

CALL FOR PAPERS

2025 RSA Regional Futures Conference

13-14 November 2025, The Cumberland Hotel, London, UK

As the world becomes increasingly interconnected it remains marked by persistent regional disparities. Regions are hubs of adaptation and mitigation strategies, especially in vulnerable areas, and regional studies must evolve to address the dynamic challenges and opportunities of our time. Complex issues such as climate change, migration, urbanisation, and socio-economic inequalities require multi-faceted approaches that transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries. Regional studies will increasingly need to collaborate with environmental, data and health scientists, while co-producing knowledge with policymakers, businesses, and communities will be key to ensuring relevance and impact. Allied with a stronger push to decolonise regional studies by incorporating indigenous perspectives and local knowledge systems into research and policy frameworks, these shifts are key to creating more equitable and context-sensitive approaches to regional development.

The Regional Studies Association Regional Futures Conference 2025 presents an important opportunity to champion a positive agenda for regional change and development. The event will provide an important platform to discuss and debate regional futures, establish new connections, and assess options for practitioners and policymakers working towards brighter regional futures.

The conference organisers are keen to attract papers and sessions which identify new connections, address broad research and policy agendas, and include contributions from any discipline offering insights at local and regional levels. Papers which are highly innovative, collaborative, international or multi-disciplinary are especially welcome.

Broad themes and key agendas the organisers are keen to facilitate discussion around include, but are not limited to:

A. Regional policies in/for the majority world	B. Technological change, innovation and entrepreneurship
C. Industrial development and policy development	D. Regional investment and trading patterns
E. Rethinking the concept of regions in the context of (de)globalisation, digital transformation, and transnationalism	F. Financing regional change
G. Strategies for enhancing regional security (e.g. health, food, energy, data, financial, geopolitical, democracy)	H. Developments in European regional policy
I. Future models of urban and regional development	J. The role of regions in mitigating climate change, fostering sustainable development, and addressing environmental inequities
K. The role of regions in global governance and geopolitics	L. Trends in migration, labour markets and housing patterns
M. Digital infrastructure, smart technology, and the reshaping of regional economies and identities	N. Demographic change, health and socioeconomic change
O. Reviving left behind places and tackling uneven development	P. Regional identities, migration patterns, and the interplay of local and global cultural dynamics
Q. Evaluating the implications of COVID-19 on regional disparities, healthcare systems, and economic recovery	R. Improving the design, planning and governance of regions
S. New tools, data, and methodologies for studying regions and their interconnections	

Submission Details: Please submit your abstract (up to 250 words and text only) through the RSA conference portal at <https://lounge.regionalstudies.org/Meetings/Meeting?ID=564> by 4th August 2025.

Abstracts will be considered and reviewed by the Conference Programme Committee against the criteria of originality, interest, subject balance and geographical spread. For special sessions submission an additional criterion for assessment of proposals includes gender balance between the speakers.

Conference Website: <https://www.regionalstudies.org/events/2025-regional-futures/>

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