



IGU Commissions:

Local and Regional Development Commission
Land Use and Land Cover Change Commission
Health and the Environment Commission

Johannesburg, South Africa, 25th-29th September 2023

Chair: Prof Ashley Gunter

Topic: Driving Growth and Sustainability: Advancing Local and Regional Development Strategies

Dear colleagues,

In 2019 the South Africa Local and Regional Development LRD group was asked by the International Geographical Union (IGU) Commission on Local and Regional Development to host the 2021 seminar. However, due to the global lockdown and subsequent travel restrictions, the meeting was not able to take place. At the IGU meeting in Paris last year the South African LRD group again committed to host the regional commission meeting and we would thus like to welcome you to South Africa. The IGU LRD Commission meeting will be hosted by the University of South Africa in its 150th year and will be hosted in Johannesburg South Africa.

Registration Fee

Conference fee: €180

The fee will include: conference facilities, all lunches, excursions to the cradle of human kind, excursion to Soweto.

The meeting will take place in Rosebank Johannesburg and a list of recommended hotels will be circulated shortly.

Call for papers

The commissions for Local and Regional Development and the Department of Geography of the University of South Africa are pleased to announce a call for papers for the Congress Meeting on Local and Regional Development, to be held on 25th through 29th of September 2023.

We currently seek **submissions of abstracts within any of the proposed sub-themes by the 30th of June 2023**. Please send abstract (300-500 words) in doc format, as an attachment, to Prof Ashley Gunter gunteaw@unisa.ac.za. The language of the seminar is English. Following acceptance of abstracts, authors will be notified and invited to submit complete papers for consideration for publication by the South African Geographical Journal following the Seminar.

Thematic axes

- Economic Diversification and Competitiveness
- Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Sustainable Development and Environmental Management
- Social Inclusion and Equity
- Infrastructure and Public Services
- Socio-economic Disparities, Local and Regional Development
- Applications of Land Use/Cover Change, Driving Forces and Impacts at Various Spatial Scales
- Land Use/Cover Change and Land Degradation
- Environmental Changes and Human Health: Vulnerabilities, Impacts and Inequalities
- Health, Wellbeing and Sustainable Development in Urban and Rural Areas
- Health Systems Responsiveness to the Changing Social and Natural Environment

INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE:

Ashley Gunter (Steering Member, IGU Commission on Local and Regional Development, University of South Africa)

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Helen Gurgel (Chair of the IGU Commission on Health and the Environment, University of Brasilia)

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Thomas Krafft (Past-Chair of the IGU Commission on Health and the Environment, Maastricht University)

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE:

Ashley Gunter

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Preliminary Agenda

Monday September 25th

Johannesburg – Rosebank Conference Centre

09:00am – 12:00pm: Registration

14:00pm – 16:00pm: Opening Address and Keynote Speaker

19:00pm: Opening Dinner

Tuesday September 26th

09:00 – 10:00 Open Lecturer

10:00 -11:30 Presentation of papers at the conference

11:30 – 12:00 Coffee Break

12:00 -13:30 Presentation of papers at the conference

13:30 -15:00 Lunch

15:00 – 17:00 Presentation of papers at the conference

Wednesday September 27th

9:00 – 15:00 Field excursion to the Cradle of Human Kind

Thursday September 28th

09:00 – 10:00 Open Lecturer

10:00 -11:30 Presentation of papers at the conference

11:30 – 12:00 Coffee Break

12:00 -13:30 Presentation of papers at the conference

13:30 -15:00 Lunch

15:00 – 17:00 Presentation of papers at the conference

Friday September 29th

9:00 – 15:00: Field excursion to Soweto

Venue

TBA – Rosebank Johannesburg

Welcome to Johannesburg, the vibrant and cosmopolitan city of South Africa! Known as the "City of Gold," Johannesburg is the hub of culture and commerce in South Africa. The city has experienced a number of economic setbacks in recent years, most notably the current power crisis in South Africa, yet despite this is still a vibrant and diverse city. It dominates the region as the wealthiest city in Southern Africa and hosts some of the most significant cultural and economic activities in the region.

Also found in Johannesburg is the township of Soweto, short for "South Western Township". It is a place of historical significance, as it was the site of the Soweto Uprising in 1976, a turning point in the struggle against apartheid. The township has since become a symbol of resistance and resilience, with a thriving community and a rich cultural heritage. Soweto is also an important subject of study for scholars of urban development, sociology, and anthropology, as it offers a unique case study of a rapidly urbanizing area in the Global South. Soweto, demonstrates insights into issues such as poverty, inequality, social movements, and cultural identity, and contribute to a better understanding of the complex dynamics of development in the region.

On the doorstep of Johannesburg is the Cradle of Humankind, a UNESCO World Heritage Site located outside Johannesburg, South Africa, has significant potential for regional development. The area is not only of immense scientific and cultural value, but also offers opportunities for sustainable tourism, job creation, and community development. The site has already attracted significant investment in infrastructure, including museums, hotels, and transportation links, which have stimulated economic growth and contributed to the local economy. The Cradle of Humankind offers a fascinating case study of how cultural and natural heritage can be leveraged for regional development, while also promoting conservation and community empowerment.