

 Project no. 693443 Project no. ES/R002991/1

 

**Smart Urban Intermediaries: Trans-European Research, Learning and Action**

Smart Urban Intermediaries (SmartUrbI) is a research project that puts those individuals who make connections and bring people and resources together in creative ways at the heart of urban development. We call these individuals, ‘smart urban intermediaries’ and this research sets out to understand how they make a difference in urban neighbourhoods.

A ‘smart urban intermediary’ could be someone who is committed over time to making a difference in their neighbourhood, campaigns on a local issue, supports people to act together, works for social change or helps to solve local problems.

They may be employed in public bodies or in the delivery of public services or in a social enterprise or a community or voluntary organization. They may be from, or represent, communities, for example as councillors, active citizens or community leaders.

We are interested in what ‘smart urban intermediaries’ do, how they do it and the difference it makes in neighbourhoods: so, how they develop and sustain their work, how they make connections within, between and across communities and formal organisations and bring together people and resources.

Over the next two years, we will work across four European cities – Birmingham, Amsterdam, Copenhagen and Glasgow to:

* Identify and work with up to ten ‘smart urban intermediaries’ in each city
* Develop a local ‘living lab’ to bring interested intermediaries and other stakeholders together
* Offer opportunities for international learning and dialogue across Europe
* Share learning and practical ideas on how to support ‘smart urban intermediaries’

SmartUrbI is a 30-month research project (April 2017 to September 2019)

We are supported by the Economic and Social Research Council and the ERA-NET Co-fund for Smart Urban Futures funded through the European Commission and Horizon 2020.

For more information on this research, please contact:

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**Smart Urban Intermediaries: Trans-European Research, Learning and Action**

**Participant Information**

Over the next two years, in each city we aim to identify and work closely with up ten ‘smart urban intermediaries’, learning about their experiences and practices, as well as bringing intermediaries together with representatives from other relevant organisations in a local ‘living lab’. The ‘living lab’ is a collaborative working group, involving the research team, each of the ten ‘smart urban intermediaries’ and other interested parties.

As an identified ‘smart urban intermediary’, you may be interviewed at the start and end of the project by a researcher. In addition, you will be ‘shadowed’ for up to 3 days over the course of the project, which means that a researcher would accompany you during your normal activities. The data collected from these interviews, observations and reflections will be used to analyse our research questions, inform the ‘living lab’ discussions and support wider learning. Four local ‘living labs’ will be held in each city over the course of the project in: February 2018, May 2018, November 2018 and March 2019. ‘Living labs’ encourage collaborative learning in real life settings to develop insights for action.

The ‘living labs’ will be half-day workshops using a series of deliberative and co-design exercises encouraging you to reflect on your own practice, share insights and learn from peers. To support this reflection, as a member of the ‘living lab,’ you will be offered training by the research team to act as a ‘participant researcher’, recording and reflecting your own experiences through research techniques such as photo-voice.

There will be opportunities to share learning across the ‘living labs’ in each city (Amsterdam, Birmingham, Copenhagen and Glasgow), together with a wider learning exchange with other European partners.

In summary, over the course of the research project (over 2 years), as a ‘smart urban intermediary’ you will be expected to participate in:

* two interviews,
* being shadowed for up to 3 days (spread over a year),
* four half-day local living labs,
* reflective exercises research techniques such as photo-voice,
* approximately one day’s induction and training.

In return for your participation, involvement in our research will offer opportunities for:

* Personal reflection and professional development
* Training and experience in research methods (i.e. photo-voice)
* Generating and collecting data as part of a research team and ‘living lab’
* Exchanging shared learning and insights with European partners
* Shaping wider learning to inform policy and practice

**Smart Urban Intermediaries: Trans-European Research, Learning and Action**

**Participant Consent Form**

Smart Urban Intermediaries (SmartUrbI) is a research project that puts people who make connections and bring people and resources together in creative ways at the heart of urban development. We call these people ‘smart urban intermediaries’ and this research sets out to understand how they make a difference in urban neighbourhoods.

We require each participant to complete a Consent Form in order to participate in the research. By signing this consent form you recognise that you are participating in a research project funded by the Economic and Social Research Council and ERA-NET Smart Urban Futures Co-fund. This form records your agreement to take part in the research and covers your consent for data to be collected throughout the research. This general consent form covers participation in the SmartUrbI project from 2017 to 2019.

We will treat all those involved in the research with honesty and respect. We have secured institutional ethical approval to undertake this research. We adhere to sector-wide standards for ethical conduct in research and seek to avoid personal and psychological harm to individuals. The primary element of the ethical approval relates to informed consent and being clear about how data is collected, stored and managed. It also relates to issues of anonymity and confidentiality.

We will be collectively generating data, which includes interview transcripts, meeting notes, observations and reflections and recordings such as audio, video or images. This data will help us address our research questions and will be made freely available to the scientific community after completion of the project via the UK Data Service (<https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk>). Data will be collected, stored, managed and archived in line with the Research Council UK’s Common Principles on Data Policy and the ESRC Research Data Policy.

Where material is generated in the course of the research, principles of confidentiality and anonymity can be applied as appropriate. Participation is entirely voluntary and participants can withdraw from the project at any time, including removal of consent for us to use any of your data up to that point. You have the right to request that anything you may regard as sensitive (verbal or written) be excluded from the study. You may also ask for copies of any recordings and transcripts of interviews or engagements.

If you have any questions about how the research is being conducted, please get in touch with:

Principal Investigator: Dr Oliver Escobar, University of Edinburgh, oliver.escobar@ed.ac.uk

Research Fellow: Elisabetta Mocca, University of Edinburgh, elisabetta.mocca@ed.ac.uk

I have read the Participant Consent Form and agree voluntarily to take part in the Smart Urban Intermediaries research project [ ]

I understand that this is a RCUK research project and that my participation is part of a data collection strategy to address the research questions of the project **[ ]**

I have been provided with participant information about the SmartUrbI project **[ ]**

I will follow ethical guidelines and adhere to RCUK policies on data management and ethics alongside the SmartUrbI team [ ]

I give permission for the information collected to be used for research purposes including publishing and conference presentations [ ]

I give permission for the information collected to be archived and accessible in the UK Data Service to be used for research purposes [ ]

I acknowledge that I will be referred to by pseudonym or by name in accordance with my wishes: [PLEASE TICK **ONE**]

* + I want my words and work to be attributed to me by my real name [ ]
	+ I want all material related to me to be anonymised. I do not want my name to appear anywhere in relation to this project. I want my words and work to be attributed to me only by pseudonym [ ]

I understand that photography will be used as part of the research, accordingly, this is my preference [PLEASE TICK **ONE**]:

* + I don’t want to be recognisable in images generated during the project [ ]
	+ I am happy to be recognisable in images generated during the project [ ]

I understand that I can change my preference with regard to anonymity during the course of the project [ ]

I would like to receive general information about this project via the SmartUrbI newsletter [ ]

Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_