

Urban Festival



Press Release

Urban Festival 2022 – Transforming Cities Through Research and Practice

In 2022, the South African Cities Network (SACN) celebrates its 20th anniversary. Established in 2002, the SACN has been the custodian of South Africa's urban story and is at the heart of urban research and practice through its flagship publications and urban conferences and events. The 20th anniversary offers the opportunity to tell the story of best practices, challenges, and lessons of the SACN. We will reflect on the future and what needs to happen over the next 20 years to achieve "liveable, safe, resource-efficient cities and towns.

The SACN Urban Festival joins global movements led by UN-Habitat dating back to World Habitat Day, first convened in 1986. The UN-Habitat theme for Urban October is *31 Days for Promoting a better urban future*. Thus, situated within that global dialogue, the SACN Urban Festival will focus on local and contextual factors under the theme, "Transforming Cities Through Research & Practice. The festival will provide a significant contribution from the Global South and aims to provide a platform for learning, experimentation, and knowledge exchange to implement a transformative urban agenda to enable active dialogue between a range of urban actors.

A range of diverse voices, from whole-of-government to all-of-society, will come together to discuss a spectrum of issues affecting all aspects of city decision-making and social and economic investments. The festival speakers will include experts and practitioners with extensive practical experience in the local and national government spheres, private sector and civil society actors. The Masterclass presenters include experts with local and international experience in managing and governing complex city contexts. At the same time, each panel discussion will consist of a range of stakeholders (from the whole of government and society) to foster collaborative approaches to urban challenges.

The 2022 Festival includes exhibits and an urban cinema to cover the SACN thematic areas with sessions focused on City Governance, Municipal Finance, Climate resilience, City Economies, and Smart Cities.



Festival Masterclasses:

- **26 October**
- *22-Years on: Why spatial transformation cannot be achieved only by government*
- *Creating Capability in Cities- how the administration and executive should work to achieve results*
- **27 October**
- *An all-of-society approach to Just-Transition*
- *Nothing Small About the Small/Medium and Micro Enterprises*
- **28 October**
- *City Branding and its importance in the development of cities*

The festival will take place from 26-28 October 2022 at The Empire Venue in Parktown, Johannesburg and virtually across a range of digital platforms. SACN and partners, therefore, invite all civil society, organisations, designers, planners, storytellers, civil servants, and city-dwellers to join the festival so that stories, research, and voices are preserved and can be used to foster greater understanding and better solutions.

Visit our website for more information on <https://www.sacities.net/urban-festival-2022/>



The graphic is a promotional poster for the Urban Festival 2022. It features a teal background with a black and white architectural drawing of a modern building facade. The text 'Urban Festival' is in a large, bold, sans-serif font, with '26-28 October 2022' below it. To the right, '20 YEARS' is written in a large, stylized font, with 'South African CitiesNetwork' and '2002-2022 OF CUTTING-EDGE RESEARCH' integrated into the design. The central theme is 'Transforming Cities through Research & Practice'. On the right side, under the heading 'What To Expect', there is a list of activities: Master Classes, Panel Discussions, Festival Pledges, and Urban Exhibition & More!, each accompanied by a small icon. At the bottom, there are social media and website links: #UrbanFest2022, www.sacities.net/urban-festival-2022, and #SACN20.