

## **MUI theme proposal:**

### ***FUTURE-PROOF CITIES (Urban innovation, transition, foresight)***

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Joe Ravetz v3 – 24-07-20

## **Outline**

Cities are the hubs and crucibles of change, both local and global. The notion of a city is also changing – not only grey areas on the map, but many other kinds of reality – peri-urban metro-scapes, constellations, multi-locality networks of experience and imaginary. There's also a strong imperative for change and transformation, towards cities of low carbon, social justice and liveable communities. Such changes are generally inter-connected (social, technical, economic, political, cultural): complex and dynamic (beyond rational governance or analysis): and controversial (different actors with different agendas). And at a time of Pandemic-induced flux and disruption, there's a strong case for looking ahead, for exploring the dynamics of complexity and turbulence – so we look for ways to **'future-proof the city'**.

This **'urban transition / foresight / futures / innovation'** cross-cutting theme explores such dynamics of change: how to understand and analyse it, how to manage and plan, how to experiment and learn, how to build capacity, and how to look ahead and envision viable futures. This theme is a networking, synergistic, inter-connecting program, which involves each of the MUI themes, others in UOM, and further afield with the EU and global community: adding value, generating insights and exploring frontiers.

## **Scope:**

- Urban foresight, future studies, strategic planning
- Urban innovation: dynamics, policies, practices (including social, technological, economic, policy & cultural innovation).
- Urban complexity & *'collective urban intelligence'*
- Urban transition theory & practice, transformation pathways
- Urban learning, living labs, experimental zones
- 'Post-urbanities', peri-urbanism, alternative urban futures.

## **General Workplan**

Sept 2020 – 2022, depending on the situation:

- interactive [\*\*\*synergistic conversations\*\*\*](#) / - series in *Mind-Lab* format, following the synergistic method & toolkit. This brings together a range of expertise from academic & other sectors to explore inter-disciplinary pathways for *'collective urban intelligence'* & urban transformation, in 6 key themes.
- We anticipate approx 3-4 major workshops over 2 years (venues in Manchester / London). UKRI / other funding will be sought).
- A series of smaller seminars will prepare the ground for the main workshops.

- Each of 6 key themes is creating an emerging '**collective book-form**' – an online networked book / platform, with multiple co-authors – to better reflect and mobilize the *collective intelligence* of the community.
- Major funding bid(s) to be prepared. Thematic focus to be developed by the community. These could include (from JR): '*collective eco-urban intelligence*' & resilience: social learning and the '*collective urban intelligence*' in governance: urban innovation-transition-foresight-strategic planning methods.
- This may also continue to focus on post-pandemic response & recovery agendas.

### Resources:

- a key text and reference point for this theme is newly published by Routledge: [Deeper-City-Collective-Intelligence-and-the-Pathways-from-Smart-to-Wise](#)