



COVID 19 – Urban Thinker Campus

NBS and Green Public Spaces for Health and Resilience - approaches, best practices, and uptake

1 Introduction

Compiling, sharing, discussing, and elevating the knowledge of the global community of urban and territorial planning professionals is at the forefront of the [International Society of City and Regional Planners](#)' agenda, as well as the project office [ISOCARP Institute](#).

We submitted a proposal for organising an Urban Thinkers Session, as part of the World Urban Campaign '[COVID 19- Urban Thinker Campus Series #2](#)'. We are glad to inform that our proposal '**NBS and Green Public Spaces for Health and Resilience – approaches, best practices, and uptake**' has been selected and will be held online on **14 October 2020, 2 pm CET**.

The session will be hosted by the ISOCARP Community of Practice on Urban Health that was recently created to improve knowledge on urban health amongst urban planners and promote urban planners' unique role to shape healthy cities.

2 ISOCARP Campus '**NBS and green public spaces for health and resilience - approaches, best practices, and uptake**'

The environmental crisis of the XXI century is increasingly manifesting its grimmest side, especially in cities where urbanisation trends are exacerbating several challenges. Air pollution, urban heat island effect, flooding are only some of the most evident consequences on public health and quality of life caused by climate change and the lack of adequate green and public spaces. The current COVID-19 crisis also highlights the importance of the urban built environment as a determinant of health in terms of prevention and response.

Nature-based solutions (NBS) can represent a valid accelerator toward a healthier and sustainable world. They emerged in the last years as a promising approach to enhance sustainable urbanisation, ecosystem restoration and to improve risk management and



climate change resilience. The growing application of NBS largely depends on the several co-benefits (environmental, social, economic) they provide and their adaptability to different geographical, climate and social contexts. In particular, NBS increase the quality and accessibility of open air public space, which are fundamental for citizens and their health. During lockdown several cities experienced the drop-in of physical activities and the increase of mental health problems, highlighting once more time the need of people to safely meet outdoor, walk and bike around.

Public spaces and NBS, therefore, could contribute to manage the current pandemic crisis, keeping health and sustainability strongly interwoven. This means increasing the green character of public spaces, renegotiating the space distribution in cities, promoting and developing more equal, functional and just societies. Even when the situation in cities returns to the 'new' normal, long-term impacts (e.g. remote-working) will probably prevail. Thus, cities need to adapt and cater to the evolving needs of citizens and their health. The opportunity to strengthen and advocate for green public spaces in cities and mainstream them into planning and policy practice is urgent and crucial for the cities of tomorrow.

The UTC session "NBS and Green Public Spaces for Health and Resilience" will bring together international experts and thought leaders providing an overview over public spaces, nature-based solutions and their potential for urban health and in the current Covid-19 crisis. In particular, the session will highlight the strong interrelations between health and urban environment, and it will give voice to some cities and organisations who are actively participating in innovative resilience and/or health strategies.

3 Organization of the Session

The session will last for 120 min and it will be as much as possible interactive and inclusive. After an inspiring keynote speech, there will be a panel discussion with other international experts and questions from the audience.

3.1 Programme

- Introduction and presentation speakers | 10 min.
- Keynote speaker presentation | 20 min.
- Q&A with audience | 10 min.
- Panel discussion with Guest Experts | 35 min.
- Q&A with audience | 20 min.
- Closing | 10 min.



3.2 Speakers

- Marc Nieuwenhuijsen - ISGlobal Barcelona Institute for Global Health (keynote speaker)
- Jo Ivey Boufford – International Society for Urban Health (ISUH)
- Cecilia Vaca Jones - ED, Bernard van Leer Foundation
- Laura Petrella - UN-Habitat
- Thiago Hérick de Sá – World Health Organization (WHO)
- Nabi Agzamov – STRELKA Kb
- Uta Christine Dietrich – ThinkCity
- Nathan Iyer – IYER - Planning, Urban Design & Architecture

3.3 Moderators

- Jo Ivey Boufford – International Society for Urban Health (ISUH)
- Jens Aerts - Bureau of Urbanism
- Elisabeth Belpaire - ISOCARP Community of Practice on Urban Health
- Federico Aili - ISOCARP Institute

4 Contact

For any question or further information, please contact Federico Aili (ailli@isocarp-institute.org).