



RSA 3RD NORTH AMERICA CONFERENCE 2019

***The Call of the New:
Unpacking Innovation, its Spatiality, its Benefits and its Costs***

**Wednesday 25th – Friday 27th September 2019
Centre-Mont Royal, Montreal, Canada**

#RSAMONTREAL

Abstract Submission Deadline: 16th May 2019

Innovation is seen as a way of responding to climate change, social inequalities, economic challenges, the provision of services and the building of infrastructure. Yet it can also be seen as the cause of many of the challenges that cities and regions now face: indeed, in its broadest sense innovation simply means change, and the consequences of many of the changes wrought over the last century and a half are now being understood.

Innovation has been enshrined as a pillar of economic agenda at all governmental scales. The government of Canada’s supercluster policy (2018) makes explicit that it sees innovation as linked to regional processes. The policy reflected the wider claim that cities and regions need to innovate yet these are vague claims in need of investigation.

This conference will provide the opportunity for urban and regional scholars to grapple with the complexities of innovation and change, qualifying the idea of innovation, questioning the institutions that organize and channel it, and exploring the actors, private, public and civil society, who instigate change and cope with its consequences. To what extent are innovative processes regionally embedded? Can radical innovation occur within the current institutional context? Who innovates? Who benefits? Is it possible, or useful, to think through the consequences of innovation? Is it always necessary or advisable to innovate? Can innovation lead to more inclusive forms of growth? How does innovation impact cities and regions – in terms of their governance, their economies, their infrastructure and their social cohesion? And, conversely, how do cities and regions, as polities, innovate, influence innovation, adapt to change, and channel its consequences? These are some of the questions that will be addressed in Montreal.

Key Conference Themes:

A. Infrastructure: maintenance, financing mechanisms	B. Culture and economic development	C. Climate change and urban processes
D. Public sector innovation	E. The causes and consequences of rising inequality	F. Inclusive growth as the new growth model?
G. Artificial intelligence, the platform economy and regional labour markets	H. Identity politics and territorial embeddedness	I. The smart city: a solution in search of a problem?
J. Private sector innovation and spatial processes	K. Medium sized metropolitan areas: what future in a world of mega-cities?	L. Rising protectionism: local, global, short and long-term effects
M. Taxing multinationals and mobile workers	N. Economic development and the environment	O. Small towns and rural regions in the age of big data and internet

We welcome papers from all – academics, researchers, students and those working in policy and practice. The event is inclusive and offers networking opportunities for all. We welcome proposals for special sessions, themed workshops and innovative forms of networking and collaboration. To contribute contact Lesa Reynolds at: lesa.reynolds@regionalstudies.org.

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