

Dear Colleagues

We welcome you to this first Annual Global Conference of the Regional Studies Association 2012, entitled '**Sustaining Regional Futures**' which takes place in the city of Beijing, China.

As well as the plenary sessions at the Beijing conference, where keynote speakers will address some of the biggest issues facing regions and sub-national areas around the world, gateways are being organised on the causes and implications of different patterns of regional development. The gateways are dedicated to assessing the forms and successes of regional policies in managing regional disparities; establishing basic public services; supporting endogenous growth and the comparative advantages of regions; promoting regional competitiveness and sustaining harmony between the economy, society and the environment. In our call for papers for this event we encouraged offers of papers on different countries' and regions' experiences, and on comparative studies. We also sought papers on aspects of social justice, territorial politics, governance, and peripheral and marginal regions to allow an examination of what has been happening in these times of rapid national growth and global upheaval. Additional topics in which we have expressed interest are city-regions, spatial planning and analysis. Debate and discussion, contrast and comparisons are essential to the success of Regional Studies Association conferences and to academic endeavour. Critical analyses and sharing of experiences in all these topic areas will ensure the Beijing conference achieves the aims that the Regional Studies Association and its partners have set out for it.

At this conference the Association will reinforce this message through its commitment of £250,000 of extra funding for the regional studies community and by highlighting its recently introduced new research grant scheme (up to a maximum of £10,000, \$16,000, €12,700) aimed at early career researchers. Monies can also be accessed to attend conferences, to travel, to run research networks and to support non-RSA conferences and events. These opportunities are on offer alongside the more traditional benefits of RSA membership which include the following publications (all received in both print and online format):

- Journals - Regional Studies (10 issues a year); Spatial Economic Analysis (4 issues a year); and from next year, our new journal *Territory, Politics, Governance*.
- Magazines - Regions (4 issues a year) ; Regional Insights (2 issues a year);
- E-subscription to 8 related Routledge journals;
- 30% discount of subject related books from Routledge, Edward Elgar and Wiley Blackwell.
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Go to our website www.regionalstudies.org or talk to our staff or Board members to find out more about our activities. We encourage you to maximise the value of your membership.

We would like to say a special thank you to those who have made this event possible. Particular thanks go to Weidong Liu and Zhouying Song from the Chinese Academy of Sciences. We also thank colleagues at the Lincoln Institute for their financial support allowing us to increase the number of bursaries. We thank all of you who have played a role as conference gatekeepers in helping to organise and coordinate the sessions. And we also thank all those who will be active participants in the conference for their time in writing and presenting their work, for chairing sessions, and for participating in the debate. Finally we would like to thank the staff team at the Regional Studies Association for their continuing professionalism and commitment.

Finally, please pencil in dates in your diary for our two international conferences next year, 2013 in Tampere, Finland from Monday 6th – Wednesday 8th May (inclusive) and in Los Angeles, USA from Monday 16th – Wednesday 18th December (inclusive). Details will soon be on the Association website.

We do hope that you enjoy the conference, and look forward to meeting you.
With all best wishes



David Bailey



Sally Hardy