SCHOOL OF CITIES
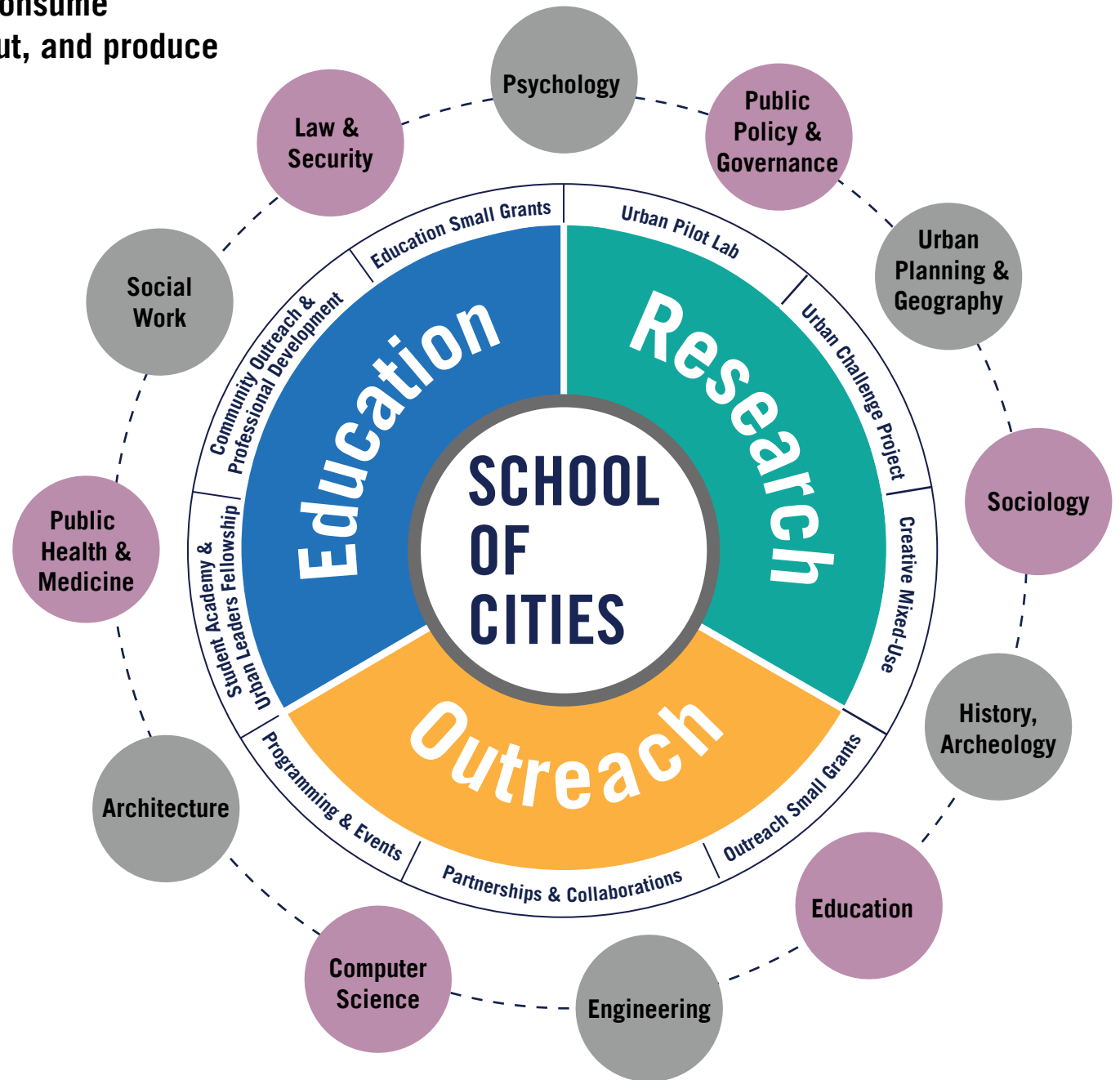
School of Cities
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

About SofC

Cities cover less than
2% of the Earth's surface, but consume
78% of the world's energy output, and produce
60% of all carbon emissions.

School of Cities seeks to be a platform for effective collaboration between our extraordinary community of urbanists, educators, researchers, students, practitioners and the general public to design interdisciplinary solutions to address complex urban challenges, with the aim of making cities and urban regions more **equitable, sustainable, prosperous, inclusive and just.**

SCHOOL OF CITIES

Education
- Education Small Grants
- Community Outreach & Professional Development
- Student Academy & Urban Leaders Fellowship

Research
- Urban Pilot Lab
- Urban Challenge Project
- Creative Mixed-Use

Outreach
- Programming & Events
- Partnerships & Collaborations
- Outreach Small Grants

Law & Security
Psychology
Public Policy & Governance
Social Work
Urban Planning & Geography
Public Health & Medicine
Sociology
History, Archeology
Architecture
Education
Computer Science
Engineering

Leadership Team

Matti Siemiatycki
Associate Professor, Department of Geography & Planning
Interim Director, School of Cities

Shauna Brail
Associate Professor & Director, Urban Studies Program
(Until June 2020)
Associate Director, Partnerships & Outreach, School of Cities
(Until June 2020)

Mark S. Fox
Distinguished Professor of Urban Systems Engineering
Professor of Industrial Engineering and Computer Science
Associate Director, Research, School of Cities

Marieme Lo
Associate Professor, Women and Gender Studies
Director, African Studies
Associate Director, Education, School of Cities

Richard Florida
University Professor, Rotman School of Management
Distinguished Scholar in Residence, School of Cities

Janice Stein
Professor, Munk School of Global Affairs & Public
Policy; Belzberg Professor Of Conflict Management,
Department Of Political Science

Staff

Ben Liu
Manager

Lara Muldoon
Senior Partnerships, Engagement and
Projects Officer

Cecelia Pye
Project Lead, Creative Mixed-Use Initiative
and Urban Pilot Lab

Katherine Danks
Programs Officer

Nida Shams
Finance and Administration Officer

Ravisha Mall
Communications Officer

Student Staff

Sarvenaz Fakharian
Communications

George Kell
Outreach

Fang Qi (Susan) Lin
Operations

Abeir Liton
Education

Yue (Anna) Pan
Education

Corals Zheng
Research

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Technology

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Urbanism
Director, Centre for Landscape Research | Platform
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Culture, Information & Technology, UTM
Director, McLuhan Centre for Culture & Technology

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Professor, Department of Sociology, University of
Toronto Scarborough (UTSC)

Enid Slack
Director, Institute on Municipal Finance &
Governance
Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy

Will Strange
SmartCentres Chair of Real Estate
Professor of Economic Analysis and Policy
Rotman School of Management

The Team

The School of Cities was launched two years ago with one simple goal - to provide a platform to convene people with a passion for, and commitment towards, making cities more prosperous, sustainable, equal and just. The past few months have not only thrown this objective into sharp relief but also laid bare the need for urgent change by demonstrating the deep rooted and unquestionable disparities that exist in cities around the world.

Looking back at the activities of the previous year is traditionally an exercise in celebrating achievements, reflecting on the lessons learned and setting the tone for the future. However, this Annual Report comes at a time when cities globally are at a turning point, facing multiple crises. The efforts to overcome the COVID-19 public health crisis stand alongside the urgent need to address climate change, and the powerful struggles to achieve social justice for Black, Indigenous and other marginalized communities. Cities are key battlegrounds for these crucial struggles against the status quo. The School of Cities stands unequivocally against anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous racism, and all forms of racism wherever they occur. To this end, the School of Cities Leadership Team has launched a $50,000 anti-Black Racism Funding Initiative and a $50,000 Anti-Indigenous Racism Funding Initiative. The funding will support anti-Black racism and anti-Indigenous racism projects from the University community.

Up until COVID-19 caused the world to halt in its tracks, the School of Cities was well on its way to achieve all that we had on the checklists for 2019-2020. The various academic and programmatic initiatives, grants and outreach activities across the three pillars were successful in facilitating connections that extended beyond physical barriers and geographical borders, bringing together students, faculty, experts, researchers and activists from multifarious backgrounds and disciplines. The School of Cities has fostered trans-disciplinary research into the grand challenge problems that cities face, has led innovative educational programs that provided students with unique research, community engaged learning and career development opportunities, and has partnered widely in outreach initiatives to mobilize knowledge into action.

In hindsight, these activities were key in setting the tone of our work post March 2020, and we are deeply grateful that the partnerships we have forged have stood the test of telecommuting. We are keenly aware of our privilege at being able to continue our work despite the shifts in our current realities caused by COVID-19. The School of Cities would also like to extend its gratitude towards the U of T community for responding to, and participating in, our efforts to engage them in conversations during these troubled times.
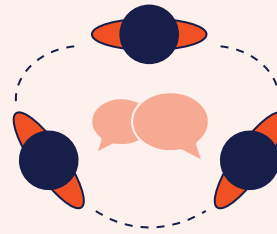
In wake of the global pandemic, the growing impacts of a changing climate, and the rise of global movements struggling for social justice, change in cities is urgently needed. It is critical that new approaches to city building are developed that are equitable, are sensitive to the natural environment, and enable all inhabitants to thrive. The School of Cities pledges to support this much needed transformation and reimagining of cities through our research, education and training, and engagement.

Matti Siemiatycki
Interim Director - School of Cities

OVER
420k
AWARDED TO
FACILITATE INTERDISCIPLINARY
RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP
& ACTIVITIES

55
EVENTS
HOSTED / CO-SPONSORED
OR SUPPORTED

46
U OF T
COMMUNITY-LED
INITIATIVES SUPPORTED

202
FACULTY AFFILIATES
FROM
56
DEPARTMENTS
ACROSS U OF T

107
STUDENTS FROM
62
DEPARTMENTS
ACROSS U OF T
MENTORED THROUGH
ACADEMY &
FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

16
STUDENTS MENTORED
THROUGH MUCP YR 1
29
APPLICATIONS RECEIVED
FOR MUCP YR 2
(AS OF JUNE 2020)

1.1M
IMPRESSIONS
GENERATED
VIA TWITTER,
WITH OVER
23k
ENGAGEMENTS

THE SCHOOL OF CITIES
BROUGHT TOGETHER OVER
400*
CITY- BUILDERS,
ACTIVISTS, ACADEMICS
& SCHOLARS,
INCLUDING:

195
CITY BUILDERS
CONSULTED IN
RESEARCH,

107
FACULTY IN
URBAN
CHALLENGE
TEAMS,

55
FACULTY
ENGAGED AS
SPEAKERS AND
CONTRIBUTORS
AT EVENTS,

21
FACULTY
ENGAGED AS
MENTORS,

19
STUDENT-LED
PROJECTS
SUPPORTED,

18
FACULTY-LED
PROJECTS
SUPPORTED.

*The figure also includes the above mentioned Faculty Affiliates

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URBAN CHALLENGE INITIATIVE

8 seminar convened, with 35 events hosted overall

Affordable Housing Seminar Series

Building and Governing Climate Resilient Cities

City Foods: Liveliness and Livelihood in Sustainable Cities

Creative Mixed-Use Kick-Off Workshop: A Matchmaking Service for Building Partners

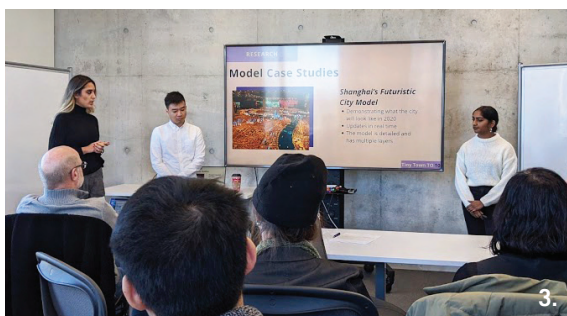Cities by Design: Smart Communities and Villages

The Future of Urban Mobility; and Mobilizing Justice

Sound-sustainability Intersections in Urban Space

Urban Genome Project, an Evolutionary Theory of the City

UrbEnNet: An Urban Environmental Network to understand the impacts of urbanization on our environment

8 Exploration grant proposals accepted, with faculties from 29 departments across U of T, with 6 community partners

VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS

3 virtual workshops with 9 speakers on City Data Models

Average 42 attendees from experts all over the world

Aimed at investigating the development of a set of international standards for city data models. To create truly smart cities, data must be shared across various departments and stakeholders, which can only be accomplished through the use of a common data model.

CREATIVE MIXED - USE

Launched with a workshop with 60 senior decision-makers

Grown the network to more than 130 city builders from across Canada

Interviewed over 40 experts in real estate development

Convened a meeting with the Mayor's Office and experts to discuss innovative ideas for affordable housing policy and action

Research

The Research Pillar convened a wide range of urban focused researchers at the University of Toronto.

The Urban Challenge Initiative teams, this year, were comprised of faculty from 29 departments and faculties and six community partners. These teams developed large-scale, long-term solutions to the most vexing urban challenges by seeking to understand the fundamental components of a city and how they interact. The Initiative uses a team-based approach that spans disciplines at the University and involves partners from leading institutions. The projects seek not only to develop the underlying theories but also to demonstrate their relevance in urban and community laboratories.

Affordable Housing is embarking on a vision of a city where everyone can find housing options that best meet their needs in an affordable way.

City Food challenges the sanitized vision of the metropolis by imagining food as a source of liveliness, equity and livability in the 21st century city.

Climate Resilience explores the interdisciplinary and evolving fields of urban climate resilience. The team hosted the City of Toronto's first resilience strategy and curated the Resilient TO exhibit.

Preparing Society for 21st Century Mobility explores academic and policy debates regarding the vision of a new mobility utopia, where technology drives improvements in efficiency, CO_2 emissions, and social inclusion.

Smart Communities and Villages considers how the idea of a smart city can inspire a concept of a smart villages, with the ambitious goal to design a scalable architecture for smart villages with a focus on India.

UrbEnNet is forming a widespread and high-density real-time monitoring system of the environmental effects of urbanization throughout the GTA.

Urban Genome Project is exploring the evolutionary perspective to understand the species of cities and their characterization, reconceptualizing what it means for the city to have a genome and the city in the way in which it evolves.

Over the past year, the Creative Mixed-Use Initiative has experienced significant success, with a growing network of more than 130 city builders, interviews with over 40 experts in real estate development, and a successful kick-off workshop with 60 senior decision-makers. Organizations across sectors enthusiastically endorse this initiative and have brought forward a variety of partnership opportunities. CMHC has contributed funding towards the development of a matchmaking platform for mixed use buildings, and we are working with the City of Brampton and Create TO on projects to support multi-hub developments. The momentum the initiative has been experiencing, and the fascinating projects under discussion, indicate that the Creative Mixed-Use Initiative can provide much-needed services to the building community.

URBAN PILOT LAB

Under the leadership of Prof. Mark S Fox, the pilot year of the Multidisciplinary Urban Capstone Project (MUCP), a part of the Urban Pilot Lab, was successfully completed with 12 students from across 3 departments and faculties, and 4 client projects. The projects ranged from an innovation district masterplan design for the Bram West Lands in Brampton, a strategic plan for Clarington's Climate Action Plan, an analysis of use and civic engagement of the Tiny Town TO model at the City of Toronto, and maximizing the usage of Toronto school yards and their outdoor environments. The four working groups presented their design solutions in a 'Virtual Design Showcase' held in April 2020.

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24 Urban Leadership Fellows representing **34** U of T departments

83 Student Academy Members convening in **10** thematic working groups addressing critical urban challenges

20 U of T Community led initiatives supported through the Education Small Grants

"Beyond providing me with invaluable resources to carry out my immediate goals, the SofC fellowship assists me to further future goals by showcasing my work and learning from other fellows and academy groups."
- Janelle Brady (Graduate Fellow)

"I've found being able to get ideas, advice, and amplification for our various efforts from each other and the SofC team has been a really wonderful experience."
- Sydney Narciso Wilson, (Undergrad Fellow)

"I think some of the most rewarding aspects of this program are its focus on building fellows' capacity to engage in transdisciplinary collaborations to conduct innovative research and the emphasis on successful knowledge translation of research finding."
- James Gibb (Graduate Fellow)

Education

The Education pillar provided a connective intellectual hub and interdisciplinary academic platform to foster students' academic and civic engagement and leadership in city-building and urban scholarship. We engaged the wider U of T community through a range of academic and co-curricular activities aimed at facilitating compelling conversations and interventions on critical urban challenges and in different fora of civic and social engagement, bringing communities together during the COVID-19 pandemic and solidarity on unfolding crises.

Following the first year of its successful launch, the Urban Leadership Fellowship and Academy Program welcomed a cohort of 83 talented undergraduate and graduate students from 62 departments across all three campuses. The Student Academy, structured around 10 thematic working groups, has been a unique and vibrant hub for interdisciplinary and collaborative research, engaged practice and civic engagement on urban issues. We also awarded 24 Graduate and Undergraduate Fellowships representing 34 departments and offered mentorship, research, and experiential and service-based learning opportunities to a diverse student body. In 2020, nine Fellows from the inaugural 2019 Urban Leadership Program have taken on the newly created role of Peer Mentors for the 2020 cohort.

The Education Pillar also hosted two non-stipendiary International Visiting Postdoctoral Fellows working on cutting-edge urban-focused research projects. In support of educational, pedagogical and curricular innovation initiatives led by the U of T community, we have awarded grants, sponsored or co-sponsored 20 novel, participative and inclusive initiatives, ranging from an International PARK(ing) Day installation to mark a global day for public use of city streets, which was covered by U of T

News, to 'Advancing SDGs @ U of T' by the Media Ethics Lab; supporting a COVID-19 related emergency U of T foodbank, 'Reconciliation through Education and Understanding – The KAIROS Blanket Exercise' at Daniels; Bridgespace: Global Student Community, Rotman; Lift Up CrossFit Program: Creating a Virtual Platform to Support Community Mental Health and Fitness; Mobilizing Justice workshop; and the 'Haiti: Political Crisis and the Culture of Resistance' by the Caribbean Studies program, among others.

CCR Opportunities

The Education Pillar is now offering Co-Curricular Record (CCR) opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students through the Urban Leadership Fellowship and Academy Program. The CCR is an official institutional document that recognizes a student's involvement outside the classroom as a significant part of their U of T experience and affirms the competencies gained from these opportunities.

World Cities Day 2019 Collective Visioning and the Fall Symposium and Curated Exhibit

To mark World Cities Day, students engaged in a collective visioning exercise "One City, One Word" to reflect on the symbolism of the day and map a critical urban challenge, concern or excitement about one city they are passionate about. This was followed by a spoken word performance and a video screening of Voices and Optics: My City, My Story, which marked the launch of the Fall Symposium.

A total of 17 original and interdisciplinary research projects were presented by the Fellows and Academy groups at the 2019 Fall Symposium, a two-day knowledge sharing and dissemination event, showcasing the impact they had made through their research and practice, such as: the Thorncliffe Park Community Market, organized by the Cities of

Inequality group; the PAYCE Canada voter education project, a civic engagement project led by the Urban Governance group, which was covered by CityNews; 'Urban Outdoor Education Day' event, organized by the Creative Cities group; the 'Cityzens' project, showcasing an affordable housing unit model , which aimed at addressing the Toronto housing crisis, led by the Urban Indigeneity group; a research project documenting the politics of market-driven displacement in cities in the Global South, led by the Global Urbanism group; an original and grounded analysis of campus transportation, 'Assessing the Gap: Analyzing Campus Transportation Infrastructure', conducted by the Infrastructure and Design group; an exhibit on urban sustainability, curated by the Sustainable Cities group. Fellows' individual projects included: Original research on Urbanization and Climate Resilience in Nairobi; Mashkiki gitigaanan; the Circular Toronto; The Future of work; Scarborough Studies Collective Zine Making Series; The Wastebelt: Incorporating Energy Production and Waste Management into Toronto; Guidelines for an Equitable Approach to Smart City Transformation; and Motivating Learning: Addressing the "knowledge to policy gap" for urban climate resilience in Southeast Asia, among others.

2020 Urban Career Expo

Over 100 students from all three campuses attended the 2020 Urban Career Expo, a full day event including moderated panels, a networking session and LinkedIn workshop. It brought together 12 panelists, leading city-builders, community champions and urban leaders in the public, private and non-profit sectors. The Keynote speaker, Kris Boyce, CEO of Greenwin Inc., panelists, and the representatives from 16 institutions in the facilitated networking session generously shared their experiences and career trajectories with students and offered continuous mentorship to students in how to navigate a competitive job market and explore new and exciting career pathways.

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MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA

UNDERSTANDING THE BUILDING BOOM

MODERATOR   PANELISTS

Prof. Cara Krmpotich
Director, Museum Studies Program
iSchool
University of Toronto
@MMStCara

Rebecca Catching
Museum Consultant
Editorial Contributor
@RebeccaCatching

Gail Dexter Lord
President & Co-Founder
Lord Cultural Resources
@Gail_Lord

Prof. Haoying Han
Director, Institute of Rural Planning Theories and Technologies
Zhejiang University
@ZJU_China

Prof. Jennifer Purtle
Department of Art History
University of Toronto
@uof_art

Yan Zhou
Curator and PhD Student
iSchool
University of Toronto
@UofTInfoFaculty

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO   School of Cities   Asian Institute Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy   Faculty of Information

6.

Over **120+** Urban Experts engaged as speakers in over **20** events

Hosted leaders of **25** urban institutes across **5** continents as a part of the Global Urban Network

26 U of T Outreach Small Grants approved to support members from across **17** programs/departments

Outreach

Outreach and Engagement at the School of Cities is focused on convening, contributing and community.

Fall 2019 debuted the Where We Gather lecture series, in partnership with the Toronto Public Library. Dynamic conversations held at library branches across Toronto explored various dimensions of public life and public space with 17 panelists from U of T, City of Toronto, private and community organizations.

In October 2019, the School partnered with the Office of the Vice-President International and, with the support of a SSHRC Connection Grant, hosted the leaders of 25 urban institutes across five continents for two days of intensive workshops, including practitioners from 25 local and global organizations. This inaugural meeting of the Global Urban Network shared perspectives on institutional mandates, interdisciplinary research, challenges in unique urban contexts, and community engagement with the goal of increased global collaboration on research, education and partnerships.

The Community-Builders Fellowship program, in partnership with United Way Greater Toronto, supported 18 fellows in 6 teams over a 10-month period focused on capacity building and neighbourhood change across the GTHA. Programming was guided by Faculty Lead Prof. Nouman Ashraf, Research Assistant Nakia Lee-Foon, and supported by a team of faculty mentors and community leaders. Despite tremendous challenges, projects continued to progress; some pivoted entirely due to the pandemic to better serve the needs of their communities. Their accomplishments were recognized during a virtual graduation ceremony in July 2020. The fellowship program will evolve and grow with a new call for applicants during the 2020-21 academic year.
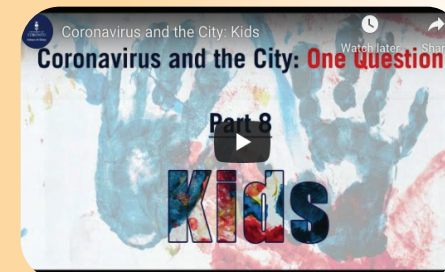
The onset of the COVID-19 global pandemic postponed some activities, including the annual Spring Symposium, however the School found unique ways to continue important conversations in virtual spaces. The Outreach and Engagement Small Grants, funding urban-focused initiatives from faculty, staff and student groups across all three campuses, shifted to support activities in which information and knowledge are shared virtually.

Coronavirus & the City: One Question

In April 2020, Coronavirus and The City: One Question launched as an interactive series. Each week, a group of urban leaders answered one question about an aspect of city life affected by the virus. Over the course of 11 weeks, 54 contributors were featured, from four countries, including seven children, five Canadian mayors, and 11 U of T faculty. The result is a collection of thought-provoking ideas about the evolution of urban life, recovery, and leadership in response to crisis.

June 2020 marked the publication of Governance Innovation, a report derived from roundtables convened by the School of Cities, the Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy, and the Schwartz-Reisman Institute for Technology and Society. Over 50 participants representing academia, government, community organizations and the private sector sought innovative responses across municipal regulatory environments, transportation systems, public realm and data governance structures. Recommendations included the need for increased risk-taking, the importance of equity, and the crucial role of collaborating with public and private community partners in municipal planning.

The work of outreach and engagement at the School of Cities could not have been possible without the extraordinary leadership of outgoing Associate Director, Partnerships and Outreach, Professor Shauna Brail.

In the News

27
ARTICLES
AUTHORED/ CO-AUTHORED
BY THE LEADERSHIP TEAM
IN LEADING PUBLICATIONS

227
EXPERT COMMENTS
BY THE LEADERSHIP TEAM
IN NEWS MEDIA

Featured In

Forbes

BBC

CBC

tvo

The Atlantic

Harvard Business Review

Policy OPTIONS POLITIQUES

THE GLOBE AND MAIL

The Washington Post

The New York Times

Thematic Areas

ART SECTOR
GIG ECONOMY
SMART CITIES
URBAN MIGRATION
TELECOMMUNICATION
PUBLIC REALM
PUBLIC-PVT. PARTNERSHIPS
URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE
PUBLIC TRANSIT
COVID-19 RECOVERY
AFFORDABLE HOUSING
SMALL BUSINESSES
TECH & IT INDUSTRY
URBAN POLICY
URBAN DENSITY
RIDE-SHARING

Cover Page

Photo by White.RainForest · 易雨白林. via Unsplash.com

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1. 2019-2020 MUCP Design Review and Critique, Bram West Lands presentation

2. TINY TOWN TO: City Hall Model, courtesy City Of Toronto

3. 2019-2020 MUCP Design Review and Critique, Tiny TownTO presentation

4. Multidisciplinary Urban Capstone Project meeting in progress

Page 6

From the presentation "What cities need: Convergence on a minimal set of data models for smart cities & communities" by Martin Brynskov, PhD, Chair of the Board of Directors, Open & Agile Smart Cities (OASC), Aarhus University, Denmark - 'Virtual Workshops on City Data Models: Session 1'

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1. 2019 Urban Leadership Fellow Mohamed Ali presenting at the 'Fall Symposium'

2. 2019 Urban Leadership Fellow Rebecca Beaulne-Stuebing (Naawakwegiizhigookwe) presenting at the 'Fall Symposium'

3. U of T student and spoken word artist Timaaj Mohamed Hassen performing at the 'World Cities Day 2019' event

4. 2019 Urban Governance, Law and Policy workstudy group presenting at the 'Fall Symposium'

5. 'PARK(ing) Day 2019' installation was a collaborative effort by University College's Willow Cabral, Kelly Gregg and Sneha Mandhan.

6. Keynote speech by Kris Boyce, CEO - Greenwin Inc. at the '2020 Urban Career Expo'

7. Prof. Marieme Lo, Associate Director, Education, with participants of the "One City, One Word" visioning exercise as a part of the 'World Cities Day 2019' event

8. From left, Anowa Quarcoo, Co-founder - Civic Tech Toronto; Amanda O'Rourke, Executive Director - 8 80 Cities; and Shannon Holness, Community Benefits Organizer - Toronto Community Benefits Network addressing students at the '2020 Urban Career Expo'

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1. Prof. Nouman Ashraf and Prof. Shauna Brail, Associate Director - Partnerships and Outreach, with the 2020 Community-Builders cohort at the 'Virtual Convocation Ceremony' via Zoom

2. Participants of 'Advancing SDGs @ U of T' design event, co-presented with the Media Ethics Lab

3. The Global Urban Network

4. Alex Josephson, Co-Founder - PARTISANS, Ann-Marie Nasr, Director - Parks Development and Capital Projects, City of Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation Alissa North, Associate Professor, John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design, in conversation with Prof. Shauna Brail at the 'Where We Gather: Public Life in Toronto' lecture.

5. Ana Teresa Portillo, Equity Officer & Equity Strategy Committee Chair, Parkdale Neighbourhood Land Trust and Mercedes Sharpe Zayas, Workforce Planning Coordinator, Parkdale People's Economy Project, at the 'House Divided' book launch event.

6. From left, moderator Prof. Cara Krmpotich, Director - Museum Studies Program, iSchool; PhD student and curator Yan Zhou; Prof. Jenny Purtle, Dept. of Art History; Haoying Han of Zheiiang University; museum consultant and editorial coordinator Rebecca Catching; and Gail Dexter Lord, President and Co-Founder - Lord Cultural Resources, at the 'Lord Museum Development in China: Book Launch'

Photo credits

Connect with Us

Today, more than half of the world's population lives in cities.
Why do people gather in cities?
What makes a city livable?
How should cities evolve, to become more sustainable, inclusive and just?

New interdisciplinary thinking is needed for cities to be successful. U of T's deep urban expertise, across all fields, is tackling the future of cities. The School of Cities is where educators, institutions, practitioners and the public will engage in research, education and outreach to drive forward new city solutions – and a shared prosperity for all citizens.

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