on a research project. Award holders will be required to comply with their HEI's ethics code and this will be referenced in the document signed off by the HEI.

It is the responsibility of the HEI to ensure that all necessary permissions are obtained before the application is sent to the Association and that the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the project are clear.

The award holder and the HEI are responsible for any matters arising out of the process of an applicant's research, the institution holding the award or from the results of the research.

The award holder and the HEI are responsible for any human resources related issue or health and safety issue (the HEI health and safety regulations will apply). The Regional Studies Association accepts no responsibility for issues directly or indirectly resulting from the funded research, the applicant or other organisations and individuals involved.

## VIII. Application queries

Research related queries should be addressed in the first instance to the RSA Chief Executive, Sally Hardy on [sally.hardy@regionalstudies.org](mailto:sally.hardy@regionalstudies.org) and [policyexpo@regionalstudies.org](mailto:policyexpo@regionalstudies.org)

Administrative queries should be addressed to [policyexpo@regionalstudies.org](mailto:policyexpo@regionalstudies.org) or by telephoning + 00 44 (0)1273 698 017

Please send your applications to [policyexpo@regionalstudies.org](mailto:policyexpo@regionalstudies.org) The submission deadline for detailed applications is **20<sup>th</sup> April 2021**.

**Regional Studies Association (RSA)**

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## **Pandemics: Regional Resilience and Regional Policy Responses**

The occurrence of pandemics such as COVID-19, Ebola, Swine Flu, and SARs have devastating health impacts. In addition, the social and economic effects of pandemics are equally profound and negative. These impacts are felt not only globally, or nationally, but at the regional level too.

Indeed, critically, and in the immediate responses to dealing with pandemics, governments and communities have turned to place-based solutions. These include, for example, the closing of borders, the restriction of local travel, an emphasis upon local foundational services (health/education) and on community and neighbourhood solutions to provide both support and an answer to the challenges of infection and economic disruption.

The scale and impact of pandemics often highlights that in times of acute crises, robust place-based policies are required to sustain individuals and the cities and regions in which they live. Questions here arise of the resilience of cities and regions, and the appropriate policy responses to mitigate the long-term scarring effects of pandemics and to restore local economic growth. Indeed, the impact of temporary measures (such as lockdown measures) to reduce infection rates could exacerbate existing regional imbalances, especially between regions more reliant upon manufacturing vis-à-vis regions whose economy is more financed based and can more easily adapt to home-working. There are also concerns about the provision of health and education services, especially where these are shifted to online delivery, and in regions where access to new digital technologies is limited.

More widely, lockdown measures are designed to initiate (temporary) behavioural changes in the context of work, technology and the environment. These, in turn, though have spatial impacts, for instance on mobility, urban centres and the environment. Yet, these temporary responses may also lay the foundations for a longer-term re-imagining of new working spaces, geo-spatial production lines, inter-regional connectedness and the effective use of technologies. Indeed, issues such as food security and the availability of medical supplies are becoming increasingly salient, and there is growing recognition that the future geography of production (such as a reliance upon Global Value Chains), may be very different.

This RSA Policy Expo Call seeks proposals that explore the spatial impact of pandemics, the resilience of regions and the appropriate regional policy responses.

Some key issues that could be addressed, but are not limited include:

- Assessing the socio-economic impacts of pandemics on regions, particularly in terms of its impact on health, education, local economies and regional imbalances.
- The comparative resilience of regions to pandemics and drawing lessons for mitigating the impact of future 'health shocks'.
- Evaluating the co-ordination and impact of International, National and Regional Policy responses to pandemics and/or exploring policy options to revitalise regional economies post-pandemic.
- Managing regional foundational sectors (e.g. health/education) to sustain local services during and after pandemics.
- The short and long-term impact of pandemics for the geo-spatial context, especially with regards to new working spaces, regional and urban centres, mobility, global production chains and utility of new technology.

# Social Innovation, Foundational Sectors and the Regional Economy

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of the 'Foundational Economy' (FE) i.e. those sectors which provide the essential (and largely collective) goods and services that comprise everyday life. These include so-called 'mundane' service sectors such as health, education, social care, energy and food. In many regions – especially lagging regions – such activities have long comprised the major part of the local economy. Yet, conventional innovation policy has largely utilised a traditional Science and Technology model with an emphasis upon a narrow band of 'high tech' sectors, often to the detriment of foundational activities.

In recent years, policymakers at both national and supranational levels, have begun to identify grand societal challenges such as renewable energy, food security, climate change/clean growth, future of mobility, healthy ageing, and health response systems (EC, 2010). By definition, these societal challenges largely affect the foundational sectors. Addressing such challenges is likely to be a multi-dimensional process, which necessitates both *technological* and *social innovation*, and involving a wide set of stakeholders (*firms, researchers, consumers/users and citizens*) in co-producing new knowledge and experimentation with new ideas. While solutions to these challenges will have a global application, there are clear opportunities to undertake the research and experimentation process in an inclusive way at local and regional levels.

For instance, regional foundational activities can facilitate social innovation processes and act as a conduit for co-production. This may arise through experimental platforms and interdisciplinary living labs with researchers working in concert with private, public and third sector actors. Regional policy initiatives (*e.g. UK Local industrial strategies*) and key regional anchors (*e.g. HE institutions/Healthcare providers*) can play a key role in facilitating this process. In doing so, this may enable place-based policies (*such as Smart Specialisation*) to identify and support more opportunities in lagging regions.

This RSA Policy Expo Call seeks proposals that explore the growing importance of the Foundational Economy and social innovation within regional economies, and hitherto the role of regional policies to take advantage of these opportunities.

Some key issues that could be addressed, but are not limited include:

- How might place based policies (*such as Smart Specialisation*) support social innovation and enhance regional foundational sectors?
- The role of regional anchors in promoting social innovation, foundational sectors and addressing societal challenges.
- Comparative Case studies and policy lessons from regional initiatives to promote social innovation
- Evaluating social innovation – what metrics are useful or are required to ensure social innovation policies meet their objectives?
- The re-orientation of foundational sectors as the basis for inclusive regional growth

# The Future of Work, the Gig Economy, and Inclusive Growth

Technological change is reshaping local labour markets. Employment structures have polarised in many advanced countries, with growth in high-wage professional occupations alongside growth in low-wage jobs. At the same time, there is widespread concern about the rise of the Gig Economy – task-based employment, often mediated via digital platforms, which offers few of the benefits of a traditional employer-employee relationship. This has led to concerns about the hollowing out the labour market, algorithmic control of employment, and – particularly in the context of COVID-19 – concerns that the burden of economic and health risk is being placed on the worker rather than the firm.

These changes in the labour market have coincided with a widespread concern that the benefits of economic growth are not being shared equally. Inequality has been rising over the past 50 years, with recent growth being driven primarily by the top 1%. Growth has often been accompanied with a decline in the labour share. And wages have been stagnant for the median worker in many countries. The result has been increasing concern with the notion of ‘Inclusive Growth’, with local areas launching strategies aiming to change the pattern of growth in their local economies. The OECD has launched an ‘Inclusive Growth in Cities’ campaign and cities across the world, from Cape Town to Belfast, have launched strategies aimed at making growth inclusive.

Local policymakers have been rethinking how they support workers in this changing context. Technological change challenges traditional support for those in (e.g. Unions) and out (e.g. welfare-to-work) of the labour market, the structure and targeting of skill systems, and the way in which local policymakers think about labour market interventions such as transport. These changes are likely to be accelerated by COVID-19 which, early evidence suggests, is increasing the skill bias in the economy with job losses primarily focused on the low-wage labour market.

This RSA Policy Expo Call seeks proposals which consider these challenges and the implications of existing research for policy. Key issues which could be addressed include, but are not limited to:

- Mapping the changing world of work, how it varies geographically, and what different local policy responses might be
- Considering evidence on the geography of the gig economy and what that means for place-based policy
- Reviewing and evaluating place-based policies which seek to address low wage employment, such as skill upgrading
- Highlighting international best-practice in efforts to address labour market change, such as the New York Career Pathways model
- Comparative evidence on policy responses to local labour market change