

RSA Annual Conference 2026

Regions as Arenas in a Changing World

Monday 15th - Thursday 18th June 2026,
School of Business, Economics and Law, University of Gothenburg, Sweden
#RSA26

The Regional Studies Association's Annual Conference 2026 is set to take place in partnership with the School of Business, Economics and Law at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. This four-day event will bring together leading academics, policymakers, and researchers to share insights, perspectives, and the latest findings in regional studies, economic development, policy, and planning. With participants from around 55 countries, the conference will welcome both seasoned experts and emerging scholars to the stunning city of Gothenburg.

Attendees can look forward to an exciting programme featuring 700+ presentations, keynote speeches from leading voices in the field, and a diverse range of special sessions, workshops, and professional development opportunities. There will also be ample networking moments, walking tours, field trips, and a vibrant social programme, including the conference dinner, welcome receptions, partner events, exhibitor showcases, and post-conference tours to discover more of Gothenburg and Sweden.

Call for abstracts

Many things that we have held for true in the spatially-minded disciplines are being questioned by new developments in technology, politics and the economy. The breakthrough of AI changes the balance between humankind and machines. We face unprecedented environmental challenges. Globalization seems to be stalling, and economic policies are taking a more protectionist turn. Location factors that we thought had largely passed on to unimportance in the learning economy, such as electricity or natural resources, are becoming strategic location factors. Also, we are living in times where scientific truths, and the virtues of sensible and balanced discussions, are questioned in ways that have been unheard of for long.

Many of these changes, and their implications, are indeed geographical by nature. The region is the daily arena for most people, business and organizations. Scholars and policy makers need new or revised geographical theories and deepened empirical analyses to navigate in an increasingly uneasy world. Also, there is a need to discuss the broader role of the social sciences in a public debate governed by the logics of social media.

We invite scholars and stakeholders to come together in Gothenburg to engage in a dialogue and exchange insights around how theories, tools and empirical information about regions and the interdependence between regions could be improved to navigate the world, and maybe, contribute to making it better. Also, since the challenges faced by humankind are not delineated by academic disciplines, we invite scholars from a broad range of disciplines to share their thoughts on the geographies of our changing world.

Conference themes

Agglomeration, Clusters, and Externalities	AI and Big Data in Regional Studies
Circular Economy, Green and Just Transitions	Demography, Labour Markets, and Migration
Entrepreneurship and Innovation Systems	Financing Regional Development and Change
Gender, Diversity, and Equity in Regional Development	Regional Governance, Policies, and Institutional Change
Global Value Chains and International Business	Peripheral and Cross-border Regions
Populism, Nationalism, and Social Change	Regional Development in the Global South
Regional Inequalities and EU Cohesion Policy	Regional Innovation and Technological Change
Spatial Economy, Infrastructure and Housing	

Session proposals: Please submit your session through the portal on the webpage:

<https://www.regionalstudies.org/2026-rsa-annual-conference-session-submissions/>

Abstract 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=565>

We welcome papers from all – academics, researchers, students, and those working in policy and practice. The event is inclusive and offers networking opportunities for all in our field. The organisers welcome proposals for innovative forms of networking and collaboration.

Deadlines

Session submission deadline 8th January 2026

Conference Bursary application 30th January 2026

Abstract submission deadline 19th February 2026

Academic Organisers

Martin Henning, Roman Martin, Hanna Martin and Sarah Franz

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