Conference Programme

RECONSTRUCTION, RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE OF HISTORIC CITIES AND SOCIETIES

L’AQUILA, 10-12 JULY 2019
INTRODUCTION

Dr. Lucia Patrizio Gumming

April 2009 marked the lives of everyone affected by the L'Aquila earthquake. Beyond the terrible loss of life and physical damage was the disappearance of everything that represented our psychological wellbeing. The rich tapestry of this historic city disappeared from our lives and with it the patterns and habits of everyday life, of social interaction and friendship as well as the subtle minute of a living city.

The past decade has been a journey for each of us seeking a new normality, reconstructing our lives and struggling to rebuild both the physical and the psychological space. Ten years have passed living lives suspended between the past and the future, between the memories of what the city was and hopes for what it could be.

Today, as life returns to the centre of L’Aquila, the emotion of rediscovering each street, square, fountain and building is powerful and there is unexpected fulfilment in the sight of light returning to its darkened streets, in finding new activities sprouting where once there were ruins. L’Aquila displayed fortitude and resilience in the aftermath of disaster and this is slowly transforming into a renaissance of civic pride.

There is a natural thread connecting L'Aquila with the Silk Cities; from the medieval web of trade in silk, wool and saffron, to the dense fabric of historic urban evolution and its interweaving with the surrounding environment. As this beautiful city re-emerges, it seems fitting that it should host the 2019 Silk Cities conference addressing the themes particular to historic cities at risk.

Dr. Fatemeh Farnaz Arefian

Silk Cities is an independent and bottom-up professional and academic initiative for contextual knowledge exchange, research and advocacy. Its initial geographic focus is those countries along the historic trade routes in the Middle East and Central Asia, which in recent years suffered from a variety of destructive incidents, from natural hazards to human induced origins, from earthquakes to wars.

I first visited L’Aquila in 2018, 9 years after the 2009 earthquake, and heard the testimony of the city’s disaster-affected residents: a clear case that when disaster occurs, it is the city and its residents who bear the consequences of insufficient attention to complexities of organizing urban reconstruction and its role in the multidisciplinary aspects of city recovery.

Post-crisis city recovery is multidimensional and post-disaster reconstruction is a manifestation of physical recovery that must facilitate other kinds of recovery, including psychological, social and economic recovery and enhance future resilience of residents. Cities are complex interconnected social, economic, engineering and administrative systems. Managing urban reconstruction and recovery requires decision makers to understand and deal with layers of complexity, their interactions and their integrating processes, doing so in historic urban landscape significantly adds another layer of complexity to all those.

Given the specific nature of the conference subject and the fact that L’Aquila, like many disaster-hit cities in the Middle East and Central Asia, enjoyed a rich history of urban life and heritage it made sense to bring the Silk Cities 3rd international conference here. I hope that the city and its people will also benefit from this exciting gathering of experts on various related aspects of the subject matter.

Prof. Paola Rizzi

"As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods. They kill us for their sport."

King Lear, Act IV, William Shakespeare

Over the centuries, the very concept of a catastrophe, as Dupuy (2000) pointed out, evolved into its current form of an “illuminated catastrophism” in which the damage is neither natural nor moral, but a “systemic” one. As a result of this systematization, the future is considered real, and prevention becomes a principle to be applied regardless of whether the expected event will actually happen.

In this context, as recently proven, it is important to reflect on the very sense of reconstruction as well as actions to be taken in different phases, from pre- to post-disaster as the aim of these processes is being shifted from the physical reconstruction towards regeneration and revitalisation of the affected urban areas. Hence, planners, urban designers, architects, engineers and stakeholders should dedicate their attention to spaces, places and infrastructures that, albeit rebuilt, remain vulnerable. In order to secure their resilience and resistance, it is necessary to support processes of inclusive reconstruction based on risk awareness of the local communities. Such an approach stimulates innovative types of recovery and regeneration that enhance resilience without losing continuity and traces of the past.

The Silk Cities Conference is a unique opportunity to embrace different points of view rooted in different contexts as well as to reflect on resilience seen as a capability to maintain the essential urban activities operational. The future of the cities will depend on whether we’ll be able to consider a reconstruction a real opportunity to reshape them.
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<tr>
<td>08:30 - 09:00</td>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>Aula Magna Alessandro Clementi, Dipartimento di Scienze Umane, Università degli Studi, L’Aquila</td>
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<td>09:00 - 09:45</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<td>09:45 - 10:45</td>
<td>Thematic Session 1A: Linking urban development and reconstruction processes</td>
<td>Aula Magna Alessandro Clementi</td>
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<td>10:45 - 11:30</td>
<td>Lunch Break</td>
<td>Terrazza, first floor, Dipartimento di Scienze Umane, Università degli Studi</td>
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<td>11:30 - 12:30</td>
<td>Thematic Session 1B: Communication and transparency</td>
<td>Aula Magna Alessandro Clementi</td>
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<td>12:30 - 13:30</td>
<td>Walking Tour of City Centre Reconstruction and Networking</td>
<td>Terrazza, first floor, Dipartimento di Scienze Umane, Università degli Studi</td>
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<td>13:30 - 14:30</td>
<td>Thematic Session 1C: Linking urban development and reconstruction processes</td>
<td>Sala del Consiglio, Rettorato</td>
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<td>14:15 - 15:45</td>
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**DAY 2, THURSDAY 11 JULY**

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<td>Guest Keynote Speech: Writing for a Broken World: Literature and Catastrophe in the Twenty-First Century</td>
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<td>Book Launch, Conversation with Editors</td>
<td>Aula Magna Alessandro Clementi</td>
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<td>10:45 - 11:15</td>
<td>Thematic Session 2A: Cultural heritage as a stimulus for recovery</td>
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<td>Thematic Session 2B: Narratives of approach to disaster and recovery / Social media disaster response policies and practice</td>
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**DAY 3, FRIDAY 12 JULY**

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<td>09:00 - 09:45</td>
<td>Guest Keynote Speech: The Emergency Management of the 2016–2017 Central Apennines Seismic Sequence: Analogies and Differences with Recent Italian Earthquakes</td>
<td>Aula Magna Alessandro Clementi</td>
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<td>09:45 - 10:45</td>
<td>Thematic Session 3A: Risk communication and public awareness in historic cities</td>
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<td>Thematic Session 3C: Past and Present</td>
<td>Sala del Consiglio, Rettorato</td>
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<td>13:00 - 14:30</td>
<td>Thematic Session 3D: Public engagement and civic participation / Information technology and civic resilience</td>
<td>Aula Magna Alessandro Clementi</td>
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**Special Sessions**

- **Special Session 2E: Rebuilding confidence in the capacities of the city**
- **Special Session: The Middle East meets West: Zoom in Pakistan & Iran**
- **Special Session:** Reclaiming cultural heritage / Tourism and heritage cities / Public engagement and civic resilience / Information technology and civic resilience / Engaging the next generation. / Rebuilding confidence in the capacities of the city / Linkages between reconstruction process and socio-economic recovery

**Venue:** Sala del Consiglio, Rettorato; Piazza Santa Margherita, 2; Ristorante Lo Scalco, Piazza San Pietro a Coppito; Sala del Consiglio, Rettorato; Aula Magna Alessandro Clementi; Terrazza, first floor, Dipartimento di Scienze Umane, Università degli Studi.
**PROGRAMME DETAILS**

**DAY 1, WEDNESDAY 10 JULY**

**08:30 - 09:30**  
Registration  
Aula Magna Alessandro Clementi, Dipartimento di Scienze Umane, Università degli Studi, L’Aquila

**09:30 - 10:15**  
Conference welcome & introduction  
University of L’Aquila, Silk Cities and UCL  
• Welcome addresses by co-organisers  
• Opening by Prof. Paola Inverardi, Provost, University of L’Aquila

**10:15 - 11:00**  
Guest Keynote Speaker  
Arch. Alessandra Vittorini  
Soprintendenza, Superintendency of Archeology, Fine Arts and Landscape for the City of L’Aquila and the Municipalities of the Crater  
Chair: Arch. Barnaby Gunning

**11:00 - 11:30**  
Coffee Break

**11:30-12:30**  
Thematic Session 1A:  
Heritage oriented reconstruction vs reconstruction oriented heritage restoration.  
Venue: Aula Magna Alessandro Clementi  
Chair: Prof. Paola Rizzi

**12:30 - 13:30**  
Lunch Break

**13:30 - 15:00**  
Thematic Session 1B:  
Reconstructing cultural heritage and rediscovering civic identity.  
Venue: Aula 0A  
Chair: Arch. Nazir Ahmed

**15:00 - 15:30**  
Coffee Break

**15:30 - 16:30**  
Thematic Session 1C:  
Linking urban development and reconstruction processes.  
Venue: Aula Magna Alessandro Clementi  
Chair: Dr. Avar Almukhtar

**16:30 - 17:00**  
Thematic Session 1D:  
Information technology and smarter reconstruction.  
Venue: Aula 0A  
Chair: Arch. Tariq Ahmed

**17:00 - 18:30**  
Walking Tour of City Centre Reconstruction  
Meeting point: Viale Nizza, outside Dipartimento di Scienze Umane  
Visit to building sites with Prof. Antonello Salvatori

**19:00-21:30**  
Conference Reception & Networking  
Visit to building sites with monuments with ‘Officina L’Aquila’
**DAY 2, THURSDAY 11 JULY**

08:30 - 9:00  Registration

09:00 - 09:45  Guest Keynote Speaker

Dr Florian Musgnug, SELCS, UCL

Writing for a Broken World: Literature and Catastrophe in the Twenty-First Century

Chair: Prof. Massimo Fusillo, DSU, Univaq

09:45 - 10:45  Book Launch

Venue: Aula Magna Alessandro Clementi

Chair: Prof. Julio Davila, Bartlett DPU, UCL

Historic Cities: Issues in Urban Conversation

Urban Heritage along the Silk Roads: A Contemporary Reading of Urban Transformation of Historic Cities in the Middle East and Beyond (Silk Cities 2017 book)

Conversation with the editors Dr. Jeff Cody and Dr. Farnaz Arefian.

10:45 - 11:15  Coffee break

11:15 - 12:45  Thematic Session 2B:

Narratives of approach to disaster and recovery / Social media disaster response policies and practice.

Venue: Aula Magna Alessandro Clementi

Chair: Prof. Alessandro Vaccarelli

Katastrophe-storytelling in post-disaster Japan: rebuilding places and community resilience from personal narratives and local knowledge.

Flavia Fukuo

Architectural heritage and earthquakes: a longstanding relation.

Margherita Gian

Water gives, water takes away. Cultural heritage and memory as ways to build resilience in ENGO-vulnerable historic landscapes in the north coast of Peru.

Rosabellla Alvarez-Calderon

Collective storytelling as an approach to influence post-disaster policy development.

Ashley E. Lazare

12:45 - 13:15  Lunch break

13:30 - 15:15  Thematic session 2D:

Reclaiming cultural heritage / Tourism and heritage cities.

Venue: Aula Magna Alessandro Clementi

Chair: Claudia Gonzales Muzzio

Evaluating visitors’ experiences at St Augustine’s Abbey (Canterbury).

Ayda Majd Ardakani, Sophia Labadi, Rocio Von Jungfeld

A study on evacuation method using agent simulation based on tourists’ behavioral intention.Hidehiko Kanegae, Kohei Sakai

The recovery of archives in the area of the Marche crater.

Giorgia Di Marcantonio, Pamela Galeazzi, Caterina Paparelli

The tree.

Arianna Taroni

Short-term and mid-term temporary strategies as intrinsic part of the pre-reconstruction recovery process: Norcia case study.

Anna Porebska, Aleksandra Rogulska

15:15 - 15:45  Coffee Break

16:00 - 17:30  Thematic Session E:

Rebuilding confidence in the capacities of the city: Linkages between reconstruction process and socio-economic recovery.

Venue: Aula Magna Alessandro Clementi

Chair: Arch. Abhishek Jain

Coventry shell or phoenix, city of tomorrow or concrete jumble. From the reconstruction after the Mondscheinsonate operation to the Phoenix Initiative.

Christina Obeng

Reconstruction of heritage and spirit: mending the scars of Aleppo.

Mount Sabish Alaki

Whom and whose cultural heritage? Comparative case studies: Rustavi and Dast-e Hasan Stepwells, in Gujarat, India.

Mehnaz Rajabi

Environmental criticalities and energetic potentials in the post-earthquake reconstruction.

Valeria Annibaldi, Marianna Rotilio
3rd Silk Cities International Conference

Viale Nizza, outside Dipartimento di Scienze Umane

Day 3, Friday 12 July

09:00 - 09:00 Registration

09:00 - 09:45 Guest Keynote Speaker

Silas Lamai

Makoko risk and adaptation.

Urban resilience in the informal settlement: the case of Arquata del Tronto in the Marche Region.

Lucia Barchetta, Enrica Petrucci

The local heritage as a mean to build resilience: the case of Arquata del Tronto in the Marche Region.

Catherine Forbes, Amanda Ohs

Knowledge of historical heritage as a basis for a conscious and resilient reconstruction. The case of Arquata Del Tronto (AP).

Mikaelo Kitamura

09:45 - 10:15 Thematic Session 3A: Risk communication and public awareness in historic cities.

Chair: Dr. Farnaz Arefian

A study on Italian disaster recovery system in comparing to Japan during living in temporary shelter. Satochi Otsuki, Hidehiko Kanegae, Pasola Rizzi, Hiroshi Shimizu

Seismic microzonation as a preventive measure for the conservation of historical heritage. Patricia Alarcón, M.Cristina Garcia Neto, Manuel Navarro, Marcos A. Martínez Segura

The preservation of rural landscapes as a tool for building resilience in the context of small towns: insights from North Italy.

Paola Brandiuni, Fabio Carnelli

The role of traditional dancing in revitalising disaster-stricken areas after the Great East Japan Earthquakes: a case study of Fudzi village in Iwate prefecture.

Miwako Kitamura

10:45 - 11:15 Coffee break

11:15 - 11:35 Thematic Session 3C: Cultural heritage as a mean to building resilience.

Chair: Dr. Patricia Montuori

Loss, recovery, resilience and hope for cultural heritage in Christchurch. Catherine Forbes, Amanda Ohs

The local heritage as a mean to build resilience: the case of Arquata del Tronto in the Marche Region.

Lucia Barchetta, Enrica Petrucci

Urban resilience in the informal settlement: Makoko risk and adaptation.

Silas Lamai

Special Session:

Reconstruction between past and present.

Venue: Aula 0A

Chairs: Prof. Andrew Hopkins & Prof. Simonetta Ciranna

Historical centers and post seismic reconstructions: experiences compared.

Carlo Bartolomucci

The inverted pyramid. The reconstruction of Verona after the 1976 Friuli earthquake.

Alessandra Ferrigni

Antigua Guatemala, from history of disasters to resilient future.

Barbara Mirenguez Garcia

Knowledge of historical heritage as a basis for a conscious and resilient reconstruction. The case of Arquata Del Tronto (AP).

Giulia Brunori, Michele Zampilli

13:15 - 14:15 Lunch break

14:15 - 16:00 Thematic Session 3D: Public engagement and civic participation.

Chair: Massimo Prosperococco

Rebuilding from the ground up.

Lina Calandra

An assessment of the Participatory Action-Research experience in L’Aquila ten years after the earthquake.

Lina Calandra

Photography for the city.

Simona Morsaci

Risk management and social participation. An Italian question.

Piero Farabollini, Francesca Lugeri

Bondings between urban fabric and capacity of collective resilience: the case of Taica historic center.

Giulia De Cunto

16:00 - 16:30 Coffee break

16:30 - 17:15 Conference closing

Venue: Aula Magna Alessandro Clementi

Remarks by co-conveners

Reflections and suggestions

17:15 - 18:45 City sightseeing tour by bus

Schools, C.A.S.E., Church of Santa Maria and Cryptas and more…

Meeting point: Viale Nizza, outside Dipartimento di Scienze Umane

* The programme is subject to change until the conference day.
This interactive session celebrates the publication of two books dealing with urban heritage in historic cities. These resourceful books provide complementing perspectives at global and regional levels and address the existing gap in the published literature on the subject matter. Editors Dr. Jeff Cody and Dr. Farnaz Arefian will present the books in conversation with conference participants. The session will be moderated by Prof. Julio Davila.

**Historic Cities: Issues in Urban Conversation**

Edited by Jeff Cody and Francesco Siravo, published by The Getty Conservation Institute, Institute, Los Angeles, US

This book, the eighth in the Getty Conservation Institute’s Readings in Conservation series, fills a significant gap in the published literature on urban conservation. This topic is distinct from both heritage conservation and urban planning, and despite the recent growth of urbanism worldwide, no single volume has presented a comprehensive selection of these important writings until now. This anthology, profusely illustrated throughout, is organised into eight parts, covering such subjects as geographic diversity, reactions to the transformation of traditional cities, reading the historic city, the search for contextual continuities, the search for values and the challenges of sustainability. With more than sixty-five texts, ranging from early polemics by Victor Hugo and John Ruskin to a generous selection of recent scholarship, this book offers a thorough address of the real-world issues that are useful for researches, students, practitioners and policy makers, who must deal with the realities of working in historic cities.

**SESSION ON SCHOOLS IN L’AQUILA**

Ten years after the earthquake of 6 April 2009, school buildings in L’Aquila have yet to be rebuilt. In an area that continues to be prone to earthquakes, the lack of safe schools represents a constant worry affecting both children and parents. Most children are still educated in temporary structures that should be created.

A group of parents has formed into a ‘Comitato Scuole Sicure’ (committee for safe schools) demanding attention and answers with students from other schools.

Students in five different buildings, with a timetable in rotation of the Liceo Classico, which then had to accommodate its evaluation made in August last year resulted in the closure for further evaluation which has yet to be carried out.

One such repaired and put back to use after the earthquake, pending the L’Aquila is a difficult undertaking – whilst the historic city centre continues to be prone to earthquakes, the lack of safe structures that should be created.

and urban economic pressures, in addition to conflicts and frequent destructive natural hazards. It is often the case that dealing with such pressing issues in a historic city is more complex than dealing with those in newly built cities and urban areas. This book provides evidence based scientific material for a better understanding of the real-world issues that are useful for researches, students, practitioners and policy makers, who must deal with the realities of working in historic cities.

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TOURS

Walking Tour of the City Centre Reconstruction, 10 July 2019, h.16:30-18:00
Professor Antonello Salvatori and in parallel Officina L’Aquila will accompany the participants on guided walking tours. The participants will visit completed, ongoing and non-commenced reconstruction sites including public and private examples, public spaces, schools and churches. Make sure you wear comfortable shoes for these tours.

Sightseeing Tour, 12 July 2019, h.16:30
Departure from the Faculty of Human Science for a tour of the school buildings, Progetto CASE, and church of Santa Maria ad Cryptas by bus.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Architetto Alessandra Vittorini
Soprintendente, Soprintendenza Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio per la città’ dell’Aquila e i comuni del cratere
Ministero dei beni e delle attività culturali

Superintendent for Archaeological, Artistic and Architectural Heritage and Landscape for L’Aquila and its Seismic Crater, architect with a Phd in Urban Planning, has done research, exhibitions and publications on architecture, urban planning and restoration, in Italy and abroad. MIBAC architect since 1990, she became Superintendent in 2012, mainly involved in cultural heritage restoration and landscape conservation after the 2009 earthquake in L’Aquila. She directed the Superintendence’s team in charge of the restoration of the Collemaggio Basilica in L’Aquila, completed in 2017, and has presented the 2009 post seismic reconstruction of cultural heritage in several conferences and meetings in Italy and abroad (Paris 2016, Istanbul 2016, Cambridge 2017, Fabriano XIII Meeting UNESCO Creative Cities 2019).

Title: L’Aquila 2009 > 2019. Back to the future
The post-earthquake reconstruction of L’Aquila represents an extraordinary experience of management, protection and restoration of cultural heritage, fully supported by public funds. This process was further complicated from 2016, by the subsequent earthquakes which devastated Amatrice and a large part of Central Italy, not far from L’Aquila.

The definition of the governance and the legal framework of the reconstruction, the challenging tasks of restoring cultural heritage and the planning and technical-economic evaluations of interventions, are some of the main topics managed in the integrated approach assigned to the Superintendency for L’Aquila and its Seismic Crater, the first such Superintendency in Italy with combined powers in monumental, historical, artistic, archaeological and landscape fields.

This has given us an extraordinary overview of a complex process, due to the importance of the cultural heritage, the severity of the damage, and the solutions found. It has also been a very strong opportunity for study, research and scientific discussion on the post-earthquake recovery of cultural heritage. The most interesting case - for us and for the whole reconstruction - has been the coordination of the largest privately funded intervention in L’Aquila: the restoration of the Basilica of S. Maria di Collemaggio, site of the Perdonanza Celestiniana.

The achievements of our work in this ten-year reconstruction have been presented at several scientific meetings in Italy and abroad, with the aim of sharing experiences and best practices, to make these available to the scientific community and to the decision makers in Italy and in Europe.

It is an engagement that forces us to face different difficulties in order to ensure safety, urban regeneration, structural and technological improvement, energy efficiency, landscape protection and, especially, good and proper use of the restoration methodology.

As 2016 ICOMOS Post trauma reconstruction Colloquium declared, in the face of destruction many issues need our attention: identity, memory, tradition and innovation. Therefore reconstruction means also creating new identities and new relationships.

And must focus on rebuilding not only stones, houses and cities, but also the connections between people, spaces and relationships. This is a process that needs the contribution of all the players in the game and that can proceed only with a shared commitment to common goals: giving back to every city its people, and at the same time, giving back each community to its identity and its history. Back to its memory and, finally, back to its future.
PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Internet Access
Complimentary internet access is available within the conference and exhibition area. Participants will need to bring with them a copy of their ID, all the procedure will be operated at the time of registration. The procedure will be as below:

- Participants must provide a copy of their ID and sign a list.
- During registration a person at the reception of the conference will fill in the form
- The user id and WiFi password will be given to the single participants
- The validity of access will be from 10 to 12 July included
- Name of the WiFi is UNIVAQ-HOTSPOT

Mobile phones
During the conference sessions, we ask that mobile phones be turned off or switched to silent, and are not used when sessions are in progress.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRESENTERS, CHAIRS AND RAPPORTEURS

Sessions are planned to be interactive and engaging. The aim of the thematic sessions is to question and reshape research and practice agendas and to identify innovative approaches to the subject matters. In this regard, each session is structured around three to four paper presentations and a discussion animated by a session chair, bringing between the presenters and the audience. There is a named Session Chair and a Rapporteur for each session.

Instructions for Presenters
Each presenter has a maximum of 15 minutes to present her/his paper. So as to enable time for discussion in each thematic session, this time limit will be strictly enforced. Please ensure you are able to present your main points within the 15 minute time limit.

If you have a Power Point presentation, please arrive at least 15 minutes early to load your presentation onto the computer system. All abstracts/short papers will be made available online before the conference. We invite you to take time to read through the other papers/abstracts in your session beforehand and to consider how they relate with the issues in your paper.

Instructions for Session Chairs
Please be at the venue 15 minutes before the session to be able to start the session on time.

We aim to have at least 20-30 minutes for discussion in each session (30 minutes for a session of an hour and half; and 20 minutes for the shorter ones). We suggest to structure your session so that the presenters will present their papers one after another (15 minutes for each presentation, so 45 minutes for a session with 3 papers and 60 minutes for a session with 4 papers). Then the discussion across the papers starts and the Q & A begins. Please ensure that all the presenters are offered a chance to speak in the discussion, or to answer a question.

You can propose a different structure for the session but in this case please ensure that there is time for general discussion between the audience and the presenters, and try to guide the discussion around some key themes.

Abstracts are available to allow you to read the abstracts in your session and prepare questions beforehand on key points across the papers.

Instructions for Rapporteurs
Please read carefully the abstracts/papers before each session.

During the session, try to pick-up three or four good points that were made in the session. Present these verbally at the end of the session, to receive feedback from the audience and presenters.

That evening, please write up your key points into a half page report and email to info@silkcities.org with the subject line "Rapporteurs Report Session xx"

For the conference report-back, please work with the rapporteurs and agree on three points to present from all sessions. Each thematic session will have 5 minutes in the plenary session to present this.
Silk Cities
Silk Cities is an independent academic and professional initiative for contextual knowledge exchange, research and advocacy. The ‘Silk Cities’ initiative is concerned with contextual urban challenges that historical cities in countries along the historic Silk Roads face within the process of urban transformation, as a result of their historic past. Those most concerned are urban heritage, disaster risk reduction and post crisis reconstruction, urban design and public spaces, community development, as well as urban development management. By using the narrative of the urban Silk Roads we tap on the notions of connectivity and exchange, historical presence that is reflected in city characteristics and urban life, and contextual contemporary challenges. Silk Cities’ initial focus area has been these cities in the Middle East and Central Asia.