



## CALL FOR PAPERS

### 2026 RSA Regional Futures Conference

12-13 November 2026, Hilton London Paddington, UK

As global interdependence deepens, regions continue to face uneven development trajectories and widening socio-spatial divides. These realities demand new framings of regional futures that recognise both the vulnerabilities and the innovative capacities embedded within localities. This said, understanding regional futures requires more than forward-looking imagination. Regional futures depend on a grounded awareness of the regional pasts and regional presents that shape the conditions from which future possibilities emerge. The historical trajectories of uneven development, socio-spatial divides, and local vulnerabilities form the backdrop against which new regional strategies must be conceived. Equally, present-day dynamics – ranging from technological change and demographic shifts to environmental pressures and evolving patterns of governance – constitute the lived realities that influence what kinds of futures are feasible or justifiable. Only by recognising how past legacies and current transformations intersect can researchers and practitioners more effectively imagine, design, and advocate for regional futures that are informed, equitable and resilient. This begins by understanding what we know, but equally what we should know that we have forgotten, and questions that we have all-too-often neglected to ask.

The RSA Regional Futures Conference 2026 presents an important opportunity to champion a positive agenda for regional change and development based on a deep knowledge and understanding of what we can learn from knowing about regional pasts and regional presents. 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:

#### The past, present and future of:

A. Regional Theory and Thought	J. Regional Policies
B. Regional Development	K. Regional Methods
C. Regional Governance	L. Regional Planning
D. Technological Change	M. Regional Innovation
E. Regional Entrepreneurship	N. Regional Inequalities
F. Regional Trade	O. Regional Finance
G. European Regional Policy	P. Regional Resilience
H. Regional Mobility	Q. Regional Cultures and Identity
I. Regional Data and Analytics	R. Socioeconomic Change Across Regions

**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=589> by 4th August 2026.

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/2026-regional-futures/>

**Academic Organiser:** John Harrison, Loughborough University, UK

**Conference Manager:** Nicola Pilling, [nicola.pilling@regionalstudies.org](mailto:nicola.pilling@regionalstudies.org), +44 (0) 1273 698 017