



NYU

Marron Institute
of Urban Management

Announcement

NYU New Cities Conference Innovative Approaches for Urban Transformation in the Global South

Hosted by the

**Charter Cities Institute &
NYU Marron Institute of Urban Management**

March 11, 2023

*New York University
(Brooklyn Campus)
370 Jay Street
Brooklyn, New York 11201*

Background

In the next 30 years, rapid urbanization will bring major challenges to cities in the Global South. The world is expected to gain over 2.5 billion new urban residents by 2050 – the equivalent of 250 megacities – and most of this growth will take place in Africa and Asia. Concerned with growing pressures on already burdened infrastructure and public services, many policymakers are turning to an ambitious idea: rapid urban expansion and the construction of new master planned cities from scratch.

The past two decades have seen an accelerated growth in the building of new cities. Most of these projects are in the Global South, with as many as 250 new cities being built in just Africa today. The hope is that new cities can alleviate growing popular pressures, facilitate industrial transformation, and spark economic growth more effectively than retrofitting existing infrastructure. However, the “new cities wave” poses its own set of challenges. If approached carelessly, these projects may develop into the same dysfunctional, exclusionary, and ineffective urban environments prevalent in much of the developing world. But if executed

well, new cities can become engines of economic vibrancy. The phenomenon has been largely neglected by academic researchers and many questions remain open.

Purpose

The **NYU New Cities Conference** will bring together researchers and practitioners from different domains—economics, political science, finance, urban planning, real estate, international development, technology, and government. Getting new cities “right” will require a diverse set of expertise, and the central goal of the conference is to initiate a dialogue between the relevant actors. This includes both scholars studying the consequences of new cities and stakeholders directly engaged in these projects. The conference will focus on two prevailing questions:

1. Are new cities an effective tool for economic growth in the Global South?
2. What are the negative consequences of the “new cities wave,” and how can we mitigate them?

Attendance

The conference will take place on **March 11th, 2023** at the **New York University Brooklyn Campus**. Due to limited space, attendance is by **invite only**. If you have a compelling reason to attend, please reach out to **Tommie Thompson** at **tommie@cci.city**.

The Charter Cities Institute

The [Charter Cities Institute \(CCI\)](#) is a nonprofit dedicated to building the ecosystem for new planned cities. It was founded on the idea that a fresh approach was necessary to tackle humanity’s most pressing challenges: global poverty, rapid urbanization, conflict, migration, and climate change. Charter cities—new cities granted a special jurisdiction to create a new governance system—can be an integral part of the solution.

CCI’s work is focused on providing technical assistance to governments and developers interested in establishing their own charter cities. They also generate novel research on relevant subjects like decentralized governance, economic growth, and urban policy.

Recent Publications

- [Research Agenda](#) outlines the five research topics most important to the charter cities movement and helps guide CCI’s research on urban governance, economic growth, and poverty alleviation.
- [Governance Handbook](#) is a guide for policymakers and city developers on how to design the regulatory environment for charter cities. It lays out the types of laws, regulations, and institutions that can help new cities become economically vibrant centers for tomorrow’s urban dwellers.

- [Planning Guidelines](#) develops an urban planning framework for charter cities. It outlines how planners should think about transportation, urban design, and city development in a way that strikes a balance between formal planning and emergent markets.

The NYU Marron Institute of Urban Management

The NYU [Marron Institute](#) is an applied research center working with cities to take on critical challenges of urban living. As the world rapidly urbanizes, the urban environment is fundamental to our global future. Cities are central to climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. They are laboratories for new models of governance, planning and innovation, and they represent diverse societies grappling with questions of equity, inclusion, and opportunity.

Launched in February 2013, the Marron Institute explores these intersecting issues through an unprecedented University-wide lens—providing a vibrant academic community for scholars and students in the social sciences, natural sciences, humanities, and professional schools. By focusing on solution-oriented research, Marron and its affiliates work with cities around the world as they strive to become more livable, sustainable, and equitable—advancing the fundamental understanding of cities in the process.

Currently, the Marron Institute has five major research programs focused on [urban planning](#), [environmental health](#), [civic analytics](#), [transportation and land use](#), and [public sector performance and innovation](#).