

Call for Applications

Mobile Utopia Bonfire School

29 October - 2 November 2017, CeMoRe, Lancaster University

Most people are unaware of the 'systemness' of their everyday practices (Urry 2016:73)

From Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516) to John Urry's *What is the future?* (2016), utopia has been a powerful means to explore how societies change. Using utopia as a method to explore and contest futures is a powerful approach (Levitas 2013). It is at once critical, ethical, creative, and integrative.

The Mobile Utopia Bonfire School brings together senior and junior scholars from a range of different disciplines (history, social science, art, design, policy, engineering and more) to explore how futures and utopia as method relate to their research. How does 'mobilising' utopia as method help us understand social futures, current everyday practices and their relation to multi-scalar, intergenerational, more-than-human futures? How might 'mobilising' utopia as method provide deeper insight and creative leverage? [Read more about the background here.](#)

The Mobile Utopia Bonfire School is organised on the fringe of the [Mobile Utopia: Pasts, presents, futures Conference](#) – jointly organised by *Cemore*, *T2M*, and *Cosmobilities*, 2-5 November 2017 at Lancaster University. A range of senior staff members, including Simon Bainbridge, Monika Büscher, Joe Deville, Melissa Fernández Arrigoitia, Malene Freudendal Pedersen, Kevin Hannam, Carlos Lopez Galviz, Mimi Sheller will participate. For an up-to-date list, please check [here](#).

To participate in the Bonfire School, applicants should submit a 300 word abstract that describes their research, addressing the following questions: What are you researching? Why? What does or could utopia as a concept or method do for you? Please complete the [Application Form Here](#).

Important Dates

05 June 2017	Submission of Applications
12 June 2017	Notification of Acceptance
15 June 2017	Early Bird Registration closes
25 August 2017	Registration closes

Participation is limited to 25 PhD students, postdoctoral researchers, artists, practitioners.

The Bonfire School provides opportunities to participate in a range of activities, including:

Presentation-based discussions: A speedy, fun series of 3 minute presentations about your research - What are you researching? Why? What does or could utopia as a concept or method do for you? Student, staff, postdoc presentations will be mixed, followed by discussion.

Master classes: (after [Erik Olin Wright](#)) Learning in small groups of one member of staff and 1-3 students/postdocs. Each student/postdoc has a total of ten minutes, divided roughly evenly between the student telling the senior researcher something puzzling about their research and them responding with off-the-cuff comments and suggestions. The point here is NOT for students to give a five minute summary of their research, but rather to identify a problem in need of feedback: something puzzling or confusing; a bottleneck in the project; a difficult (perhaps annoying) objection that has been raised by someone; a mysterious finding that doesn't make sense; an intractable methodological problem; an ethical issue about the research. The senior researcher questions, comments, provides advice, constructive critique. These initial exchanges are followed by discussion.

Mentoring: In pairs or threes staff/students/postdocs discuss successes and failures related to the practicalities of research and career.

Publishing Pleasures: A one to one discussion of publication prospects and practices with Gerhard Boomgarden, senior editor, Routledge Sociology Series in a 'publication surgery' session. Please note: Participants wishing to take advantage of this **must send in a short outline of a book proposal by 1st October** to [Aurora Trujillo](#). This can be rough. To see what might need to go into a book proposal, consult the [Changing Mobilities Book Series Form](#) [here](#). Scheduling of the sessions will be on a first come, first served basis.

Writing Exchange: Taking inspiration from the activities at the Bonfire school, participants will have the opportunity to produce and exchange a 500-1000 word piece of writing for constructive critique with other participants.

The Mobile Utopia Experiment: As part of the *Cemore | T2M | Cosmobilities* 2017 Conference (2-5 November), there will be a creative experimental pre-enactment of mobile utopia, with various activities. Participants in the Bonfire School will participate in the experiment. See [here for more information about the experiment](#).

For further detail, please see the [Preliminary Programme](#).

Registration Fees

Early Bird (including all meals & facilities)	£350
After 15 th June 2017	£450

Campus accommodation is available at a reduced rate (around £50 per person/night, including breakfast). **Please note that Registration and accommodation for the Conference are separate.** We'd be delighted to welcome you. Registration will open [here](#). (Early registration is recommended).

Bursaries and Travel Grants

A small number of bursaries and travel grants are available. Allocation is competitive and based on peer review of the research abstract submission. Please complete this [Travel Grant Application Form](#) by 05 June 2017. Decisions will be made by 12 June.

Note that the Bonfire School is one of several events and we would be delighted to welcome you for the whole week:

1. Take part in all of it, the [Bonfire School](#), the [Mobile Utopia Experiment](#) and the [Mobile Utopia Conference](#) 29th October - 5th November 2017
2. Join the [Bonfire School](#) to discuss your research and participate in the [Mobile Utopia Experiment](#) (you don't have to bring an experiment) 29th October - 2nd November 2017
3. Make a [Mobile Utopia Experiment](#) and bring it to Lancaster 1-2nd November 2017

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to [contact us](#).