

DUAL Dichotomies in Urban Agendas and Logics

Aurora Academic Conference
Call for Abstract



DUAL: Dichotomies in Urban Agendas and Logics

What does it mean to engage critically with the theme of the city – or, more broadly, with urban space? Can we still consider this a well-defined field of inquiry, or does it continue to raise unsolved issues, contested practices, and discursive tensions that demand further problematization?

As we know, urban environments are **spaces of contradiction**: they are centres of wealth and poverty, innovation and tradition, community and isolation. From the bustling metropolis to the fragmented suburb, urban life is shaped by tensions that often appear as dichotomies: public vs. private, inclusion vs. exclusion, permanence vs. transformation, visibility vs. invisibility. These oppositions do not merely describe urban phenomena – they shape the material, social, political, and symbolic structures through which the urban is produced, inhabited, and interpreted. To read the city through dichotomies is therefore not to simplify it, but to open a critical lens on its layered complexities and contradictions.

Moreover, urban areas play a **central role in the European Union's policy agenda**. On one hand cities are at the forefront of challenges such as climate change, migration, digital transformation, and social inequality; on the other hand, they are also engines of innovation, economic growth, and cultural diversity. The **EU's Urban Agenda** and initiatives like the **New European Bauhaus** highlight the need for integrated, inclusive, and sustainable approaches to urban development. Indeed, investigating the contradictions within cities is not only intellectually vital but also politically and socially urgent, especially in the context of the EU's vision for a greener, fairer, and more resilient future.

Call for Abstract

DUAL - Aurora Academic Conference invites **university students, PhD students** and **researchers** from **all disciplines** to explore how these dualities emerge, overlap, and evolve within urban contexts. This **transdisciplinary conference** aims to foster dialogue across fields and methodologies, offering fresh perspectives on how cities are studied, understood, and experienced.

The conference is organised within the framework of the project **AURORA2030** and represents a continuation of the work begun as part of the course **Challenges in Europe** (April-June 2025).

Possible Dichotomies for Exploration (non-exhaustive):

Center - Periphery, Tradition – Innovation, Formal - Informal, Mobility - Immobility, Nature – Artificial, Growth - Decline, Safety - Surveillance, Belonging - Alienation, Open - Closed, Local - Global, Work – Leisure, Visible - Invisible, Production - Engendering, Private - Public.

We welcome **creative interpretations of “dichotomy”** and encourage proposals that challenge, subvert, or reinterpret this concept.

Language: the requested language of the conference is **English**. Please submit an abstract in English, for the sake of effective circulation.

Who Should Submit?

- Undergraduate and postgraduate students
- PhD candidates
- Recent graduates and early career researchers

All disciplines are welcome, including but not limited to:

Urban Studies, Architecture, Geography, Sociology, History, Philosophy, Law, Political Science, Environmental Studies, Anthropology, Literature, Art, Design, Media and Communication, and Digital Humanities.

Submission Guidelines

Please submit your proposal **by July 31st, 2025 via mail to dual.auroraconference@gmail.com**

Your proposal should include:

- Title of your paper
- Abstract (max 300 words)
- Short bio (max 150 words)

Practical information

Main organisers: University of Naples Federico II (UNINA) and University of Duisburg-Essen (UDE)

Venue: Department of Humanities (University of Naples Federico II), Napoli

Dates: September 29th-30th

Online participation possible. We especially welcome presentations by PhD-students and early-career scholars. The participation is free. For Aurora students: get in touch with your International Officer to explore funding possibilities for the mobility.

All the students participants will receive a **Certificate of Attendance** equivalent to **3 ECTS**.

All the contributions admitted will be published in a collective volume after the conference.

Scientific-Organizational Committee:

Alessandro Arienzo, Francesca Scamardella, Florian Freitag, Zohra Hassan-Pieper, Ramon Rispoli, Martina Bosone, Benedetta Toledo, Giovan Giuseppe Monti, Francesco Casalbordino, Maria Fierro.

Important Dates

	Deadlines		Deadlines
<i>Deadline Call for Abstract</i>	July 31st	<i>Full Paper submission</i>	October 25th
<i>Notification of Acceptance for the Conference</i>	August 18th	<i>Paper Review</i>	November 14th
<i>Final Program Announcement</i>	September 1st	<i>Final Paper submission</i>	November 28th
<i>Conference Date</i>	September 29th-30th	<i>Conference Proceedings Volume</i>	March 2026