

Manchester Urban Institute Newsletter 2018

# Urban Explorers

Welcome to the latest MUI newsletter, a special one that marks the first anniversary of the Institute's external launch!

Over the next twelve months there are a number of projects that will be coming on stream, as we seek to expand the contribution we make to debates over how best to conceptualise the future of cities and what this means for local, national and international policy-makers whose jobs are to make them better places for people to live.

Whilst our colleagues from across the University of Manchester continue the great work that helped to make the MUI possible, there have also been discussions with associates locally and globally about future projects that we will no doubt be telling you more about in future newsletters.

**Matthew Harrison**  
MUI Manager

**Kevin Ward**  
MUI Director

# Research Theme Updates

The Manchester Urban Institute is home to a number of research projects which are organised into four research themes.

Each of these themes speaks to challenges highlighted by key funding and policy organisations, such as the European Commission, Innovate UK, and RCUK.

Further information:  
[www.mui.manchester.ac.uk/research/themes](http://www.mui.manchester.ac.uk/research/themes)

## Green and Resilient Urban Futures

Our newest signature theme was introduced to highlight the breadth of MUI's research into increasing environmental, economic and social stresses and how urban areas can mitigate and manage them.

Find out more about this theme at  
[www.mui.manchester.ac.uk/gruf](http://www.mui.manchester.ac.uk/gruf)



## Smart & Sustainable Cities

A recent addition to this theme's suite of projects is 'Well cities: implementing a wellbeing valuation toolkit for urban learning'. Supported by ESRC IAA funding and Arup, Well Cities develops a valuation toolkit for urban environments to make a case for good design.

Find out more about this project at  
[www.mui.manchester.ac.uk/wellcities](http://www.mui.manchester.ac.uk/wellcities)



## Spatial Inequalities and Poverty

This theme houses some of MUI's energy research, including the Energy Vulnerability and Urban Transitions in Europe (EVALUATE) project which is investigating fuel poverty across Europe in order to inform national and international policy.

Find out more about this project at  
[www.mui.manchester.ac.uk/evaluate](http://www.mui.manchester.ac.uk/evaluate)



## Urban Governance and Politics

With the advent of Greater Manchester's first mayor in 2017, a key project under this theme in MUI's first year was the Devo Manc hub. As an example of our activity in this area, MUI commissioned three short stories and released them online in August 2017.

Find out more about the Devo Manc hub at  
[www.mui.manchester.ac.uk/devo-manc](http://www.mui.manchester.ac.uk/devo-manc)





# Launch Success!

Our 2017 external launch was a great success. There was widespread coverage on various social media platforms and the feedback from those who attended the two signature events was very positive.

Our launch began on 7 February when Professor Michael Keith from the University of Oxford joined us for his talk titled 'The future's promise? Technocratic Dreams, Faustian urbanism and the cities yet to come'.

On 9 March, Lord Blunkett gave his talk on 'Universities post-Brexit, aspiring to remain international but with a mission

that is essentially local'. Lord Blunkett had some very positive things to say about the University of Manchester "getting its act together" on social responsibility.

You can see full videos of these two events, along with interviews with Michael Keith and MUI Director Kevin Ward at [www.youtube.com/manchesterurbaninstitute](http://www.youtube.com/manchesterurbaninstitute)



## Comics and the City in Latin America: Framing Urban Communities

Latin America, like many other parts of the world, is experiencing a resurgence in the popularity of comics and graphic novels. No longer restricted to print and comic cons, this growth is also seen online and in art galleries.

Project coordinator James Scorer is looking in particular at how comics are being deployed in urban public spaces in the region and the way that state entities, institutions and individuals variously deploy national and international comics traditions, tropes and iconographies in an attempt to foment or contest narratives of nationhood and belonging in the often alienating cityscapes of Latin America.

Network partners will gather in Bogotá in September 2018 where they will contribute to the annual Entreviñetas festival, and then in Manchester in the summer of 2019 for an international conference drawing together scholars from diverse global contexts who are working on comics and the city.

Comics and the Latin American City: Framing Urban Communities' is funded by the Leverhulme Trust.

### Further information

<https://comicsandthelatinamericacity.wordpress.com/>



## Co-producing urban governance for social innovation

Cities are sites of crisis and opportunity. In a context of rapid social change and austerity, the effectiveness of traditional systems of urban governance is in doubt.

Greater Manchester is leading the way in a series of devolution deals that have been proclaimed by the UK Government as heralding a "revolution in the way we govern England".

Jam & Justice looks to seize the seeds of opportunity provided by devolution to explore how we could govern differently in our cities.

'Jam' is about trying to bring together different partners to address shared problems. 'Justice' is about reconnecting with those who are usually left out from the search for solutions.

Jam and Justice is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council's Urban Transformations programme, a portfolio of projects in the UK which examines major changes taking place in cities across the globe.

### Further information

[www.mui.manchester.ac.uk/jam-and-justice](http://www.mui.manchester.ac.uk/jam-and-justice)



## European Energy Poverty Observatory

The European Energy Poverty Observatory is a 40 month project, aimed at engendering transformational change in knowledge about the extent of energy poverty - estimated to affect 50 million people in the European Union - and measures to combat it.

The EPOV project is funded by the European Commission, and is implemented by a consortium of universities, advocacy groups, think tanks, and the business sector. The University of Manchester leads the consortium: Harriet Thomson acts as Project Manager, while Stefan Bouzarovski chairs the Steering Committee.

Among other objectives, EPOV is geared at improving the transparency of information and policy by bringing together the disparate sources of data and knowledge that exist in varying degrees across the whole of the EU. It also provides a user-friendly and open-access resource that promotes public engagement as well as informed decision making by local, national and EU-level decision makers. The Observatory will support the work of interested stakeholders, based on a holistic approach to understanding and addressing energy poverty in the European Union.

### Further information

[www.mui.manchester.ac.uk/epov](http://www.mui.manchester.ac.uk/epov)



## Taking a RoundView of the Carbon Landscape

This multi-million pound project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund has been launched to restore areas in the North West transformed by heavy industries like coal mining, peat extraction and iron & steel production.

A collaboration of local authorities, statutory organisations, environmental charities and community groups and led by the Lancashire Wildlife Trust, The Carbon Landscape aims to restore more than 130 hectares to nature, train more than 1000 volunteers and offer free education to 40 schools, and is spearheading the latest Government thinking on the environment. While work has already been happening to create green areas, the project aims to get local people involved in the restoration work using the RoundView - an accessible and positive approach to sustainability - which has come from research by Joanne Tippett, Lecturer in Planning and Environmental Management.

The aims and objectives of the project are to continue restoring a derelict landscape connecting wild areas to offer a better chance for wildlife; to reconnect people to the land; to raise awareness and remind local residents that this is YOUR landscape.

### Further information

[carbonlandscape.org.uk](http://carbonlandscape.org.uk)

- Knowledge Exchange
- Social Responsibility
- Business Engagement

# Research

MUI includes a range of research projects. Here, we highlight four projects to provide a glimpse of the work currently underway.



“

To be given an award bearing Jo Cox's name for my research on the impacts of austerity in the UK gives me confidence in the value of this work.

*Sarah Marie Hall,  
Political Studies Association Jo Cox Prize*

”

# Awards

## Prizes, Fellowships and more

MUI staff have been individually recognised with a number of high profile and prestigious awards in 2017. Here are just a select few.

**Sarah Marie Hall** won the inaugural Political Studies Association Jo Cox Prize for Public Service and Active Citizenship.

The judges at the awards ceremony commended Sarah for her “research into socio-economic issues, including the unique ‘Everyday Austerity’ project which moved beyond academia and the media to engage directly with the public and ultimately reflecting the values and ethos espoused by the late Jo Cox.”

**Harriet Thomson** was awarded the Economic and Social Research Council Outstanding Early Career Impact award. Harriet has played a central role in changing the European Commission's approach to fuel poverty. Her research has provided the European Union (EU) with a new tool for measuring fuel poverty, and gathered Europe-wide momentum behind helping the 54 million European households that currently struggle to heat and power their homes.

**Saskia Warren** became the first academic member in the School of Environment, Education and Development to secure a prestigious Arts and Humanities Research Council Leadership Fellowship. It will be used to develop a project on the roles and impact of Muslim women in

distinct spaces of the UK creative and cultural economy.

**Cecilia Wong** has become the newest Fellow of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI). Fellowship is the RTPI's highest membership class and was awarded to Cecilia for her outstanding contribution to planning.

**Albena Yaneva** was awarded the Lise Meitner Visiting Chair in Architecture at the University of Lund. The award is offered to a distinguished female academic to provide the opportunity to conduct innovative research and lecture at Lund University in Sweden.

For more details on these stories and many more, please visit [www.mui.manchester.ac.uk/about/news](http://www.mui.manchester.ac.uk/about/news).



# A Global Urban Institute



During the launch programme and throughout 2017, MUI welcomed 23 high-profile academic visitors to Manchester from across the globe for lectures, seminars and workshops.



Over the course of the year MUI welcomed seven Hallsworth and Simon Visiting Professors ([www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/research/funding/](http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/research/funding/)): Xiangzheng Deng (Chinese Academy of Sciences), Roger Keil (York University, Toronto), Bruno Latour (Sciences Po, Paris), Ute Lehrer (York University, Toronto), Zhigang Li (Wuhan University), Timothy Moss (Humboldt University, Berlin) and Stephanie Pincetl (UCLA).

exploring Manchester's various redevelopment strategies, before taking part in a day workshop with some of us at the MUI. This visit further enhanced the strong link between our two groups of researchers and provided an opportunity to discuss future collaborative projects and activities.



Each of these visiting Professors took part in a variety of events, including public lectures, seminars, workshops with staff and students and discussion panels.


It is certainly not all one way traffic! As well as the conference circuit and invited lectures around the world, MUI researchers have been accepting visiting Professorships and discussing and embarking on research with Universities and other organisations in countries including Australia, Canada, China, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the US.





In May 2017, MUI's Spatial Policy Analysis Laboratory (SPA-Lab) hosted a collaborative workshop event here in Manchester with the Chinese University of Hong Kong's Institute of Future Cities. Five academics from the Institute of Future Cities toured the city,

These efforts have already boosted the Manchester Urban Institute's global reputation and provided a strong platform for making MUI a truly global urban hub.

# 2016/17 in numbers

 [www.mui.manchester.ac.uk](http://www.mui.manchester.ac.uk)

 [mui@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:mui@manchester.ac.uk)

 @UoMUrban



# 650

new Twitter followers

Over 4000 total followers **69%** UK, **31%** overseas

Klout average of **51.4**, compared with 46.8 across other urban research groupings



# 1687

YouTube views

# 11

 new videos

# 9

podcasts,  
**168** listens



# 210

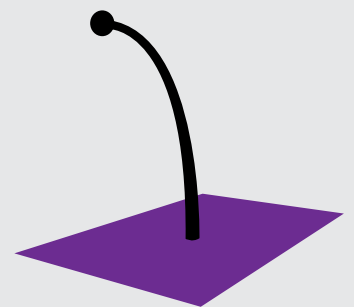
journal articles

# 19

 authored and edited books

# 23

academic visitors



# 7

 Simon and Hallsworth Visiting Professors

# £1.74m

research grant income