

Call for Papers, Artworks, Posters

Mobile Utopia: Pasts, Presents, Futures

Conference 2-5 November 2017

Fringe Events 29 October – 2 November 2017

Centre for Mobilities Research, Lancaster University, UK

‘Mobilising’ utopia can provide important insights into intergenerational, multi-scalar, human and non-human interconnectivities across transport, traffic and mobilities. From Thomas More’s *Utopia* (1516) to Ruth Levitas’ *Utopia as method* (2013) and John Urry’s *What is the future?* (2016), utopia has been a powerful means to explore how societies have shaped, and have been shaped by, complex im|mobilities, from microbial to big data mobilities, from horse-drawn carriages to driverless cars, from migration to planetary jet streams. Faced with the global uncertainties of the Anthropocene, utopia provides renewed analytical and creative purchase.

This joint conference brings together historians, researchers, artists, policy-makers, designers, and innovators to explore Mobile Utopia: Pasts, presents and futures. Lancaster’s Centre for Mobilities Research, the International Association for the History of Transport, Traffic and Mobility (T2M) and the Cosmobilities Network have joined together to invite contributions across the spectrum of mobile utopian themes. In addition, proposals may address any aspect of the history, and social, cultural, economic, technological, creative, ecological and political aspects of transport, traffic and mobility.

The celebrations that marked the 500th anniversary of the publication of Thomas More’s *Utopia* have been both global and wide-ranging. In his seminal work, More outlined his ideas around an alternative society living in a City of Man in contrast with former visions of the City of God. Five centuries later, we are part of a world where 54 per cent of the population live in cities (Worldbank 2015), and the trend is set to continue and increase, with the UN estimating that the world’s population is to reach 9.7 billion by 2050. This poses great challenges concerning natural resources, (food) security, clean water, energy, environmental and social justice, and more. This all involves mobilities of different kinds, operating at different spatial and temporal scales, with different motivations, processes, and consequences.

Utopia is an integrative method that can assist us when thinking about the relationship between societies and mobilities past, present, and future. It can help us trace the complex interconnections between the urban and the rural, the digital, oceanic, global, and planetary, the here-and-now and the *longue durée*. Utopia creates rich ground for contestation, as one person’s utopia can be another’s dystopia, and innovative visions followed through produce unintended consequences. From the UN’s Sustainable



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Development Goals to visions of a future where CO₂ emissions are no longer the norm, utopia helps us challenge the past and present by imagining the future. As research has shown, transformations in governance, everyday practices, and exchanges between communities are key to the success or failure of these visions.

This call invites proposals exploring utopia as a heuristic and creative methodology – rather than as a narrative closed system – which challenges our assumptions about what has been possible in the past and what will be possible and preferable in the future. We invite reflections on the diverse dimensions of im | mobility adopting such a utopian perspective from any city, country or place, in relation to any theme, scale, or period in history. We encourage transnational, comparative, artistic, design-led, interdisciplinary and trans-modal approaches, and welcome proposals exploring theoretical or methodological issues as well as those of a more empirical nature. We invite different submission and presentation formats. Topics may include, but are not restricted to:

- Traffic, transport, mobilities and social futures
- Urban, rural, digital mobilities
- Space, geoengineering, planetary mobilities
- Intergenerational mobilities
- Embodiment, health, healing and wellbeing
- Civility, migration and citizenship
- Mobility justice, human rights and mobility
- Pasts, presents, futures of tourism
- Energy production and consumption
- Automation, autonomous machines, robotics
- Post-human ontology, phenomenology
- Critiques of the concept of anthropocene, non-human mobilities
- Sustainable mobilities
- Utopia in the ruins of capitalism and modernity
- Living alternatives
- Corporate mobilities futures
- Utopia as method
- Mobile utopias, dystopias, anti-utopias, beyond-utopias
- The history and heritage of mobile utopia
- Mobile Utopia & the state, globalization, cosmopolitanism
- Free-market and neoliberal utopia
- Values and moral orders of mobility and travel
- Arts practice and research as mobile utopia

Proposals can be for individual papers, panels, artworks, posters, and other creative formats as outlined below. We welcome relevant contributions from any academic perspective or discipline, from professionals, policy makers and practitioners, as well as artists and creative professionals, designers, and engineers. Recent entrants to the research field and doctoral students are very welcome.

The conference language is English.

Important Dates

31 March 2017	Deadline for the submission of abstracts and sessions
5 May 2017	Notification of acceptance for abstracts and sessions
5 May 2017	Submission of artworks and posters
25 May 2017	Decision on travel grants
26 May 2017	Notification of acceptance for artworks and posters
15 June 2017	Early Bird registration closes
1 September 2017	Programme Deadline
1 October 2017	Submission of full papers and posters
2-5 November 2017	Conference

Conference Format and Sessions

The conference aims to create an insightful, inspiring, creative and thought-provoking dialogue. To this aim, different types of sessions will foster exchange and discussion:

7/7 sessions: This means seven slides and seven minutes for each presentation. The sessions will have plenty of time for discussion. This will be supported by having both a chair and a discussant. Presenters shall focus on their main argument in order to avoid overly-complex presentations.

Debate sessions: Debate sessions have a maximum of five presenters. Each gives a five minutes focused input to the topic and this should be followed by discussion involving the audience. Led by a chair.

Experimental sessions: These sessions invite experimental ways of presenting, discussing and interacting. They can be experimental in relation to the papers/projects presented but they can also be experimental in relation to new formats for sessions (including 'unconferencing' formats like lightning talks, dotmocracy or café philosophique, participatory art or performance, and so forth).

Panel sessions: Panels consist of a chair and four paper presenters and one discussant (optional). Panels should include time for audience discussion. Each presenter has 20 minutes (15 min + 5 min for questions); papers are grouped thematically.

Art Stream: There will be an exhibition of art works within the conference and we invite proposals for new or existing works for exhibition, screening, performance, installation, sound art, locative media, event or other formats. Venues for these works are tbc in consultation with accepted proposals, and in collaboration with Lancaster Arts <https://www.lancasterarts.org/>. There are a small number of bursaries available for artists who work outside of full time academic posts.

Submissions

Submission Website: <http://ocs.sfu.ca/t2m/index.php/t2m/Mobilities2017>

We invite a range of different submissions, especially encourage transnational, comparative and interdisciplinary approaches, and welcome proposals exploring theoretical, methodological, and empirical issues. If you have any questions, please contact mobile-utopia@lancaster.ac.uk

Papers: Individual submission of a paper consists of an abstract (300 words) and a brief biography (100 words) including contact information. Papers will be grouped thematically by the programme committee and may become part of 7/7, experimental or panel sessions. You will be able to state a preference.

Sessions: A full, pre-organized **7/7, debate, experimental, or panel session**. A session submission should include a title, summary of the session theme and the method chosen for facilitating discussion (300 words), as well as abstracts for each contribution (300 words). A short biography of each presenter is required (100 words), with contact information.

Artworks: Submission of art works consists of an abstract (300 words), a link to images and/or video of the work online (due to time limitations we can only view up to 3 minutes of video), a brief biography (100 words) including contact information, and a technical requirements document (1 page max) including dimensions, duration, light levels, and technical details for presentation of the work. Submissions of art works to this stream can be in addition to an abstract for another session.

Posters This is a great way to discuss early or exploratory work and present it as a **Poster** at the conference. Submission consists of an abstract (300 words) and a brief biography (100 words) including contact information. The full poster is due 1 September.

After **Acceptance** all abstracts will be made available to conference participants on the conference website. You also have the opportunity to submit a **Full paper** (5000 words). We strongly encourage the submission of full papers, which will be shared with all conference delegates. Authors whose contributions are accepted and who wish to submit a full paper will have until 1 October 2017 to do so. Papers will be published in a restricted area for conference participants on the conference website, and, with your permission, they will be made available as part of the T2M archive.

Registration and Fees

All participants must register and pay the registration fee. Please use the 'Registration' link at <http://wp.lancs.ac.uk/t2mc2c/>. Only one abstract per person.

Early Bird (closes 15 June 2017)	£265
Early Bird T2M members*	£235
Late Registration Fee	£350
Reduced*	£195
Reduced* T2M members	£165

* To qualify for the T2M member rates, you must provide evidence of membership. [Become a member](#) and get registration discounts along with a choice of journal subscriptions.

T2M is currently offering a promotional discount price. Join before February 15th!

** Reduced Fees are available for: Students, activists, artists, retirees, participants coming from 'lower income' and 'lower middle income' countries as defined by the World Bank. All Latin American countries. **You will be requested to provide proof of status.**

Travel Grants

Graduates and doctoral students and participants from developing countries whose submissions have been accepted may apply for travel grants of up to £250. A limited number of grants are available. Please complete the application form available on the [Conference Website](#), detailing the cost of travel, and send it to mobile-utopia@lancaster.ac.uk. Applications must be received by 25 May, decisions will be made by 12 June 2017.

Sponsorship

The *Cemore | T2M | Cosmobilities* conference builds on strong existing relationships with a wide range of organisations, and it offers new and exciting opportunities for sponsors. Benefits include publicity and professional development as well as networking.

Participation in the Sponsorship programme is an ideal opportunity to demonstrate your organization's commitment to interdisciplinary mobilities research. The *Cemore | T2M | Cosmobilities* Conference offers proven opportunities for your organization to make delegates and a several thousand strong global network aware of your commitment to high-quality mobilities research. See the [list of past sponsors](#).

Your sponsorship of this conference is a strong statement about your organization's commitment to mobilities research, as well as the professional development of your staff. For further information about these and the many other advantages of sponsoring, please see the [Invitation to Sponsor](#) or contact Pennie Drinkall p.drinkall@lancaster.ac.uk.

We look forward to welcoming you at the [Centre for Mobilities Research](#) in Lancaster. Come join us to explore pasts, presents and futures of mobilities!

Conference Committee

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