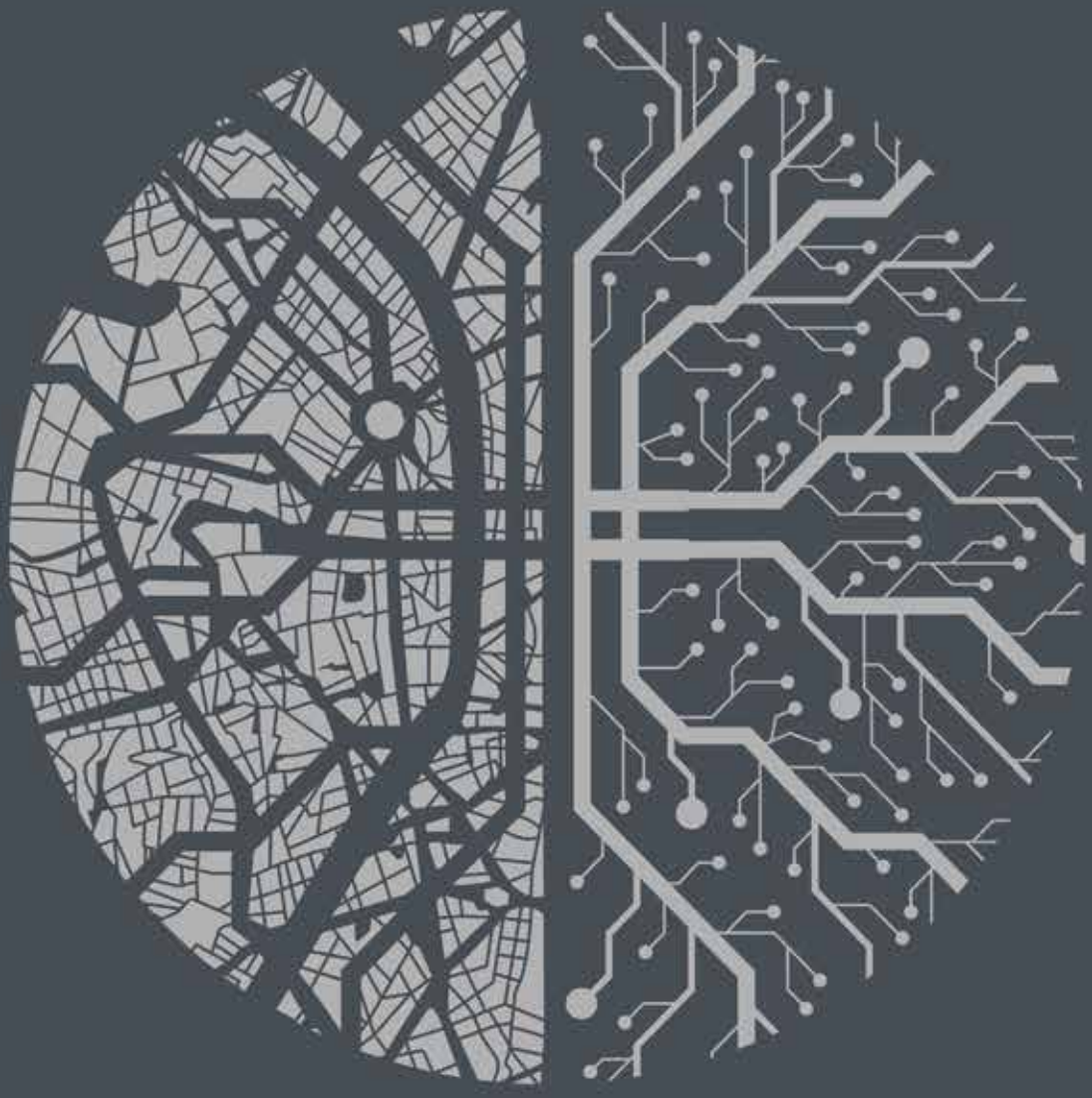
ICFU '21

International Conference on 'Future is Urban':

Resilience, Livability & Resource Conservation

16th to 18th December, 2021



NIRMA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING
NAAC ACCREDITED 'A' GRADE

Organised by:
Institute of Architecture and Planning, Nirma University

Introduction:

Cities are engines of economic growth and development, socio-cultural and ethnic melting pots and dynamic integrated systems with their own logics. They are places with access to good quality education, health care facilities, sound infrastructure, communication and transport networks, social services and amenities and thereby, centers for opportunities and prosperity. At the same time modern cities and metropolises also face serious issues of housing shortage, degraded environmental qualities, poor living conditions, inaccess to basic services, unemployment, poverty, crime, congestion, etc. With rapid urbanization of the world and exponentially expanding cities, the world today faces formidable challenges of social, economic and environmental sustainability.

Developing economies like India are also witnessing emergence of mega cities and urban agglomerations with very high densities and haphazard urban growth. This has questioned our strategies for planning and providing for adequate and appropriate physical and social infrastructure for our cities. Increasing urban population due to rural-urban migration and population growth has led to rampant growth of squatter settlements and unsustainable living environments. Stress caused due to urbanization and industrialization has intensified depletion of natural resources, damage to eco-sensitive zones, anthropogenic climate risks, poor air and water quality, waste-disposal problems and high-energy consumption. In such a complex context, our cities need to undergo structural transformations to facilitate and accommodate inevitable urbanization and spatial expansion. At the same time cities also need to improvise and innovate while maintaining their historical legacy, geographical diversity, cultural variety and identity.

With over 68 % of the global population projected to be living in urban areas by 2050, the world is entering a future, which will be predominantly urban. Now more than ever before, urban planners, designers, architects, decision makers and other stakeholders are faced with the challenge of creating more resilient, sustainable and livable urban environments for today and future generations to come. ICFU'21 aims to create a platform for scholars, academics, practitioners and other experts from the field of Urban Planning, Urban Design, Technology and Architecture where cross-disciplinary emerging research and perspectives, issues and concerns related to the human living environment are shared and deliberated upon. We hope that this will be a small step towards creating a more sustainable, resilient and livable urban future for all of us.

Core themes of ICFU'21- resilience, livability and resource conservation, offer paradigms for sustainable urbanism. SDGs outlined at the Rio+20 UN Sustainable Development Conference have charted the path for a 'holistic approach to urban development and human settlements and an integrated approach to planning and building sustainable cities and urban settlements. Progressive measures need to be taken, to control the rising ecological footprint of an already resource depleted planet, for creating low-energy and low-carbon climate neutral cities. This asks for reforms and innovations to reduce CO2 emissions, mitigate urban heat island effect, adopt low-carbon mobility, increase use of renewable energy and promote energy efficiency, adopt scientific waste management systems, adopt water harvesting systems, enable recycling and reuse of grey water, establish sustainable urban transport systems, reduce urban sprawl, preserve and expand green spaces, design energy efficient buildings and adopt energy conservation building codes in urban design and planning practices. Compact cities show the way forward to reduce automobile dependency by integration of green infrastructure and transportation such as light rail, cycling and pedestrian networks. Such an approach will also help protect biodiversity and the natural environment from urban development. On the other hand, smart cities integrate technical systems with urban planning to create integrated solutions for smart development, energy, waste, public transport solutions, etc.

Cities also need to become communities without barriers. Among rising socio-spatial inequalities, efforts need to scale up to create an inclusive and livable city for people and communities by implementing socio-spatially integrated and people-centered urban planning approaches. Livable cities focus on the well-being of its citizens and have healthy scores on indexes of social and physical infrastructure, health facilities and amenities, safety, education, public open spaces, efficient access networks, stability and culture. With knowledge economies and digital revolution laying new demands on the physical structure of the city, there is a re-emergence of 'place' with young and technology savvy citizens showing new uses of public space. Apart from providing good quality living environments it is equally important that every citizen has access to quality urban life, especially the deprived sections of our societies. Through inclusive urban development having adequate provisions for affordable housing, slum redevelopment schemes, supply of formal housing, low-cost housing stock and affordable housing finance, the urban poor and middle class can find residential stability in our cities.

It is important to realize that cities are cultural entities and a source of pride, social cohesion, identity and sense of belonging for its residents. Every city needs to be recognized and celebrated for its uniqueness and characteristics, which are shaped by all who live in it. If the future is irrevocably linked to the city, humanizing and contextualizing SDGs by integrating culture within sustainable development is a pressing need today. A culturally inclusive foundation for sustainable and resilient cities can be laid by incorporating cultural and contextual dimensions in their Planning, Urban Design and Architecture. This can be done by adopting and integrating approaches which foster human scale and mix use development, effectively manage population densities and resource consumption, prevent abrupt urbanization, nurture a sense of place and belonging, implement learning from traditional and vernacular practices and knowledge, use local materials and climate adaptive strategies, convert global ideas into meaningful local identities, preserve sacred landscapes, ensure conservation of heritage, regenerate urban-rural linkages and enhance role of communities in local governance in environmental planning and design of cities.

Cities being dynamic socio-ecological systems undergo a constant process of change and adaptation. Cities also face uncertainties and challenging situations like resource scarcity, natural hazards, climate risks, pandemics, conflicts, violence and economic fluctuations. These may result in social breakdown, physical collapse or economic deprivation. The ongoing Covid -19 pandemic has made us question the resilience of our cities. It is imperative that our cities and communities develop the ability to recover, adapt and prepare for such future shocks. Cities of today and tomorrow need to develop capacity to function, so that people living and working in cities survive and thrive in the face of such stresses and shocks. Context specific resilient planning frameworks need to be developed in order to bridge the gap between short term and long term goals of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. Thus it is pertinent to incorporate key principles and attributes of resilience like flexibility, robustness, resourcefulness, adaptability, self-organization, agility, creativity, inclusivity, equity, integration, modularity, efficiency, stability, diversity, coordination capacity and mutual collaboration. Approaches such as adaptive planning, people oriented design, bottom-up approach, emphasis on spatio-temporal dynamics, integration of social justice, reducing urban inequalities, suitability to slow and steady changes, scenario building, hazard analysis, etc are features of resilient planning practices. Strategies such as decentralized infrastructure, water efficient landscaping, water resources management, conservation of forests and ecologically sensitive areas, urban agriculture, use of geospatial technologies, restoration of hydrologic flows form parts of resilient green and blue infrastructure planning.

Up to 90% of all future world population growth till 2050 is predicted to be in the urban areas of the global south where dynamic social and economic change is expected. But at the same time many countries of the global south severely lack the capacity for a sustainable response to the downsides of rapid urbanization, climate change and population growth and ageing. Urban issues are distinctly different in emerging economies but most technologies, knowledge and urban theories of planning are developed in global north and transplanted in global south. This calls for creation of context specific knowledge through empirical experience, evidence based and practical knowledge, which can be developed into conceptual and theoretical frameworks on urban sustainability. With such vision and conviction for an Urban Future, ICFU'21 invites original research papers for following themes and sub-themes:

Conference Themes:

1. Space, Society and Culture

This theme is majorly concerned with relationship between culture, social and spatial characteristics of built environment and communities. The health and well-being of societies are also impacted due to an ever increasing population and overcrowding of the spaces. The conference calls for deliberations to improve the space, society and culture system for our future cities under following sub themes:

a) Responsive & Inclusive Neighbourhoods
b) People, Place & Traditional Knowledge Systems
c) Built Form & Quality of Living Environment
d) Cultural Identity of the Place
e) Climate, Culture & Lifestyle
f) Heritage and Tourism

2. Green & Blue Infrastructure

Blue infrastructure refers to water elements, like rivers, canals, ponds, wetlands, floodplains, water treatment facilities, etc. Green infrastructure refers to trees, lawns, hedgerows, parks, fields, forests, etc. Blue-Green Infrastructure refers to an urban planning approach in which design of naturalistic or completely artificial infrastructures in the city is intended to allow the whole water system to work efficiently. This can improve the delivery of water-related ecosystem services, as well as preventing harms like flooding and spread of contaminants. The conference call for deliberations under following sub themes :

a) Design of Public Spaces
b) Pedestrian Streets and Community
c) Recycling & Reuse of Waste Water
d) Decentralised Waste Management
e) Nature Based Solution for Urban Infrastructure
f) Non- Motorized Transport System

3. Ecology, Environment & Climate Change

Environment refers to all the conditions that influence and affect the development and sustainability of life of all organisms present on the earth. Ecology is the study of inter-relationship of organisms with physical as well as biotic environments. It is important to have an understanding of the surroundings as the survival of mankind is dependent on it. The continued increase of human population and intervention, e.g. deforestation, pollution, excess use of natural resources and pesticides has resulted in the destruction of the natural environment and has made people aware about the ecology and environment. This really impacts the city planning and future urban cities. The conference call for deliberations under following sub themes :

a) Climate Change and Urban Planning
b) Urban Agriculture and Urban Forestry
c) Environmental Pollution & Health Risk Assessment
d) Ecology & Biodiversity
e) Eco System Bases Approach to Planning
f) Protection & Integration of Eco Sensitive Areas

4. Urban Planning & Design

The ongoing pandemic has really impacted in all the spheres of life and has brought with it new set of learnings. The pandemic has not only raised a lot of issues on Environment and climate change but eventually at the same time it has raised a lot of concerns on city planning, Urban Design and Spatial planning of the residential neighbourhoods and the city and the region. The conference calls for various deliberations from various processionals across the globe to discuss various strategies in Urban Planning & Design to improve the planning and mobility systems for future urban cities. This conference calls for papers with wide range of focus as given below:

a) Density, Urban Form & Development Control Regulations
b) Smart Cities
c) Pandemic and Its Impact on Urban Planning
d) Urban Finance & Governance
e) Urban - Rural Interface
f) Public Transport System

5. Housing Policies & Form

Housing is the basic need of a human being but it is interesting to learn how the character of housing changes from place to place. For population with adequate resources allows for low rise low density houses whereas for the core areas of city with extremely high land prices calls for solution towards high rise high density housing. The inter play between population, land availability, land value, infrastructure availability, good connectivity, governance, institutions into action, etc. changes the type of housing. In housing, architects and planners and the planners have a major role to play as they get liberty to use their skill and knowledge to bring out best from a given situation. A good housing gives priority to human needs and also safeguards environment. This conference calls for papers with wide range of focus as given below:

a) Building Construction System for Mass Housing
b) Housing for the Urban Poor
c) Rural Housing
d) Housing Typology & Social Acceptability
e) Land, Housing and Real Estate
f) Urban Land Policy

All accepted papers would be published as conference proceedings with ISBN. Selected peer reviewed papers will be published in a Scopus or Web of Science indexed edited volume.

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Category		Registration fees
Academicians and professionals	National	4000 INR
	International	7500 INR
Students	National	2000 INR
	International	4000 INR
Co-author	National	2000 INR
	International	4000 INR

Important Dates	
Call for Abstracts	07th July 2021
Submission of Abstracts	07th Aug 2021
Acceptance of Abstracts	20th August 2021
Submission of full length paper and extended abstracts	15th October 2021
Acceptance of full length paper and extended abstracts	15th November 2021
Registration	
Conference date	16th to18th December 2021

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Partner Institutions