

call for papers

**from urban research to planning and design:
strengthening cooperation
between academia and practice**

6th-9th december 2023
@ university of cyprus



Contemporary cities are faced with significant and urgent challenges such as rapid climate change and environmental degradation, complex waste management, mobility issues and traffic-related emissions, levels of energy and resource consumption, as well as questions of equity in access to resources and health. Cities also provide opportunities for developing physical and social assets, collective actions, and innovative ideas to address such challenges. Urban planning and design, as well as management and governance, are called to respond to such challenges under the pressures of their complexity and urgency. They have the responsibility to foster the solutions to mitigate environmental burdens and risks and to create the conditions which enable a high quality of life in cities through effective and just supply and distribution of resources and infrastructures. These challenges are complex and multifaceted; addressing them requires different kinds of data gathering, analytical approaches supported by multidisciplinary expertise, practical experience in implementing urban planning policies and design projects, as well as the ability to visualize and communicate research findings to local authorities, private stakeholders and the general public.

Design and planning professionals are now required to have a broad knowledge of the variety of issues affecting cities and multidisciplinary skills to address them; evidence-based approaches to urban design and spatial planning are now necessary tools to ensure that urban challenges are addressed effectively and sustainably, based on sound knowledge and understanding of the impact of design and planning decisions.

A significant number of higher education institutions across Europe address the topic of evidence-based urban design and planning, but this still retains a secondary role in curricula compared to traditional methods of teaching design studio. While a small number of successful enterprises in Europe have made research outputs a core element of their practice to address pressing urban challenges, including sustainability, mobility, health, and social cohesion, embedding research within daily professional work remains a challenge for the industry.

Despite the growing demand for evidence-based urban practices by designers and authorities to ensure successful and sustainable results in urban design and governance, there is still little awareness in academia concerning the demand for research skills in the profession and the opportunities available for entrepreneurship in this field. Furthermore, the links between design firms and academia in many countries remain minimal, even in a field where most learners move directly into the professional world at the end of their studies to receive accreditation.

This conference aims to bring together academics and practitioners from both the private and public sectors to exchange knowledge and explore ways of strengthening collaboration. Evidence-based design and planning (EBDP) is the focus of this conference because, by assisting planning and design with rigorous analytical methods, it reduces the risk of failure. In traditional design processes, conjectures are tested intuitively, and designers develop their own judgment about the outcomes, while EBDP enables the evaluation of ideas led by intuition to determine empirically whether they are the right solution for the problems faced. The conference's ambition is to strengthen the links between academia, businesses, and the public sector, valuing the know-how produced within different sectors to mutually benefit from the tools that research can provide and from the practical expertise of the profession.

We welcome submissions from academics and professionals and from those working across both research and practice on how the cooperation between academia and practice can be successfully enhanced. In particular, we are looking for papers addressing the following themes:

- 1.Theory and concepts of evidence-based design: the history of EBD and how it has been adapted to urban design and planning; conceptual models of EBD; issues in the interpretation and the translation of research findings for practice.
- 2.Emerging research methodologies for application in urban planning and design: recent tools and methods created within academia or practice for application in design and planning processes.
- 3.The role of urban morphology in evidence-based design and planning: 'traditional' morphological approaches (historico-geographical, process-typology, space syntax) and their role in EBDP; evaluations and discussions of their uptake, effectiveness, and success in professional practice.
- 4.Evidence-based design in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East (EMME) region: the extent of the application of EBDP in different design and planning contexts in the region; progress in engaging industry and public sector agencies in the uptake of EBDP practices in the region.
- 5.Case studies of research methods applied in professional practice: examples of specific applications of research methods and tools used in real projects to produce design and planning outputs; successful examples as well as challenging projects to reflect on; case studies from any geographical areas and the EMME region, in particular, are welcome.
- 6.The evidence from participation in design: the role of the public, NGOs and civil society in planning and design, creating knowledge from participation for the purposes of sustainable and inclusive planning and design, the value of different types of knowledge (from experience, practice, know-how, etc.) in EBD.
- 7.The urban form of Beirut [special track in memory of Professor Robert Saliba]: the historic formation and transformation of Beirut, tradition and modernity in the urban form and architecture of Beirut, city-planning for post-war reconstruction, and contemporary urban design in Beirut and the Arab World.



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