

SCHEDULE

ROYAL  
GEOGRAPHICAL  
SOCIETY

# MID-TERM CONFERENCE

19 - 23 APRIL 2021



PGFMT2021  
PGFHOME

**Royal  
Geographical  
Society**  
with IBG

Postgraduate Forum

## WELCOME

Hello, and welcome to the final schedule for the 2021 Mid-Term Conference. We're looking forward to joining everyone online from the 19th-23rd April for a week of stimulating presentations and workshops and opportunities to network and socialise!

Though online, this year's Mid-Term will once again provide an environment in which PhD students can present their research to fellow postgraduates in a friendly and relaxed environment. We would like to thank the Research Group Postgraduate Representatives for organising their fantastic sessions, in which we will hear from researchers from across a wide range of geographical sub-disciplines. We warmly encourage you to attend all sessions which interest you across the week, to learn more about our peers' work, enter into discussions on contemporary geographical issues and provide support for all our presenters.

We also extend our thanks to those involved in this year's workshops: Dr Maddy Thompson, Dr Sophie Hadfield-Hill and Helen Johnson's #GeogComm panel of Dr Phil Emmerson, Dr Catherine Oliver, Caitlin Hafferty and Jack Lowe.

Finally, a big thank you to the Research and Higher Education Team, without whom an online Mid-Term would not have happened! Your support in the organisation and planning of this event is greatly appreciated and we are grateful for the provision of conference prizes too.

In the following pages, you'll find a hyperlinked Contents page and more information about each of the sessions, including timings and presenters' details. There is also more information on the registration process. Plus find out how you can win one of two £30 National Book Tokens in the Schedule!

Please continue to keep an eye on our [Twitter](#) and on our website [rgspostgradforum.org](https://rgspostgradforum.org) for any further updates.

*PGF Committee*

The Postgraduate Forum Committee, 2020-2021

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## SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

	Mon 19	Tues 20	Wed 21	Thurs 22	Fri 23
<b>0900-1000</b>	PGF Welcome	Workshop: Postgraduate Mental Health	Talk: Dr Alex Hastie, co-editor of the Postgraduate Pedagogies Journal	Talk: RGS PGR Support	
<b>1000-1200</b>	Economic	Children, Youth & Families	Poster Session	Rural	Keynote
<b>1300-1500</b>	Energy	Quantitative Methods	Workshop: Fellowships & Funding	Food	Climate Change & Justice
<b>1500-1700</b>	Transport & Gender	Latin American	Workshop: #GeogComm	Digital	Closing & Poster Prizes
<b>1700-1800</b>			AGM	Urban	
<b>Evening</b>		PGF Social	Q&A (Slack)		

## REGISTRATION DETAILS

You can register for the conference [here](#).

Through registering for the conference, you will receive access to all conference sessions.

You will also receive a link to join the conference Slack page. We will use this space for networking outside of the live conference sessions and each research group will have a dedicated channel. Our Poster Session Q&A will also take place on a dedicated channel.



## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE: MONDAY 19 APRIL

### WELCOME #PGFMT2021

Join us on the [Postgraduate Forum Twitter page](#) at **0900 BST** to hear from some of the Committee, tell us what you're looking forward to during the conference, and ask any last minute questions before the presentations begin!

Our welcome will include a video put together by the committee. A transcript will be available on the Postgraduate Forum website, the link to which will be provided in the video Tweet.

### SESSION 1 - ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHIES RESEARCH GROUP

#### **1000 - 1200 BST**

#### Session chair Session title

Zara Babakordi ([Z.Babakordi2@newcastle.ac.uk](mailto:Z.Babakordi2@newcastle.ac.uk))  
Geographical (dis)connections: experiences of (dis)connection within the research process

#### Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has had (and continues to have) an enormous impact on global value chains across a multitude of sectors around the world. From prohibition to panic-buying, we have witnessed the volatility of value chains, including multi-scalar disruptions and disconnections. We also see widening inequalities, tensions, and injustices across the 'length' of these chains, from production, distribution, to consumption and beyond.

Through an interactive and reflective session, we would like to invite researchers who are working broadly around themes associated with global value chains to consider and discuss the ways in which they see new connections, reconnections, and/or disconnections within their research area(s). Interactive story telling methods (bring your paper and pens!) will be used to help guide the session and to facilitate a space within which participants can reflect on broad topic areas such as theory, methodology, empirical work (and more).

## SESSION 2 - ENERGY GEOGRAPHIES RESEARCH GROUP

**1300 - 1500 BST**

Session chairs

Joe Lawley ([ee16jwl@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:ee16jwl@leeds.ac.uk)), Alice Garvey and Kate Scott

Session title

Emerging Energy Geography: PGR Research Review

**1300** - Intro & Icebreaker

**1310** - Research Presentations: Part 1

**Name and institution**

Hiromi Inagaki, National University of Singapore

**Title**

Tracing Connections of 'Power' Infrastructures: A

Methodology

for Studying Uneven Expansions of Bioenergy Production

### Abstract

This paper examines a methodological tool of tracing 'power' infrastructures that the author has employed for her doctoral research on the uneven expansion process of sugarcane-based electricity generation and circulation in Northeast Thailand. The paper first discusses key notions of infrastructure drawing on Marxist geographical thought on circulations and material politics of infrastructure conceptualised in science and technology studies (STS). The paper then illustrates 1) material and discursive practices on infrastructures that were traced in the study; 2) new or altered circulations of capital, electric and political 'powers'; and 3) their (un)intended effects on material flows that have shaped the recent expansion of sugar production and electricity generation in particular areas. The paper shows that the attention especially to 'extensible' power grids would reveal how financially ambitious electricity authorities and geographically confined sugar producers may achieve favorable positions in 'power' circulation. The paper argues that the tracing of 'power' infrastructure as a methodology would allow for investigating the spatial and temporal connections of varied visions and materialities.

**Name and institution**

Nidhi Srivastava, Jawaharlal Nehru University

**Title**

Minerals for Just Energy Transition: Unearthing a new conundrum

### Abstract

As several countries embark upon a journey to low carbon pathways, the actual and sustained energy transition is dependent on availability and accessibility of raw materials needed for renewable energy and energy efficient technologies. It is estimated that energy transition will be extremely mineral intensive since clean energy technologies require more materials than fossils (The World Bank, 2020). In the last few years, scholars have tried to engage with the theory of justice in energy and transition. McCauley et al have defined energy justice in terms of distributional, procedural and recognition justice (2013). The concept has been expanded to include restorative justice to correct the mistakes of energy sector (Heffron & McCauley, 2017). The discourse on just energy transition has revolved around minimising negative impacts on people dependent on fossils or ensuring greater employment opportunities in renewables or low carbon sectors (IISD, 2018)(Tsani, 2020), but not on the impact of critical mineral extraction needed for such transition. Minerals and Energy have been treated as two distinct sectors, in policy as well as academia, neglecting their interdependence.

Justice in energy transition has been viewed in a very localised context, one of ensuring justice for people getting affected by decarbonisation in terms of losing jobs due to a shift from fossil fuel. While intergenerational aspect is integrated, inter jurisdictional aspect is

not discussed, especially when energy transition in one jurisdiction is completely dependent on raw material from another jurisdiction.

The proposed presentation argues for extending the domain of energy justice to go beyond a narrow interpretation of decarbonisation, and extend to securing raw material for energy transition.

**Name and Institution** Zoe Chateau, University of Exeter  
**Title** Imaginations of the local in the wind energy transition: a spatial approach to wind deployment imaginaries in France

### Abstract

In wind deployment policies, projects, debates as well as contestations, the 'local' has become a recurring theme, seemingly crystallising conflicts, consensual discourses, as well as possibilities for a fairer and more acceptable energy transition. In that respect, it is a gateway into how different groups imagine the wind energy transition and relate to its socio-spatial dimensions. My PhD projects analyses how the local is discursively constructed by actors engaged in the production, negotiation and contestation of wind energy deployment in France at two scales of action: in national wind energy discourses and debates, and in local disputes around specific wind projects. It develops a spatial approach to the concept of sociotechnical imaginaries to analyse interrelations between images of the local and imaginaries of wind energy deployment at different scales. Combining national discourse analysis to two wind project case-studies, it investigates whether and how different constructions of the local are points of contention between diverging sociotechnical imaginaries. By this, it hopes to contribute to understandings of how energy transitions are produced as collective and contested socio-spatial projects, and of the ways specific representations of space, place, scale and publics are used to frame and legitimate sociotechnical imaginaries.

**1355** - Break

**1400** - Just-a-Minute Presentations

**Name and institution** Ami Crowther, University of Manchester  
**Title** **The impact of Covid-19 on Greater Manchester's low-carbon ambitions**

### Abstract

Towns, cities and city regions across the UK have declared ambitions to become net zero ahead of the national government's target of 2050. A range of local strategies have been developed to support these ambitions, with each reflecting the context, resources and motivations of the area in which they are situated. Greater Manchester intends to become net zero by 2038; a whole systems approach has been proposed to support this, which outlines actions relating to energy generation, transport, and housing. The timeline of achieving net zero by 2038 in Greater Manchester, and the whole systems approach developed, involves the implementation of a range of initiatives and strategies. A number of these were planned to be launched in 2020 but priorities shifted in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. To support the 'recovery' from Covid-19, narratives of a 'green recovery' and 'building back better' have emerged at both the national and sub-national scale. Drawing upon initial reflections of interviews conducted with a range of actors associated with Greater Manchester's low-carbon transition— including combined authority officials, local government policy makers, politicians, academics and activists – this presentation will outline their views on how Covid-19 has impacted the city region's low-carbon ambitions.

**Name and institution** Gloria Serra Coch, HERUS lab, Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne

**Title** Diffusion of Innovation in the Energy Landscape: The Role of Supply and Demand Side Network Effects for Integrated Energy Management Systems

**Abstract**

The uptake of innovative and new technologies is key for the success of the energy transition in Switzerland and beyond. Previous research has shown that both, access to reliable information and peer-effects, can have a significant effect on the uptake of new technologies by consumers. In this project we aim at better understanding information diffusion patterns and peer-effects on the supply and the demand side in all three linguistic areas in Switzerland with different region-specific contextual factors. We do this by looking at information exchange networks between suppliers of integrated energy management systems linking photovoltaics and electro-mobility, as well as the actor-networks and information sources influencing investment decisions of individuals, i.e. home- and car-owners. By taking a distinct network view, we identify who are central information carriers, which channels of information exchange are of special importance for innovation diffusion in Switzerland, and where are key leverage points that could be targeted to increase the uptake of innovative technological solutions by consumers.

**Name and institution** Lucy Maddox, University of Nottingham

**Title** A Climate of Change or Conserving the Status Quo? The Energy Transition and Rural Landscape Conservation in UK National Landscapes: An Introduction

**Abstract**

How do sustainable energy futures and rural landscape conservation interact? Climate Change, described as humanity's greatest contemporary threat, requires fundamental changes to the way we live our lives socially, politically and through technological development. This presents particular challenges for the management of rural landscapes such as the UK National Landscapes, including the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These are large areas designated as 'special places' and subject to high levels of landscape conservation and protection; whilst also being home to a hybrid of resident communities, businesses and industry; and iconic highly valued tourist destinations attracting millions of visitors per year. Conceptualisation of place as an 'inherent energy landscape' [whereby energy landscapes have been defined by Stremke, S. and Pasqualletti, M in 2008] will enable the inhabited and modified cultural landscape, whose histories and current conditions reflect technologies, policies and social values of energy generation and systems over time to be explored. It is posited that by attending to the socio-historical narratives of the UK National Landscapes and acknowledging these as 'inherent energy landscapes', that the values and drivers that underpin rural landscape conservation and future energy landscape change can be understood in parallel.



**Name and institution** Lucas Barning, TU Wien  
**Title** There's only one "d" in Smart Grid

**Abstract**

The discourse on the promises of Smart Grid development is narrated by four "d's": Digitisation, decarbonisation, decentralisation and democratisation. While the first "d" is an inevitable prerequisite for Smart Grid systems, I argue that the other three "d's" are at best optional. Decarbonisation depends on the technologies of choice (ranging from generation to storage and ICT technology), decentralisation might hold true for the physical layout but not necessarily for institutional structures or regulation, and democratisation seems in most instance to be misunderstood for market liberalisation and individualisation. Particularly the last "d" appears flawed as little elements of classical definitions of democracy, such as Robert A. Dahl's process-oriented principles of effective participation, freedom of choice, enlightened understanding, citizen control over the agenda and inclusiveness, seem to be inscribed in Smart Grids material and immaterial structures. At the example of the Indian Smart Grid Mission (NSGM), I argue that instead of decentralisation and democratisation the transformation of the Indian energy system comprises a tendency towards centralisation of authority and the roll back of democratic federal institutions and regulations. I therefore suggest to take Smart Grid literally and characterise it with one "d".

**Name and institution** Alexandra-Elena Vitel, University of Leeds  
**Title** The challenges of linking personal mobility and domestic energy

**Abstract**

Traditionally, transport and energy are seen as two separate fields of activity with a low correlation. However, the citizens of cities do not normally separate their lives between the two. Rather, both domains mutually shape human lives and form what we commonly call lifestyle. As technological innovation in mobility, especially electromobility, tries to unite the two areas more and more, it becomes increasingly clear that the interaction between sectors, in this case energy, transport and heat, highlights how net zero is in fact a 'system of systems problem'. This brings to light an important ascertainment. In order to effectively establish the smart energy system of the future, it is necessary to unite these different sectors. The operationalization of this conceptual understanding, however, remains challenging. At the structural level, the energy system requires a functional strategy to stabilize a system that will hinge on fluctuating renewable energy sources. While the involvement of several users in a single smart grid depends on this, the realistic achievement of efficiency goals, which lead to lifestyles that sustain sufficient energy consumption, are highly dependent on the end user's behaviour. This understanding begs for attention in a virtuous circle - circularly from beginning to end.

**Name and institution** Chloe Baruffa, University of Geneva  
**Title** Negotiating new frontiers in sustainable energy production: hydropower development in recently deglaciated Swiss mountain regions

**Abstract**

As glacial lakes are rapidly forming in the Alps as a result of human induced climate change and glacier retreat, so are plans to exploit their potential for hydropower generation and storage. In the last ten years, policy plans and narratives have shifted from considering glacial lakes as a source of risk to an opportunity for renewable energy production. While the formation of these lakes creates opportunities to expand the limit of hydropower production on new territories, it also raises a number of unprecedented questions related to the legal status of glaciers and their waters, the long term impacts of glacier retreat on hydropower production, and the compromises that societies are willing to accept with respect to environmental regulations, landscape preservation, and renewable energy transitions in the context of climate change. Building on discursive approaches to policy change, the two main objectives of my PhD thesis are to trace the evolution of plans to build reservoirs on Swiss glacial lakes from the early 1990s to today and to analyze the specific development of the Trift dam project, the country's first hydropower project on a recently melted glacier.

**Name and institution** Jane May Morrison, University of Exeter  
**Title** A Town Called Eco: Low-carbon transport practices in an English eco-town

**Abstract**

In 2008, the UK government announced plans to build new 'eco-towns' – low-carbon developments to pioneer ways of solving the climate crisis. But today, after massive policy changes and economic recession, are UK eco-developments actually lower-carbon? And if not, why? And what other policies, infrastructure, economic changes or campaigns might help them hit Net-Zero carbon targets in future? My case study research uses survey, document, and interview data to investigate an English 'eco-town'. It takes a practice theoretical perspective, and looks at the practices of stakeholders and residents alike. Multiple aspects of decarbonization are examined, but this one-minute presentation will focus on transport. Does the evidence show this eco-town having below-average transport emissions? No, not yet. Survey results show a negatively significant association between the length of time a resident has lived there, and public-transport-taking,  $r(206) = -.19$ ,  $p = .005$ . Survey results also show 61% of residents self-report taking transport less often. This presentation will briefly outline three ways to help UK eco-developments (+ other developments!) to hit CO2 targets: increased frequency of public transport, spatial placement and service availability in new developments, and internal cycle/pedestrian route connectivity.

**Name and institution** Mathias Koepke, Utrecht University  
**Title** SDG 7 and the city: The (re-)making of urban and infrastructural heterogeneity through access initiatives in Greater Maputo

**Abstract**

Energy access for all' initiatives in the global South have predominantly focused on connecting marginalized, rural populations through a combination of centralized grids and alternative socio-technical solutions. Across energy geography and development studies, attention to the urban ramifications of such initiatives is largely missing so far. Yet, affordability and reliability of centralized grids in cities are greatly affected by energy access policies, innately linking spaces often investigated separately. In this presentation, I mobilize recent debates on urban and infrastructural heterogeneity as a lens to investigate the complex and partially adverse outcomes of SDG 7-guided policies across diverse urban agglomerations. Empirically, I focus on Greater Maputo, Mozambique. Here, massive connection campaigns threaten the utility's commercial viability, trigger tariff increases and strain distribution infrastructures. In turn, end-user aspects for electricity access such as affordability and reliability are growing challenges. An analysis of diverse case study neighborhoods reveals the diverse and complex outcomes across Greater Maputo which partially counteract policy goals and complicate the struggle for integrated sustainable urban development. With factual grid accessibility threatened, hybrid and heterogeneous electricity constellations become even more important. Investigating these constellations highlights questionable, place-based outcomes in terms of social, environmental and economic performance.

**Name and institution** Ben Robinson, University of Nottingham  
**Title** TIME to Change: Rethinking Sustainable Energy Access

**Abstract**

Achieving Sustainable Development Goal 7, sustainable energy for all, by 2030 represents a considerable challenge. Currently, 40% of the global population do not have sustainable energy access, and instead rely on burning biomass to satisfy their energy needs. Despite a long history of Improved Cookstove (ICS) initiatives across the globe, many interventions fail at persuading end-users to sustainably use ICS past the adoption phase. Resulting in many ICS falling out of use once project partners depart. These failures are often due to the energy-technology for poverty-alleviation discourse being shaped by ever more complex technologies rather than social methodologies such as understanding end-user priorities and complex contextual barriers to sustained use. In this paper, we present a novel qualitative implementation model, the Technology Implementation Model for Energy (TIME), for practitioners and policymakers that focuses on three core areas; to rethink impact, to understand differences in practitioner perception and end-user reality, and to champion a co-produced approach with all energy key stakeholders. TIME is the first energy implementation model to blend Social Enterprise, Appropriate Technology, Water, Hygiene and Sanitation behavioural change models and International Development planning tools whilst advocating a value driven approach centred around co-production, ownership, use of resources and equality.

**Name and institution** Muez Ali, UCL  
**Title** Migration, Land Policy and Electricity Access in Rwanda

**Abstract**

Land is scarce in Rwanda, a small, mountainous country with a high population density and a historic reliance on agriculture for food security. The genocide in 1994 made matters worse. The destruction of homes and a mass exodus left a lot of Rwandans and returnees homeless. In December 1996, the Ministry of Public Works in Rwanda issued instructions to restructure unplanned urban areas and regroup the rural population. The lack of a coherent policy to address issues of human settlements increased unplanned residential areas in rural and urban areas. In 2004, the government drafted and enacted the National Human Settlement Policy. In urban areas, the policy aimed to organise urban sprawl. In rural areas, the government designed a resettlement (villagisation) programme, where residents are grouped into new settlement centres, called "Imidugudu", where the government hoped to provide agricultural land, access to markets and public services. One of the public services is electricity. This research uses the Rwanda MTF household energy consumption survey to investigate the effect of the resettlement policy on the likelihood of households having access to electricity, specifically the effect of living in an Imidugudu on the likelihood of a household having a connection to the national grid.

**Name and institution** Alejandra Ise, Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas

**Title** Energy Geography in Argentina and South America

**Abstract** (Alejandra Ise, Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas):

At the beginning of the 21st century, South American countries diversify their energy supply, dominated by hydrocarbons and hydroelectricity. They valorize unconventional resources, renewable and non-renewable. Goals behind this are to provide new and better services, eradicate poverty, gain autonomy and security, and mitigate emissions of greenhouse gases. In Argentina, harnessing of photovoltaic and wind energy expands through small-scale distributed installations and large centralized plants. As of 2010, unconventional hydrocarbons, with gas as protagonist, are exploited. With the shifting of production and resource access boundaries, on a national and continental level, energy maps are redrawn. The trend towards regional energy specialization is highlighted. The aim of this proposal is to present a trajectory of transdisciplinary research on energy issues, articulating results of individual –doctoral and postdoctoral- and collective work, developed in a framework of interinstitutional, international cooperation. In the transition towards a more inclusive and less polluting model, the evolution of socio-technical systems modifies the Argentine and South American energy geography, incorporating new productive territories. At the same time, possibilities of co-constructing projects, extending services and promoting regional integration emerge.

**Name and institution** Ana Watson, University of Calgary  
**Title** Natural Gas Extraction and Conflict in Upper Amazonia: Discourses and Power in Peru's Camisea

### Abstract

Natural gas extraction in Amazonia is deeply connected to questions of colonial power and territory. While many studies have addressed extraction conflicts, few have examined the socio-political foundations of discourses and power behind the negotiations and acceptance of extractivism in indigenous communities. Biological conservation, climate change mitigation and development approaches have shed light on indigenous livelihoods and the ecological importance of the Amazon, but tend to overlook their mutual constitutions with strategies of power and knowledge production during extraction negotiations. Drawing on political ecology, my study helps to uncover those dynamics by examining the roles of power and knowledge in defining environmental impacts and in influencing social acceptability of hydrocarbon operations across cultural worldviews and a multi-scalar geography. My research focus on the study case of Peru's Camisea natural gas project. Some praise it as a national example of sustainable and clean energy by defining its impacts to "acceptable" levels. This research examines such definitions of "acceptable" as an active process in which power and knowledge production plays important (but usually hidden) roles in meaning-making and behavior. This research generates theoretical contributions for the political and cultural understanding of energy extraction negotiations and conflicts for indigenous communities that co-lived with and are affected by hydrocarbon extractivism.

## 1425 - Research Presentations: Part 2

**Name and institution** Sylvere Hategekimana, Chalmers University of Technology, Department of Technology Management and Economics  
**Title** Energy geography in East Africa: spatial dimensions of renewable energy transitions and sociotechnical change

### Abstract

East African countries have pledged to achieve sustainable energy for all by 2030. The achievement of this goal implies changes in how societies organize electricity supply and use. However, access to modern energy services remains limited and fragmented. Many contextual challenges hinder access to modern energy to become a driver for socio-economic development. There are spatial differences in the organization of renewable energy and fossil fuels systems that call for a focus on geographical aspects of energy transitions. This study aims to contribute to the understanding of the role of spatial dimensions of the energy transition for rural transformation processes in East Africa. Gavin Bridge has proposed a comprehensive framework on energy transition geographies which includes six elements: location, landscape, territoriality, scaling, spatial differentiation, and spatial embeddedness and path-dependencies. The application of this framework in the Global North has been useful in analyzing the spatial patterns of energy transitions. However, its relevance to modern energy mixes for East Africa remains to be seen. By operationalizing this framework through a theoretical review in the East African context, we analyse evidence in socio-spatial relations, such as trends in the development of resources, flows of finance and knowledge, territorialities, actor networks and power dynamics as well as their effects on rural transformation in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania. Results show that the location dynamics of electricity are characterized by the scramble for



available energy resources. This has contributed to the considerable increase in electricity generation, with Kenya emerging at the forefront.

The energy landscape in East Africa has been characterized by a constellation of expanding material infrastructures ranging from hydropower and geothermal infrastructures targeting the modernization agenda. Transnational flows of knowledge and resources spurred by the World Bank and the implementation of the Feed-In-Tariffs policies have caused considerable changes in the electricity landscape, especially in Uganda. The diversification of actors has made possible the emergence of three territories respectively controlled by the state, private sector and communities. These territories reflect rural-urban inequalities in term of access to electrification. This spatial differentiation has made electricity a contested phenomenon in rural areas with a minor contribution to socio-economic transformation. The review identifies data and knowledge gaps indicating the need to conduct empirical studies to fully materialize each dimension of the framework. This would permit the identification of centre-periphery dynamics of ongoing and potential transformation processes in Rwanda.

**Name and institution**

Majd Jayyousi, University of Manchester

**Title**

Electricity infrastructures, developmental aspirations and just transitions in Kenya

**Abstract**

Works on sustainable transitions are increasingly recognising the importance of balancing climate concerns with socio-economic considerations. Just transitions approaches therefore emerged to critically assess pathways to a low carbon future that ensure social and economic justice. With its ambitions to achieve universal electrification in 2022, Kenya's just transition requires closing the electricity access gap, improving socio-economic wellbeing, and meeting climate change targets. Within that context, this paper assesses energy transitions in Kenya considering its developmental aspirations. To achieve that, the paper looks at energy policies and strategies in Kenya and examines how they shape infrastructural transformations accompanying sustainability transitions. It analyses how Kenya's commitment to the modernisation and infrastructure for development policies impacts electrification in the country and seeks to understand its implications on just energy futures.

SESSION 3 - TRANSPORT GEOGRAPHIES AND GENDER AND FEMINIST GEOGRAPHIES  
1500 - 1700 BST

Session chairs

Zhengyue Wan ([zhengyue.wan.17@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:zhengyue.wan.17@ucl.ac.uk)) and Olivia Engle

Session title

Women in the UK transport sector: where are we now, and where are we going?

Abstract

Although feminist geographers and women in the transport sector have been advancing gender perspectives on mobility, their contributions to safe, inclusive, and sustainable transport are insufficiently acknowledged. This session will be a panel discussion of female practitioners working in key areas of the UK transport sector. The panel will be asked questions about their experiences as women in the transport sector, their gender or feminist perspectives in enacting sustainable and gender-inclusive transport, and how women postgraduates can move towards working in the transport sector. This session will conclude with questions from audience members for the panel.

Panellist details

**Dr Lucy Mahoney**

Email: [lmahoney@c40.org](mailto:lmahoney@c40.org)

Senior Manager, Walking and Cycling C40 Cities

**Kris Beuret OBE, FICHT, TPP, MMRS**

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Director, Transport for Quality of Life

## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE: TUESDAY 20 APRIL

### SESSION 4 - TALKING ABOUT POSTGRADUATE MENTAL HEALTH

**0900 - 1000 BST**

Session chair

Dr. Maddy Thompson

Abstract

This workshop will provide a space for discussions about postgraduate students and mental health, recognising the ongoing impact of COVID-19. Mental health is affecting the HE academy more broadly, however, many of the struggles faced by staff are amplified for postgraduates. Furthermore, postgraduate researchers, in their uncomfortable position of neither staff nor student are often overlooked in institutional and national discussions.

This workshop hopes to provide an opportunity for postgraduates to connect and have a space to share their concerns and strategies for survival. The workshop will also provide information on what the RGS and other Geographical associations are doing in regards to the mental health of members, as well as provide an opportunity for the postgraduate community to feedback key concerns to the RGS.

Please note, this is not a training session on mental health, nor is it run by a mental health professional, instead, this is a discussion space. The workshop will not be recorded, but it is hoped discussions can continue afterwards, so please do email Maddy if you can't attend but would like to be involved: [m.thompson1@keele.ac.uk](mailto:m.thompson1@keele.ac.uk)

## SESSION 5 - GEOGRAPHIES OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES RG

**1000 - 1200 BST**

**Session chair**

Emma Bates ([E.Bates2@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:E.Bates2@lboro.ac.uk)) and Dr Maria Alfaro Muñoz

**Session title**

Geographies of children, youth and families: what is one challenge that you have faced during your PhD so far?

**Session details**

The session will begin with the below presentations. They will be followed by a break and time for questions and discussion.

**Presenters**

**Name and institution**

Alice Leyman, Portsmouth University

**Title**

My Challenge: Being a Parent of a Child with Autism whilst researching Children and Young People with Autism's exclusion from Society

**Abstract**

My inspiration for my PhD is my daughter and how she defies assumptions and preconceptions about a young person with autism – particularly with her creativeness, imagination, and social skills exclusively during cosplay. As a parent of an autistic child, I am both included and excluded from the community and this is tricky for data collection. I have a good deal of knowledge of autism and live with autism, but as a neurotypical I am, in part, excluded. With my research I wish to challenge assumptions and increase awareness to empower individuals with autism and increase inclusiveness particularly through ascertaining their perspectives and voice, however I also have a neurotypical daughter and I do parent her differently. Am I no better than society? Will this be viewed as hypocritical? How do I create trust with other children and young people with autism if I am not included in their life spaces?

**Name and institution**

Ellen Bishop, University of Leicester

**Title**

Negotiating the Roles of Researcher and Teaching Assistant in Ethnographic Research

**Abstract**

This presentation will discuss the challenge of taking on the role of a Teaching Assistant (TA) to conduct ethnographic research for my PhD on the Geographies of Secondary School Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL). I took on the role of a TA to immerse myself in the classroom and gain insights into the everyday experiences of EAL pupils and the actors of support around them. However, this led to many complicated situations where my priorities as a TA and researcher were at odds with each other, exacerbated by my lack of TA training and feelings of anxiety around my abilities as a TA and feelings of out of placeness. Whilst currently writing up my analysis, I reflect on this challenge and how it has impacted my research findings.

**Name and institution** Poppy Budworth, University of Manchester and  
*GetYourBellyOut*

**Title** Researching with young ‘ostomates’: How to negotiate  
positionality?

**Abstract**

Thinking about ‘positionality’ and ‘personality’ is fundamental when undertaking social research, but how are these put into practice, and how do new researchers navigate these big ideas? My main focus as a new Postgraduate Researcher has been theorising and designing ethical and reflexive research. A goal for my first year was to establish a creative and flexible methodological framework which centres the participant-voice, whilst acknowledging how I might impact on (and be impacted by) research processes and encounters. Two aspects of the project design have helped me put ‘positionality’ into practice: (1) establishing and nurturing a supportive and advisory relationship with the project’s CASE-partner ([GetYourBellyOut](#)), and (2) writing a field diary, which acts as a tool to reflect on my ‘emotional engagement’ with the project (Liddiard 2017:54) and as a ‘self-care strategy’ (Liddiard 2017:50). This presentation outlines my challenges with positionality and provides space to discuss how others negotiate with this.

**Name and institution** Helen Woolley, Newcastle University

**Title** Ethical Conduct Towards Participants and Self as a Junior  
Social Researcher of Children

**Abstract**

Research with children is a complex and ongoing process, punctuated with critical moments, where researchers need to be ethically mindful. Gallagher (2009) highlights the importance of ethical conduct towards yourself and your participants. I found the process of institutional ethical approval deeply problematic; a strategy I developed was to view it topographically as a set of jigsaws that lay on top of each other: institutional ethics; positionality both personal and professional; understanding childhoods; methodological issues - rather than pieces of one very large jigsaw. By highlighting the areas of similarity and difference between the layers, it supported me to recognise when to be pragmatic or dynamic in my approach. A concern expressed by many is that the ethical committee process can turn this complexity into an exercise in form-filling ‘doing research ethics’; I found this approach helped me to operate ethically when taking pragmatic process driven actions.



**Name and institution** Simeon Shtebunaev, Birmingham City University

**Title** Recruiting teenager participants online - intermediaries, challenges and strategies

**Abstract**

Recruiting and collecting data from teenager participants has traditionally been a challenging prospect. As a demographic under competing pressures, researchers often have had to resort to employing intermediaries - schools, teachers, youth workers and parents. However, throughout the pandemic traditional recruitment strategies quickly became unavailable. As a PhD student in the beginning of the data collection period, the pandemic quickly challenged my approach, ethical consideration and recruitment channels. Responding to the challenges of reaching young people directly online, very different strategies of recruitment were developed, some of which worked and others failed. This presentation will give an overview of the process of recruiting teenager participants online and hopefully provide some insights to other researchers struggling with data collection.

**Name and institution** Liz Ackerley, University of Manchester

**Title** Making sense of messy data: Writing about, through and within times of change

**Abstract**

Throughout my PhD research I have been thinking about, talking about, and seeking to capture processes of change. Working with a youth charity navigating internal organisational shifts and a difficult funding context after a decade of austerity, as well as young activists working to challenge inequality at multiple scales, my research is both about, and conducted within, times of significant social and economic change. Post fieldwork I was faced with pages of ethnographic fieldwork notes and transcripts from interviews and group discussions, leaving me overwhelmed and unsure how to make sense of it all. In this presentation I hope to share my thinking and invite discussion about how I have worked through this challenge, drawing on ideas about the importance of temporality in researching social change and young people's lives (McLeod and Thomson, 2009; Worth, 2009; Nolas, Varvantakis and Aruldoss, 2017; Maynard, 2018).

**Name and institution** Louise Meincke, University of Dundee

**Title** Arche-what? Finding my way through the breadth-and-depth method and archeological metaphors

**Abstract**

I stumbled across the notion of using archeological metaphors to describe the breadth-and-depth method for analysing a large corpus of secondary qualitative data. The academic debate about how to approach and handle large qualitative datasets, while still remaining true to the rigour, integrity and nuancing of such research, is still a relatively new field. Tasked with analysing the largest ever database of the lives of street-connected youth, the breadth-and-depth method as developed by Edwards et al (2019) is a welcome starting point, setting out a four-step approach. Behind this method sits an 'archeological metaphor' for enabling exploration of the dataset to tease out different actors, situations, places and times. This archeological metaphor is attributed to Seale (2004) and is utilised by Edwards et al (2019) to 'enable the researcher to think further of what lies beneath'. The issue is that no further elaboration on the issue can be found in the literature to date. What would be the potential next steps as a budding PhD student to approach this emerging field?

## SESSION 6 - QUANTITATIVE METHODS RESEARCH GROUP

**1300 - 1500 BST**

**Session chairs** Patrick Ballantyne ([p.j.ballantyne@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:p.j.ballantyne@liverpool.ac.uk)) and Rachael Sanderson

**Session title** Becoming an Early Career Researcher: The Ups and Downs of a PhD and Beyond

### Abstract

Join the Quantitative Methods Research Group (QMRG) for an exciting conversation with Early Career Researchers (ECRs) from across the discipline. The session will focus on life beyond the PhD, including the transitions into research and teaching fellowships, permanent lectureships, as well as other post-PhD routes including industrial positions and gap years.

During the panel we will discuss the various experiences, advice and lessons learned by ECRs, providing a diverse insight into how unique some of these can be, and evaluating the role to which some of these 'pathways' have supported career decisions. We will also be conversing with our panellists to identify some issues and/or opportunities that current PhD students/ECRs may experience in the field.

The panel will be made up of a broad variety of ECRs, each with different stories to tell about their career pathways, disciplinary backgrounds and experiences post-PhD. Although the panel is made up of ECRs from primarily quantitative and methods-based disciplines, **we feel this session will appeal to all PhD students and ECRs in the academic community.**

### Panellist details

<b>Alec Davies</b>	<i>Data Scientist, Pets at Home Group</i>
<b>Andrew MacLachlan</b>	<i>Lecturer in Spatial Data Science, Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis.</i>
<b>Flurina Wartmann</b>	<i>Lecturer in Geography and Environment, University of Aberdeen.</i>
<b>Gwilym Owen,</b>	<i>Research Associate in Public Health Policy and Systems, University of Liverpool.</i>
<b>Hyesop Shin</b>	<i>Research Associate in Geospatial Data Science, University of Glasgow.</i>
<b>Isabel Williams</b>	<i>Teaching Fellow in Quantitative Human Geography, Durham University.</i>
<b>Joanna Wilkin</b>	<i>Lecturer in Social and Geographic Data Science, University College London.</i>
<b>Nick Hood</b>	<i>Teaching and Research Fellow, University of Leeds.</i>
<b>S.M. Labib</b>	<i>Research Associate, University of Cambridge.</i>
<b>Vikki Houlden</b>	<i>Lecturer in Urban Data Science, University of Leeds.</i>

## SESSION 7 - LATIN AMERICAN GEOGRAPHIES RESEARCH GROUP

**1500 - 1700 BST**

**Session chairs** Elizabeth Chant ([elizabeth.chant.17@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:elizabeth.chant.17@ucl.ac.uk)) and Francesca Ferlicca

**Session title** Latin American Geographies in the UK

### Session details

The Latin American Geographies in the UK Research Network (LAG-UK) is a group of researchers based in the UK and elsewhere who work closely with geographical ideas and practices in Latin America, including building relationships with diverse civil society movements and organizations, as well as academic institutions.

This session will combine networking with presentations in our hope that attendees can connect with scholars from the UK and Latin America, as well as from across the RGS postgraduate community. We will begin with a 'lightning round' where attendees will be invited to share a brief summary of their current research, followed by three 'key concept' talks from expert members of our research group, and breakout group discussions.

We invite anyone with an interest in Latin America to come along to our session. Participants are welcome to share their work in English, Spanish or Portuguese. Concept presentations will be in English.

**1500** - Introduction, Elizabeth Chant and Francesca Ferlicca

**1510** - Lightning round presentations

**1530** - Concept presentations

<b>Name and institution</b>	Dr Ana Laura Zavala Guillén, QMUL
<b>Topic</b>	Territory

<b>Name and institution</b>	Dr Matthew Richmond, LSE
<b>Topic</b>	Gentrification / Hygenisation

<b>Name and institution</b>	Dr Gabriel Silvestre, Newcastle University
<b>Topic</b>	Right to the City / Insurgent Planning

**1610** - Break

**1620** - Guided breakout discussions

**1635** - Group feedback

# PGF SOCIAL & QUIZ

Tuesday 20 April 2021 | 1930 BST

**Join us for a virtual social and quiz!**

The quiz will have six rounds and last 30 minutes. We will then be socialising from 2000 onwards.

★ WIN: £30 NATIONAL BOOK TOKEN! ★

**MID-TERM CONFERENCE**

19 - 23 APRIL 2021

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## NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN

COMPLETE APPLICATION FORM BY FRI 9 APRIL

[APPLY HERE](#)

**READ OUR LATEST  
BLOG POST  
ABOUT JOINING  
THE COMMITTEE  
[CLICK HERE](#)**

## HUSTINGS HELD AT MID-TERM

ALL CANDIDATES ARE INVITED TO APPEAR IN  
HUSTINGS ON WED 21 APRIL TO TELL OUR MID-TERM  
ATTENDEES WHY THEY SHOULD VOTE FOR YOU!



# WORKSHOP ATTENDEES - WIN!

Tuesday 20 April & Wednesday 21 April 2021

If you attend at least two of our three live workshops (Talking about Postgraduate Mental Health; Fellowships and Funding; #GeogComm), you will be entered into a draw to win a £30 National Book Token.

WIN: £30 NATIONAL BOOK TOKEN!

## MID-TERM CONFERENCE

19 - 23 APRIL 2021

Royal  
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## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE: WEDNESDAY 21 APRIL

SESSION 8 - PRESENTATION: DR ALEX HASTIE, CO-EDITOR OF THE POSTGRADUATE PEDAGOGIES JOURNAL

### **0945 - 1000 BST**

Hear from Dr Alex Hastie, Co-Editor of the Postgraduate Pedagogies Journal. A link for the video will be released on the Mid-Term Slack channel and the [PGF Twitter](#) page.

There will be a chance to ask questions on the Mid-Term Slack channel and on the [PGF Twitter](#) page.

SESSION 8 - POSTER SESSION

**1000 - 1200 BST**

Session chair

Théo Lenormand ([tlenormand@glos.ac.uk](mailto:tlenormand@glos.ac.uk))

## POSTER SESSION

Wednesday 21 April 2021 | 1000 - 1200 BST

**If you would like to present a poster at the PGF Mid-Term Conference, please fill the form below by Friday 2nd April.**

**APPLY HERE**

You will know whether your submission has been accepted the following week by Tuesday 6th April.

We will ask you to submit your poster with the final abstract by Wednesday 14th April by email to [rgsibpgforum@gmail.com](mailto:rgsibpgforum@gmail.com)

PLEASE NOTE: We will be unable to accept applications from those presenting in one of the live sessions.

Posters will be made available on the Mid-Term Slack channel. You will have time to respond to any questions during the Poster Session on Wednesday 21st April between 1000 and 1200 BST. Your poster will also be shared on the PGF Twitter page if you select 'Yes' to the final question of your EOI form.

**WIN A YEAR OF RGS POSTGRADUATE FELLOWSHIP**

POSTER PRIZE: All posters will be judged by a panel from the RGS-IBG's Research and Higher Education Committee. The winning poster will receive a one year RGS Postgraduate Fellowship.

**MID-TERM CONFERENCE**  
19 - 23 APRIL 2021

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## SESSION 9 - FELLOWSHIPS AND FUNDING WORKSHOP

**1300 - 1500 BST**

Workshop chairs

Dr Sophie Hadfield-Hill (University of Birmingham) and Dr Susanne Börner (Universidade de Sao Paulo & University of Birmingham)

Abstract

‘Fellowships and Funding: Pitching your story and thinking like a reviewer’

Are you coming to the end of your PhD? Thinking about next steps and applying for fellowships? This two-hour workshop is designed to give insight into preparing for and writing fellowship and funding applications. The interactive session will help you to sell yourself as a researcher, develop your ideas for future projects and think like a reviewer.

## SESSION 10 - #GEOGCOMM: ENGAGING WITH YOUR AUDIENCE

**1500 - 1700 BST**

Workshop chair

Helen Johnson ([h.l.johnson@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:h.l.johnson@liverpool.ac.uk))

Abstract

As contemporary academics, we are encouraged to use social media to build our profiles and share our research on social media. However, does this mean that we need to split our accounts? How much of ‘ourselves’ should we show online and is blogging still relevant in 2021?

These are some of the questions that the #GeogComm panel will discuss. The panel is comprised of multi-disciplinary PhDs and ECRs discussing how they have used social media to build their profile and/or spread the word about geographic research. SciComm is key within STEM to explain research in an easily digestible manner, demystify scientific work and to show the human faces behind research papers. While geographers do overlap with many STEM subjects, we have our own set of skills and knowledge that has incredible relevance to our modern day and modern-day issues.

By the end of the session, we should begin to see what a #GeogComm community could look like and hopefully spark a few ideas for the audience to build upon. This is a casual panel, and we encourage you to grab a drink and tweet along with the hashtags #geogcomm and #pgfmt2021

Panellist details

**Phil Emmerson**

Managing Editor: Academic Publications, Royal Geographical Society

**Caitlin Hafferty**

PhD Researcher, Countryside and Community Research Institute

**Jack Lowe**

PhD Researcher and Visiting Lecturer in Digital Storytelling at Royal Holloway

**Catherine Oliver**

Research Associate, Department of Geography, University of Cambridge

# AGM, Q&A AND ELECTION HUSTINGS

Wednesday 21 April 2021 | 1700 - 1800 BST

## AGM

Come along as we report back on our year.

## Q&A

Feel free to ask us any questions you have about the role of the PGF committee and the events we organise.

## ELECTION HUSTINGS

During this session, we'll also hear from candidates for the 2021-2022 committee in our hustings.

## MID-TERM CONFERENCE

19 - 23 APRIL 2021

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## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE: THURSDAY 22 APRIL

### SESSION 11 - RGS SUPPORT FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

#### 0900 - 1000 BST

Hear from Dr Sarah Evans, Research and Collections Engagement Manager at the RGS, about the support the Society offers to postgraduates. A link for the video will be released on the Mid-Term Slack channel and the [PGF Twitter](#) page.

Further information can be found [here](#).

There will be a chance to ask questions on the Mid-Term Slack channel and on the [PGF Twitter](#) page.

### SESSION 12 - RURAL GEOGRAPHIES RESEARCH GROUP

#### 1000 - 1200 BST

[Session chair](#) Niamh McHugh

[Session title](#) Current Research in Rural Geography

[Abstract](#)

**1000 - 1100 BST** – “Adapting your Research” Workshop presented by Professor Martin Phillips, University of Leicester and Professor Darren Smith, Loughborough University.

Professor Martin Phillips, currently at the University of Leicester and Professor Darren Smith, Loughborough University, are renowned researchers in the field of rural geography. Recent works include a joint UKRI funded project, “International Rural Gentrification (iRGENT)”, which explores cross-national rural geographies and the capability of rural gentrification in explaining rural change in France, the UK and the USA. Individually, Martin is currently working on a project on comparative ruralism in Japan and the UK, funded by the AHRC and ESRC under their UK-Japan Connections programme and is the Chair of Rural Geography Research Group of the RGS. While Darren currently is the (Co)Editor-in-Chief of Population, Space and Place as well as the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Rural Studies and recent works cover subject areas such as rural displacement and studentification in North America and China.

This workshop will involve Martin and Darren delivering a session which will be based on their own experiences of when they have had to adapt their research and advice for researchers and students who are experiencing similar challenges in their own environment. It will then be followed by a Q&A session which will allow researchers and students to ask questions surrounding their own research adaptations as well as any comments regarding the workshop.

## 1100 - 1130 BST – Postgraduate Lightning Presentations

<b>Name and affiliation</b>	Hermann Kam, Imperial College London
<b>Title</b>	New Land Managers - The potential role of non-farmers in the future delivery of public goods in the UK countryside.

### Abstract

The UK has experienced a transition towards a more multifunctional countryside over the past several decades, with the use and management of rural land to promote public goods becoming increasingly important; especially in light of incoming Environmental Land Management scheme. The UK's departure from the EU seems likely to accelerate these trends in the coming years, with increasing demands for public goods provision and other uses of rural land potentially pushing landscapes further away from agriculture. One significant, if still poorly understood, outcome of this is the change in the demographic of rural landholders – some of whom appear to possess values and practices significantly different to main occupation farmers, but could play a role in the provisioning of public goods in the years to come. Hence, this research will seek to understand the shifting patterns of rural land occupancy in the UK, along with gaining a deeper insight into these new land managers: their values and practices, what their entry into communities means for farmers, and how they could be effectively engaged in the provisioning of public goods.

<b>Name and affiliation</b>	Theo Lenormand, University of Gloucestershire
<b>Title</b>	Big money, big subsidies for small and unevenly distributed returns, is UK farming economic performance structure future proof?

### Abstract

For the last 50 years farm income has been supported either directly or indirectly through the Common Agricultural Policy. In the last 30 years the farming environment has changed tremendously with a liberalisation of most components. Thanks to an analysis of the economic performance and agricultural revenue per family worker on 3 agrarian diagnosis (Cochet, 2011); lowland wales 2019, 1 in upland wales 2020, France-Cantal 2019. We will explore the effect of different productions and farming system functioning on the profitability. Finally the repartition of landholding patterns, land market structure and subsidies distribution will help us understand the differences in agricultural revenue. We will see that farm specialisation, differentiation and amalgamations are linked to thin margins compared to other sectors with a challenging expansion environment. This analysis will help us understand possible routes for Wales farming with the end of direct farm income support and its replacement by agri-environmental schemes.

## 1130 - 1200 BST

This session will then conclude with an open discussion surrounding the RGRG, its committee and what opportunities there are to be involved next year.

## SESSION 13 - FOOD GEOGRAPHIES RESEARCH GROUP

**1300 - 1500 GMT**

**Session chair** Barbora Adlerova and Rob Booth

**Session title** Food system inequalities pre, during and post-pandemic.

### Abstract

The ongoing pandemic has brought into sharp relief vulnerabilities within the food system, from the agricultural practices that create the conditions for the spread of the zoonotic diseases to the reliance on underpaid, seasonal agricultural labour and the precariousness of just-in-time supply chains. The pandemic has only exacerbated existing crises. The impact has extended across the food chain to include dietary-related ill-health, food poverty and community initiatives to address increasing food insecurity. In the UK it has also shone a light on the uneven food governance and infrastructure intended to facilitate access to healthy and nutritious food, for example through Free School Meals or through local food partnerships, whilst exposing the potential and limitations of alternative and local food networks. This conference session looks to bring these evolving and emergent issues under scrutiny from an interdisciplinary perspective. We will hear from a panel of ECRs examining these questions before breaking out into discussion groups to go deeper on the impacts and ramifications of the pandemic across the food chain.

We are delighted to announce we will hear presentations from the following speakers:

**Zdeňka Smutná** is a PhD student in Economic Policy and Public Administration at Jan Evangelista Purkyně University in Ústí nad Labem, Czechia. Previously, she graduated in Geography at Jan Evangelista Purkyně University and after graduation, she completed research internships at Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research (Leipzig) and Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies (Halle) in Germany. She focuses mainly on the topics of rural development and the sustainability of agri-food systems with a particular focus on alternative food networks.

**Hannah Slocombe** is an ESRC-funded PhD student at the University of Liverpool. Her research interests centre around forms of social and spatial inequality, with a focus on the everyday as well as lived experiences. Her current research explores the intersection between classed and gendered realities of austerity and the pandemic through an examination of community-based social infrastructures within Merseyside, in the North-West of England.

**Louise Mitchell** started her PhD at the University of Salford in October 2018, adopting a case study approach to investigate how community gardening or farming projects affect the health of older adults. She is currently in her third year, trying to recover from a pandemic that wiped out her original data collection method, whilst juggling teaching and an RA post. The results gathered within her PhD are intended to provide a deeper understanding of the perceived and actual changes to physical and mental health community gardening has on older adults, whilst also engaging with stakeholders across the field and examining the impact of the pandemic.

**Laurie King** combines her interest in ethnography and food system challenges in her PhD in Human Geography at Cardiff University. Her project looks at the relationships of care surrounding people's food choices in locations considered to be most at risk of diet related ill health. Her aim is to explore methodologies that challenges Eurocentric and simplistic binaries such as local/global and traditional/modern/industrial when discussing food system challenges, while at the same time recognising that there are such challenges that people have to negotiate resulting from an unequal and problematic food system.

## SESSION 14 - DIGITAL GEOGRAPHIES RESEARCH GROUP

**1500 - 1700 BST**

**Session chairs** Jack Lowe and Daisy Curtis  
**Session title** Digital Geographies and the Everyday  
**Session timings**

**1500 – 1505:** Welcome and introduction

**1505 – 1615:** Screening of digital shorts

**1615 – 1700:** Discussion and opportunity for Q&A

### Presentation 1

**Name and institution** Ellen Addis, University of Birmingham  
**Title** “We are where we aren’t”: Place at the digital literary festival

#### Abstract

Using the author Ali Smith’s dictum from her Hay Festival Digital 2020 appearance, “we are where we aren’t,” my digital short will explore the geographical boundaries and contradictions which arise from the digital space of the literary festival. The ephemeral nature of the online literary festival event renders them to be what Beth Driscoll calls only “temporary community”.<sup>1</sup> I will explore how this reading community links to the geographical festival space created online and ask how it can be made more traceable.

Literary festivals, events which gather writers and readers in interactive spaces, have become increasingly reliant on digital platforms since the coronavirus pandemic. One such book festival is Hay Festival in Wales which launched a purely ‘Hay Digital’ edition of their event in May 2020 and garnered their largest audience to-date with over 500,000 digital attendees.

My digital short will investigate the particularity of the digital geographical space at Hay Festival. Primarily, I will ask, how is Hay Festival’s sense of self, or ‘Hayness’, created at its digital events? I will argue that the digital literary festival creates a place of shared collectivity among strangers through reading which emulates the festival environment to encourage audience engagement online.

### Presentation 2

**Name and institution** Maciej Głowczyński, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan  
**Title** Influence of mobile media on digital placemaking practices  
 preliminary research results

#### Abstract

Nowadays, dynamic development of information and communication technologies including mobile media is treated by geographers as an essential factor of production of space. Mobile media changes the ways in which people finding, experiencing and interacting with places. Virtual space is filled with digital content about places created, among other things, by text, images, rankings, ratings or labels assigned to a given location. We are not only a recipient reacting to this information but also its co-creators. Therefore, contemporary places could be treated as an amalgam of digital content, physical objects, locations and people, while spatiality could be considered in the context of mediation by mobile media. This raises the question of what attributes of places are most commonly shared in virtual space and which places do they refer? Who are their creators? Finally, how does mobile media limit or expand perception of space and experience of being in a place? The aim of the study is to determine the influence of mobile media on digital placemaking. This process is understood as practices related to the potential for development and access to dynamic aspects of location through digital technologies that influence mobility patterns and decisions about travel destinations, as well as practices that combine and augment material world experiences and imaginations about a place. During the presentation the author will share the preliminary pilot study

results which contains findings from in-depth interviews combined with quasi-experiment and questionnaire interviews.

### Presentation 3

#### Name and institution

Grace Hiu-Ling Yeung, Hong Kong Baptist University

#### Title

Telecommuting amidst Covid-19: The Governmobility of Working-from-home Employees in Hong Kong

#### Abstract

Covid-19 is ravaging the world. In order to cut off the chain of virus transmission between people, various types of mobility restrictions have been initiated around the world. Under this circumstance, working is also restricted to maintain social distancing. In the blink of an eye, the world has become a 'work from home laboratory'. Through the rapid circulations of information on the Internet, teleworking effectively eliminates daily commuting and allows people to work remotely from home. Considering Dorow, Roseman and Cresswell's (2017) call for 're-working mobilities', the author finds that extant literature lacks a thorough investigation into the politics of mobility embedded in teleworking. In particular, how the ever-changing power relations of teleworking produces or shapes various forms of (im)mobilities, and what opportunities and constraints virtual mobility brings to spatial mobility (or conversely). From the perspective of the politics of mobility, teleworking can be considered as a new form of society-making involving sociality, sociation and network capital intertwined with (im)mobility. Teleworking enables the ruling of information flows and circulations work through (self-)governed workers and their complex relational networks. Compared with before Covid-19, workers are subject to self-governance and governance-at-a distance. Hence, this research adopts the notion of governmobility proposed by Bærenholdt (2013) as a theoretical main axis, and supplemented by Cresswell's (2010) interpretation of mobility (i.e. the physical movement, representation of (im)mobility and experienced practices of (im)mobility) to investigate how teleworking arrangements influences the (im)mobile experiences and practices of workers.

### Presentation 4

#### Name and institution

Seerat Kaur, University of Bristol

#### Title

(Re-)Imagining subjectivities of refugees/asylum seekers in the digital realm

#### Abstract

UK's asylum regime, as embodied in various laws and legislations, has become increasingly hostile towards asylum seekers and refugees. This 'hostile environment' has given rise to hostile ways of seeing and visualising refugees/asylum seekers which is further solidified by the national mainstream media. While dominant narratives (and visualities) on asylum are primarily framed at the national level (by the Home Office and national media) I aim to explore the digital as a site where nation-state-centric accounts of asylum may reconfigured and potentially unsettled. The digital domain (e.g. websites, social-media, online campaigns) is being increasingly used by advocacy/humanitarian actors to register dissent against hostile immigration policies and to (re-)present refugees/asylum seekers in a new light. For example, a representational strategy used by certain humanitarian actors on their digital spaces is to depict refugees/asylum seekers engaging in everyday mundane activities (e.g. cooking, gardening etc) in the host society which unsettles national imaginaries. In this context, I ask the question: How do digital-visual artefacts (e.g. images, photographs, illustrations, video/film) on the digital spaces of advocacy/humanitarian organisations construct the subjectivities of refugees and asylum seekers in the context of the UKs hostile environment? On a methodological level I suggest that being more attentive to the 'visual' and other modes in these digital spaces besides the textual and discursive aspects will add a rich dimension to the analysis thereby enhancing it. This line of enquiry is in keeping with the recent 'visual' and 'digital-visual' turn in geography (Rose, 2015; Leszczynski, 2019).



## Presentation 5

### Name and institution

Thomas Shrimplin, Newcastle University

### Title

Young people, violence and the 'everyday' co-production of geopolitics in PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds

### Abstract

This research will focus on young people who play PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds (PUBG) and other military-themed Battle Royale videogames, to understand how geopolitics emerges through co-productive, 'everyday' practices in ludic assemblages, and also to explore the effects of this on young people. Advancing emerging scholarship within the sub-discipline of popular geopolitics, this research will argue that processes of globalisation, such as technological improvements in online communications, have enabled the young people who play videogames, to 'co-produce' geopolitical assemblages. It will do this by recognising and engaging with young people as active 'geopolitical agents' to understand the ways in which they are involved in the co-production of ludic assemblages, through 'everyday', 'violent' and creative practices of videogaming. It will also attend to the social effects of engaging in these practices of geopolitical co-production that young people must then negotiate in their everyday lives. This work will be done via a participatory mixed methods approach towards assemblage, using hybrid ethnography and semi-structured interviews to investigate how the young people who play military-themed Battle Royale videogames, co-produce and live geopolitics (Dittmer and Gray 2010). In doing so this research project will move away from the abstract, 'textual' focus of prior scholarship on how popular geopolitical discourse shapes the everyday, by instead focusing on the ways in which young people are co-constitutive of the geopolitical assemblages that emerge in their everyday lives.

## Presentation 6

### Name and institution

Alexander Manby, University of Oxford

### Title

Towards a digital geography of diplomacy: understanding the digitalisation of the UN Human Rights Council

### Abstract

This paper advances a digital geography of diplomacy by considering how accelerated processes of digitalisation associated with the Covid-19 pandemic have altered the spatialities, norms, and practices of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC). In doing so, I address two conceptual lacuna: the under-theorised role of the spatial in digital diplomacy scholarship, and the lack of attention to the diplomatic within geography's 'digital turn' (Ash et al. 2018). Following Leszczynski (2015: 729), I conceptualise the HRC, characterised by hybrid modalities of digital and physical participation, as a "mediated" space involving an "incomplete coming-together of technical presences, persons, and space/place". Drawing on observations and interviews with 'unrepresented diplomats' from minority and indigenous communities, the paper's aims are threefold. First, I explore how digitalisation of the HRC has unevenly reconfigured the spatial exclusions and hierarchies of human rights diplomacy by reproducing some physical exclusions, but challenging others. Second, I show how the digital has altered the spatialities and multi-scalar geometries of diplomacy to incorporate new diplomatic sites, including the home, within the (digital) diplomatic assemblage (Dittmer, 2017). Finally, I draw from the geographies of embodiment, intimacy, and encounter to consider how digitalisation has shaped the decorum, fidelity, sociability and intensity of diplomatic encounters across difference. I conclude by reflecting on the implications of these shifts for the advancement of human rights, arguing that, although they offer opportunities for novel "creative practices"

(Pinkerton and Benwell, 2016:15), they risk establishing new digital (diplomatic) divides which disproportionately silence the concerns of marginalised communities.

## Presentation 7

**Name and institution** Marie Oldfield, University of Portsmouth

**Title** AI: Anthropomorphism and Dehumanisation

### Abstract

The use of Artificial Intelligence is becoming widespread and as we continue to ask 'can we implement this' we neglect to ask 'should we implement this'. When AI is implemented as a model there are various frameworks and conceptual journeys one should take to ensure a robust model; context is one of the vital parts of this. AI is now expected to make decisions in a wide range of situations, from deciding who gets a credit card to Cancer diagnosis. These decisions affect most, if not all, of society. Even if we do not get a credit card, sharing of our information to multiple systems could result in discrimination in other systems. Therefore, if we do not understand, or use, fundamental modelling principles then we can cause serious effects to society. Recently more serious effects of AI have been observed. We are aware of discrimination within credit card allocation due to gender and race and we have seen benefits allocation incorrectly implemented by unaccountable algorithms, however, the most recent observable issue is dehumanisation. Dehumanisation is the human reaction to overused anthropomorphism and lack of social contact caused by excessive interaction with technology. This can lead humans to devalue technology, but also then to begin to devalue other humans. This is a contradiction of the use of 'social robots' and 'chatbots', indicating that the negative effects would certainly outweigh any perceived positive effects of the use of this technology. It is clear to see that, due to lack of testing and modelling forethought, we are entering uncharted territory that holds a vast array of consequences, some that we are yet to observe.

## Presentation 8

**Name and institution** Daisy Curtis, University of Exeter

**Title** The invisible infrastructure: management and perceptions of the electromagnetic spectrum

### Abstract

In the case of telecommunications, the electromagnetic spectrum forms part of the infrastructure which is the foundation on which numerous devices depend. The spectrum underpins much of everyday life, and as Shepard (2009: 210) highlights, it is 'embedded in manifold ways'. The dependency upon the spectrum means that it is highly valued and considered by some as a basic necessity akin to water. However, it is also an entity which is easily forgotten as it functions beyond the human senses (Dunne, 2005).

Even though on an everyday level the presence of, and dependence upon, the spectrum may not be obvious, by using the example of 5G technology, there are two key ways it is drawn into focus: management and perceptions. The development of 5G technology is broadly based on an expansion into 'new' areas of the electromagnetic spectrum not previously used by the mobile network operators. There is a whole range of policy decisions, licensing processes, and international cooperation involved in order to ensure the spectrum is being used effectively and efficiently. Alongside this, the spectrum and the frequencies involved in 5G have become entangled in Stop 5G protests revolving around the safety of the electromagnetic frequencies. Situating the discussion in relation to 5G technology this digital short will explore some of the main tensions and challenges entangled in this invisible infrastructure which forms the basis of everyday life.

## Presentation 9

### Name and institution

Giulia Occhini, University of Bristol

### Title

Natural Language Processing: the best way to advance the methodological toolkit of digital geographers?

### Abstract

Previous studies in the field of GIS introduced the usage of Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques both to extract geographically relevant information from text (e.g. geographic information retrieval) and to complement imagery obtained from remote sensing through geolocated social media textual content (Karimzadeh et al. (2019); Liu et al. (2017)). As much as the usage of textual processing techniques has been advocated within the critical human geography tradition as well - mostly in order to confront representation issues in a comprehensive and sophisticated way (Lees (2004)) - large scale NLP models are still struggling to emerge in the field. Indeed, textual analysis has the ability to differentiate not only the quantity, but also the nature of raced, classed and gendered geolocated contributions, helping to uncover substantial inequalities happening at the level of voice representation and power dynamics. A domain to which NLP can be fruitfully applied to, is online textual data. The study at hand is going to provide an empirical illustration of how the usage of unstructured data sources scraped from the web can reveal previously hidden insights on persisting urban inequalities in the digital space. More specifically, this work uncovers formerly unknown patterns of occupational segregation happening within the digital economy realm. In the study, NLP techniques are complemented with multilevel models, allowing to provide an overarching description of occupational segregation phenomena accounting for the role of place, gender and ethnicity following intersectionality theory. All in all, the presentation aim is to showcase how digital geographies can benefit from textual analysis at scale.

## Presentation 10

### Name and institution

Olivia Fletcher, University of Liverpool

### Title

Theorising self-tracking and the geographies of surveillance in the lives of young people

### Abstract

There has been a growing use of self-tracking technologies to track 'health' in everyday life, which has resulted in growing concerns over young people's obsessive monitoring practices and negative self-image. As Goodyear et al (2019) identify, previous research often views technology as a solution or as a deterministic technology of surveillance. Following this, this research looks at the complexities of this usage, offering a more nuanced approach to this in the context of young people's everyday voluntary use of technologies outside of institutions. Thus, examining how 'health' and the 'healthy' self are being reformulated through the data from these devices and their associated surveillance. This digital short will highlight the multiple theories – feminist new materialism, Foucauldian theory and social capital theory - synthesised in this research, used to better understand how humans come together with digital technologies in everyday lives. Through combining these theories, this research examines the body as a site of power intervention, aiming to better understand how the surveillant gaze relates to self-regulation of the 'healthy', ideal, neoliberal gendered subject. In applying social capital theory, this research analyses how certain performances of health may be reified over others in these digital spaces, leading to the transfer and development of social capital. In synthesising these theories, this research will offer insights into how to better understand and negotiate what 'health' is and how it is practiced in digital spaces.

## Presentation 11

### Name and institution

Rosie Knowles, Royal Holloway, University of London

### Title

The Digital Geographies of Ecotherapy

### Abstract

Recently there has been an expansion in digital technologies offering access to ecotherapeutic spaces. The pandemic has encouraged people to turn to alternative solutions for their mental well-being. Lockdown has resulted in many being unable to access 'untouched wilderness', or what is often deemed suitable as an ecotherapeutic landscape. This has given rise to digitalised ecotherapy experiences, seeking to offer immersion within the home. Forest Bathing (Shinrin-Yoku), is an ecotherapeutic practice originating from Japan, promoting healing within forests. It has recently risen in popularity and circulated globally and is now prescribed by the Japanese government's national health programme, promoted by UK National Trusts, used as a tool for wellness gurus, and experienced within the home through sonic/visual immersive apps and wellness tools (including forest sprays). Scientific studies have quantified the benefits of forest bathing experiences (e.g. hormone levels, heart rate). However, Cultural Geographies and Health Geographies lack research into this ecotherapy and its digital implications. I seek to explore this through a virtual creative ethnography, inviting participants to share their experiences. This research is situated within Cultural Geographies of nature and the environment, questioning modern western binaries of nature/culture, human and non-human, in this attempt to commodify and digitalise nature. I will draw upon feminist and creative geography perspectives and methods to explore this practice at the scale of the body/home. This responds to calls from health geographers to challenge abstraction and universalised embodied accounts of health, using participatory creative methods to enable the articulation of sensory and affective experiences.

## SESSION 15 - URBAN GEOGRAPHY

**1700-1800 BST**

Session Chair

Sidra Ahmed ([sidra.ahmed.17@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:sidra.ahmed.17@ucl.ac.uk))

Session Title

Emerging Urban Research and Speed Networking

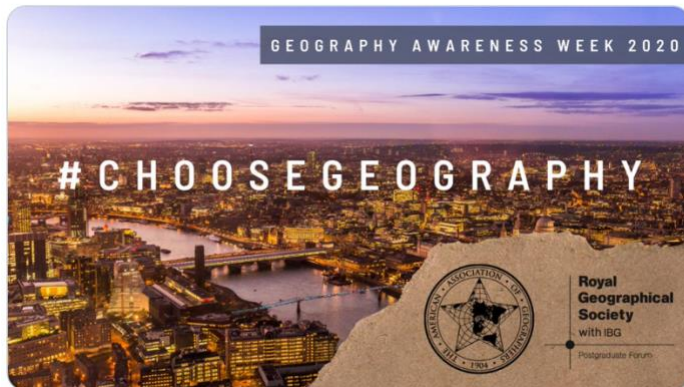
Abstract



PGF RGS-IBG (is @Home!)  
@PGF\_RGSIBG

**#ChooseGeography.** Choose cities and visual culture. The 24/7 City. Urban mobility. Urban exploration. Psychogeography. The urban imaginary. The movie set for your favourite film. Urban planning.

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... You may have seen that this year's Committee launched a number of events under PGF@Home, our digital events initiative. And whether it has been talking about urban geography or sharing urban imagery captioned like a #geographer on our new [Instagram](#) account, there has been something missing... It has dawned on us that it is important to increase our engagement with urban geographers given the vast array of ideas and topics cities inspire and provoke us to consider. And it is great to see the Urban Geography Research Group back up and running this year! As a first step, this networking and research sharing session has been planned.

The provisional outline of the session includes:

### **1700-1720 BST Speed Networking | ALL ATTENDEES**

You will be put into pre-assigned Zoom breakout rooms with other urban researchers based on your research background. It will be informal and you will have an opportunity to meet other PhD geographers and urbanists from around the world.

### **1720-1800 BST Share Your Research: 1 Photo, 3 Minutes, Your Research | UP TO 10 SELECTED PRESENTERS FROM SUBMISSIONS**

Share one image that is representative of your research and present your thoughts, findings or vignette in 1-3 minutes.

You can be as creative as you like - tell us about your theoretical framework, the story behind how you got the idea, share your early thoughts and/or findings, or recite a poem! It does not matter what stage of your research you are at - a picture speaks a thousand words! Whether you are still finding your feet at the start, immersed in data collection, writing up or prepping for your viva, you are welcome to submit an image to present.

Sign up here:

Please complete [this form](#) by Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2021 so that the speed networking segment can be set up and, if you choose to submit an image, selected images are ready to present.

*If you would like to join after the sign up date has passed, please email the Session Chair.*



## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE: FRIDAY 23 APRIL

### KEYNOTE

#### 1000 - 1200 BST

Dr Sarah Percival

Liverpool John Moores University

In this keynote session, Dr Percival will be discussing a coastal flood vulnerability and risk model that captures crucial features of coastal flood vulnerability; integrating physical and socio-economic vulnerability data, combined with a coastal flood hazard analysis, to give overall flood risk at neighbourhood scale, at two different times of day, for floods of different magnitudes. She will focus on the interdisciplinary nature of her work and the methods she uses, to discuss the value of working in such a way.

### SESSION 16 - CLIMATE CHANGE GEOGRAPHIES RESEARCH GROUP

#### 1300 - 1600 BST

##### Session chair

James Dyson ([J.Dyson@lse.ac.uk](mailto:J.Dyson@lse.ac.uk)), Sabina Lawreniuk and Candice Howard

##### Session title

Climate Change and Geographies of Justice

##### Session details

#### 1300 - Introductions

#### 1305 - Keynote presentation

##### Name and institution

Erik Swyngedouw, University of Manchester

##### Title

The Apocalypse will be disappointing: Traversing the Climate Fantasy

#### 1330 - Keynote Q&A

#### 1350 - Break

#### 1400 - ECR Panel, chaired by Erik Swyngedouw

##### Name and institution

Liam Saddington, Jesus College, Oxford

##### Title

The Geopolitics of Adaptation: The Temporalities and Spatialities of Climate Change in Tuvalu

##### Name and institution

Alice Garvey, University of Leeds

##### Title

A 'spatially just' transition? Subnational inequality and the geography of the UK's low carbon agenda

##### Name and institution

Africa Bauza Garcia-Arcicollar, University of Reading

##### Title

Climate-related displacement and the loss of memories: cultivating practices of remembrance as symbolic reparations

# POSTER PRIZE-GIVING & CONFERENCE CLOSE

Friday 23 April 2021 | 1600 - 1700 BST

Join the committee as we present this year's poster prize, announce the winner of the workshop prize draw and bring the 2021 Mid-Term to a close.



**MID-TERM CONFERENCE**  
19 - 23 APRIL 2021

**Royal  
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Free online access to all RGS-IBG journals: *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, *Area*, and *The Geographical Journal* and the guides 'Publishing in Geography' and 'Communicating in Research'.



## NETWORK

Attend our online events to meet other postgraduates.

Join the Society's Research Groups to network with geographers with whom you share research interests.

Meet geographers from around the world at the RGS Annual Conference and the Society's regular events, such as the Monday Night Lecture Series.

Join our active online community of over 2.7k geographers on Twitter and Instagram!

  @pgf\_rgsibg

## #PGFHOME

PGF@Home, our digital events initiative.  
Check out our Twitter and Instagram to catch up on...

- Publishing in Geography Q&A with Phil Emmerson
- Creative Research Week
- Local Geography Week
- Home for the Holidays



## CONFERENCES

### TWITTER CONFERENCE

We held our first ever Twitter global Conference this year over 3 days and 6 sessions. Catch up via #PGFTC2020 on Twitter and participate next year!

### MID-TERM APRIL 2021

Attend and present at the PGF's annual Mid-Term Conference organised for PhD Students by PhD Students. Watch for updates @pgf\_rgsibg

### RGS-IBG ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2021: PGF SPONSORED SESSIONS CALL OPEN!

Find out more and apply: [tinyurl.com/pgfsessionscall](https://tinyurl.com/pgfsessionscall)



## POSTGRAD LIFE: THE BLOG

From top ten tips for PhD students, a welcome and a warning from a postdoctoral researcher, to conversations with RGS Postgrad Reps - we've got you covered geographers!



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