

Call for Papers

2026 RSA Student and Early Career Conference



Emergent Directions in Regional Research

3rd-4th September 2026, Cardiff, UK

Are you a PhD student or an early career researcher, within the first five years of completing your PhD, specializing in areas such as regional and urban studies, planning, geography, politics, development studies, economics, or related fields?

If so, mark your calendars as the Regional Studies Association welcomes submissions of abstracts to our annual Student and Early Career Conference to be held in Cardiff, UK, in September 2026.

As the world faces up to global geopolitical tensions, economic instability, climate change, disrupted global supply chains, the rise of AI, and social inequality, it is a period of uncertainty and change across many regions, leading to increasing questions around the resilience and sustainability of regions, as well as opportunities for change. The theme for this conference covers contemporary issues in Regional Studies research.

Co-organised by Cardiff University Business School and Cardiff Metropolitan University School of Management, the 2026 RSA Student and ECR Conference invites papers discussing topics including, but not limited to:

- Addressing regional disparities
- Harnessing regional strengths
- Promoting regional innovation and entrepreneurship
- Inclusive regional growth
- Regional ecosystems
- New approaches to regional policy, planning and governance
- Re-imagining regional places and spaces
- Digital technology, platforms and regional development
- Regional mobility and migration
- Regionalisation in emerging economies
- Regional land-use, housing and infrastructure
- Regional identity, culture and regionalism

The RSA Student and ECR conference serves as a vibrant platform for emerging scholars from across the world to present their research, engage in thought-provoking debates, and cultivate valuable connections. We offer a welcoming, supportive, and intellectually stimulating environment where participants from diverse backgrounds and disciplines converge to share knowledge and insights.

What You Can Expect:

1. **Networking and Collaboration:** Connect with like-minded peers and establish valuable collaborations in your field. Forge connections that can shape the future of your research and career.
2. **Constructive Feedback:** Receive expert feedback on your research. Gain fresh perspectives and insights that can elevate your work to new heights.
3. **Career Advancement:** Attend workshops designed to equip you with essential skills and knowledge that will empower your academic and professional journey, including how to get published; how to win external research funding; how to manage your own research project; and how to take the next steps in your career.
4. **Practical Takeaways:** Join panel discussions with academics and Regional stakeholders to explore fresh perspectives on how to drive positive regional change, promote sustainability, and nurture inclusivity within your community and beyond.

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=591> by **11th June 2026**.

Abstracts will be considered and reviewed by the Conference Programme Committee against the criteria of originality, interest, subject balance and geographical spread.

Conference Website: <https://www.regionalstudies.org/events/2026secconf/>

Academic organisers: Robert Bowen, Cardiff Business School, Cardiff University, UK; Nick Clifton, Cardiff Metropolitan University, UK

Conference Manager: Nicola Pilling, nicola.pilling@regionalstudies.org , +44 (0) 1273 698017