



THE CITY TRANSFORMED

URBAN LIFE AT THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Green Institute Conference 2023

Meanjin / Brisbane and online, Aug 18/19, Griffith University, South Bank

The City Transformed: urban life at the end of the world as we know it

Here at the end of the world as we know it, in the teeth of intersecting ecological, economic, social and political crises, our cities are being transformed by communities, corporations and governments in ways which will either worsen the crises or enable us to survive and thrive.

The Green Institute is calling for proposals for presentations, panels and workshops from activists, advocates, academics and change-makers of all kinds for a two-day conference to share ideas, make connections, and plan the green transformation of our cities.

Home to half of humanity as well as countless other species, cities are complex ecosystems of many kinds, from ghettoised, car-based wastelands and food deserts to interconnected homes of social cohesion and urban ecology. Today, they are changing rapidly, both for better and for worse. As the climate destabilises and old certainties collapse, these changes will accelerate.

Our word “politics” comes from the Ancient Greek polis - city-state. And from ancient Athens to Occupy Wall Street, the Paris Commune to the Zone À Défendre, Brisbane’s Greenslide to Sydney’s teal wave, participatory budgeting to pandemic mutual aid and alternatives to policing, cities have always been a key site for collective innovation, exploration and reorganisation.

It’s this spirit of reorganisation that we need to harness at this pivotal point in history.

We must transform our cities. And our cities must be sites of transformation for us and our politics. How are Greens and others negotiating and shaping this crucial urban transformation? What are we doing well? What do we need to do better? With the seeds of change all around us, what do we need to do to take them from alternatives around the margins and draw them together as radical, transformative system change?

Proposals are welcome for keynote speeches, panel discussions and workshops to explore some of the vast array of questions this topic raises.. Suggested focus areas, as a stimulus for discussion, are listed below.

Please submit:

- proposal of no more than 250 words
- proposed format – presentation, panel or workshop
- short bio of no more than 100 words for each proposed participant
- Send to office@greeninstitute.org.au by COB 16 June, 2023



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Suggested focus areas

Cities and democratic organising:

- transformative democracy in the city - community organising, mutual aid, campaigning, assemblies, etc
- transforming democracy in the city - devolution of power to the grassroots
- “municipal globalism” - the city as the basis for a new, non-state-based geopolitics

Urban ecologies and planning in crisis:

- managing cities in the face of the climate crisis
- equitable, democratic and sensitive urban development - doing density well
- blurring the urban / ecological boundary - “rewilding” the city, multi-species communities, green walls, etc
- challenging the private car - mass transit, active travel, design for people not cars

Commoning the city:

- urban agriculture
- sharing and repairing
- cooperatives
- housing justice, community organising for shelter
- reclaiming privatised space (advertising, malls, roads) for the public
- “third spaces” - neither private property nor commercial spaces, libraries and other public commons where people can gather and not be expected to buy anything

Diversity, social cohesion and anti-racism in the city:

- can this most colonial structure be decolonised? How?
- borders, movement of people, and urban inclusion - eg sanctuary cities providing protection for refugees
- social cohesion and anti-racism by design
- Inclusive, accessible development
- alternatives to policing cities - community safety programs, restorative justice, community building and social investment

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