

# Global Urban Challenges: The Role of Research Universities

April 2015



## Executive Summary

As cities around the world are pressed to address challenges presented by increased urbanization, antiquated infrastructure, and outdated public policies, research universities and their scholars may be a source for solutions.

Cities worldwide face major issues, including providing access to health care, ensuring quality education, maintaining urban vitality, and adapting infrastructure to be environmentally sustainable. Yet few mayors or city officials have the time, money, or expertise to explore these problems in depth. Universities, though, are thought leaders, conveners of experts and practitioners, aggregators of data, partners to government and civic organizations, anchors in their communities, and—perhaps most important—the nucleus of new ideas.

What role can major research universities play in helping cities address global urban challenges? To explore this question, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, Northwestern University, the University of Chicago, and the University of Illinois convened a major conference in Chicago from November 18 to 20, 2013, with representatives from over 25 research universities from around the world. The conference was not intended to provide solutions. Rather, it focused on how research universities are addressing these problems, on opportunities for international collab-

oration, on their relationships with their local communities, and on how they are using big data in their search for solutions.

This report summarizes the three-day conference. Highlights include:

- ▶ Government, corporate, civic, and educational leaders must collaborate to meet the needs of cities; government cannot do it alone.
- ▶ Universities and researchers, freed from institutional constraints, have the resources and bandwidth to study issues over time, test hypotheses, assess variables, and explore potential outcomes that could help solve urban challenges. But universities still remain centers of teaching and research, not consultants to a city government.
- ▶ International collaborations are useful for exchanging ideas, but scholars come from different disciplines and cultures, so partnerships should be pursued on a case-by-case basis. Collaborations are far more effective when they come with a common budget, an external funder, and mutual trust.

While the conference did not reach consensus on how research universities and cities can collaborate to tackle the problems of urbanization, it revealed the ferment within universities as they grapple with the problems of the cities, their relationship to government, and their role in their communities.

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## I. Introduction

As humanity becomes ever more urbanized, cities around the world are pressed to find solutions to new and growing problems, some unique, all increasingly complex. They confront these enormous challenges with reduced budgets and other resources diminished.

Several major issues face cities today, including providing access to health care, ensuring quality education, maintaining urban vitality, and adapting infrastructure to be more environmentally sustainable. Few mayors or other city officials have the time, money or expertise to explore these problems in depth, yet they are responsible for identifying solutions. Many of these cities are also home to great research universities and to the research expertise that these universities command. Universities have powerful assets to bring to these issues. They have enormous capacity to research the most effective ways to deal with many of the problems facing cities. Universities are thought leaders, conveners of experts and practitioners, aggregators of data, partners to government and civic organizations, anchors in their communities, and—perhaps most important—the nucleus of new ideas.

While cities face extensive challenges, research universities and their scholars may have the solutions. But are cities making full use of this knowledge on their doorsteps? For that matter, are the universities themselves interested in offering that knowledge to urban governments? What ideas are emerging from these universities? How are they applying their resources—especially their power to gather and analyze large amounts of complex data—to major urban issues? How are university researchers collaborating with scholars around the world to share information and insights? In short, what role are major research universities playing in addressing global urban challenges?

To study these questions and problems, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, Northwestern University, the University of Chicago, and the University of Illinois convened a major conference in Chicago November 18–20, 2013, with representatives from over twenty-five research universities from around the world. The conference was not intended to provide solutions. Rather, it focused on how research universities are addressing these problems, on opportunities for international collaboration, on their relationships with their local communities, and on how they are using big data in their search for solutions.



Ambassador Ivo H. Daalder, president of The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, welcomes attendees.

This report serves as a summary of the three-day conference. It is organized by topic and brings together the ideas and recommendations made by participants in plenary and working group sessions. The ideas reflect the sometimes contradictory contributions of individual participants—all on a not-for-attribution basis.

The conference did not reach consensus on how research universities and cities can collaborate to tackle the problems of urbanization. In fact, it revealed the ferment within universities as they grapple with the problems of the cities, their relationship to government, and their role in their communities.

## II. The Future of Cities

The conference focused on the role of research universities in helping major cities understand and solve the problems of increasing urbanization. But first, it looked at those cities themselves and the new challenges they face in a globalizing world. Saskia Sassen, the Robert S. Lynd Professor of Sociology at Columbia University and one of the leading scholars of the global city, was a key speaker at the conference.

A city is complex, almost organic, and “incomplete,” Professor Sassen said. A city must be complex, since it includes business, commerce, housing, education, culture, and governance. It is organic, and some cities will grow and others will die. It is incomplete, because it always has unmet needs and is constantly changing, even reinventing itself. Cities such as New York and Chicago have reinvented themselves many times: Their capacity to do so is a big part of what a city is all about.



Saskia Sassen (right), Robert S. Lynd Professor of Sociology, Department of Sociology, and cochair, Committee on Global Thought, Columbia University, in conversation with Richard C. Longworth, senior fellow, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, about “The Future of Cities.”

So what does this mean for the future of cities? Cities are embedded in nations and subject to national policies, which vary from country to country. National governments need to be players, but these governments are subject to global economic forces that they cannot control. Many of these global challenges—terrorism, climate change, immigration—strike cities first and with the greatest force. This is what is being called the new “urbanizing of global geopolitics.” When the Chinese premier comes to the United States, he visits the capital in Washington, D.C., but also New York and Chicago. He chooses cities that play key roles in urgent and acute policy issues such as trade, commerce, and immigration.

Corporations, too, play a significant role in the status of cities. Many of them operate globally, connecting through other people, and institutions. While many cities offer tax incentives to encourage corporations to locate in them, incentives alone will not determine this decision. Global firms often need to be in more than one city. They have the money and the resources to do what they want, and only certain places can serve them most effectively. The new reality is that the leadership of government, corporate, civic, and educational sectors need to collaborate to respond to the needs of these international corporations.

Another issue gaining attention is the disparity between the global elite and impoverished lower class in many cities. The voice of the powerless is beginning to be heard. Historically, a modest middle class

was a key actor in cities throughout the world. Today, more and more of the middle class feel that the state has broken the social contract with this section of the population. People in cities around the world share a growing disadvantage in the face of increasing wealth at the top. And they share the reality that they may be poorer and more confined in their life projects than their parents, and perhaps even their grandparents, were.

Have any cities successfully solved this conundrum of global inequality, and can this solution be replicated in other cities worldwide? Professor Sassen argued that the cities themselves cannot resolve this challenge, because it is the very global systems of complex knowledge and technology within which they operate that have produced the inequalities.

To this problem, research universities bring an extraordinary assemblage of resources, and so must play a critical role in finding solutions. Research universities encourage different modes of thinking and

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engage new actors that should be recognized. Cities are useful for identifying challenges and optimal solutions, but experts can examine theories and outcomes. She warned, however, that universities run the risk of being elites, talking from the ivory tower, and should engage other important actors in this discussion.

### **III. A View from the City: Managing Urban Challenges Worldwide**

Each city has unique challenges based on its geography, history, demography, national setting and political structure. Yet most cities share the challenge of increased urbanization. People have migrated from rural areas to cities within their own countries or to other countries to work, study, escape oppression, or to find the excitement that cities offer. Many are poor, and go to cities to better their lives. Often they are young and, in time, raise families in their new homes. Some are overwhelmed by the cities, or slip into crime. All need schools, jobs, health care—a decent life. Taken together, they now account for more than half of humanity. And the United Nations predicts that by 2050, two-thirds of the world’s population will live in cities.



The panel discussion on managing urban challenges worldwide was moderated by Julia Stasch (left), vice president of U.S. Programs at the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and featured (second from left to right) Washington Fajardo, Secretary of Cultural Heritage, Urban Intervention, Architecture, and Design, City of Rio de Janeiro; Dick Gleeson, city planner, City of Dublin; and Heng Chye Kiang, former board member of Singapore’s Urban Redevelopment Authority and dean, School of Design and Environment, National University of Singapore.

In both developed and developing countries, the growth of urban populations imposes new and multi-dimensional demands on city leaders. New global challenges—public health, climate change, terrorism—compound these demands. Mayors and other government officials often cannot solve these problems on their own. But they can move toward solutions by collaborating with other experts and institutions that make up a great city. First among these experts and institutions are the scholars and researchers, and the universities that employ them. These scholars bring their own expertise. They have the time to study the problems and their own funding. Most of all, they have the freedom to pose new, even heretical ideas, and to put them into the public debate.

Here are some of those ideas, on a variety of issues, which enlivened this conference.

### Growing Demands

**The influx of migrants, especially from rural areas, creates great demands.** Cities in developing nations, including global metropolises such as Beijing and Shanghai, face housing shortages and spikes in housing prices. For example, in Singapore, where the population has grown from 4 million in 2000 to 5.4 million in 2014, access to land is at a premium and

infrastructure and housing supply have yet to catch up to the needs of a growing population. Public housing policies can go against the natural supply and demand of a market economy for housing, but government housing programs may not deal with social integration issues such as the quality of housing, access to public transportation, or jobs. The public and private sectors and universities must collaborate to address housing policies and provide innovative solutions.

**Growing urbanization** strains city infrastructure while transforming the city’s demographic balance. To combat these stresses, cities must be sustainable—socially, economically, and environmentally—and they must be livable and resilient. Social sustainability means that the city can maintain processes and structures that support a healthy community for current and future generations. Economic sustainability requires ways to use existing resources to achieve a responsible and beneficial balance long-term. Environmental sustainability requires structures and practices that contribute to long-term environmental health. Public-private partnerships can help cities if they serve the needs of residents as well as the corporations that partner with the city. Sometimes the needs of large corporations compete with the needs of residents. City planners should work with all the parts of the city, including universities, to think of the city as a living laboratory, in which ideas can be piloted, eval-

### Rio’s Urban Development

Rio de Janeiro is wrestling with urban development while dealing with an extraordinary array of twenty-first century challenges. The city has been undergoing significant economic and social difficulties. Yet the city’s leaders chose to host both the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Summer Olympics. Some urban analysts felt this was too ambitious. Yet preparing for these major events enabled the city to invest in needed developments, such as creating a more integrated public transit system; reconstructing the downtown area; establishing a new network of public services to meet health, family, and education aspirations; and restoring the public spaces that had become informal settlements or hubs for drug trafficking and crime. Not every city can harness major international events into funding for new development. But cities worldwide are seeking creative ways to address the challenges of increased urbanization.

## Singapore's Growing Population

Besides immediate infrastructure and housing needs, Singapore faces other long-term stresses from population growth. Singapore is a small island state with a large port and a highly dense population that has been growing for decades. In 1980, the population was 2.4 million, in 2000 it was 4 million, and in 2013 it hit 5.4 million. Its population is projected to hit 6 million in 2018. Water shortages will challenge all aspects of the growing city and it will also be directly affected by climate change. Demographics in Singapore are changing and will continue to do so as the population ages and grows more diverse. Despite these challenges, city planners are optimistic about Singapore's livability, which they attribute to its diversified and growing economy.

uated to see if they serve the needs of the city and its residents, and fine-tuned.

## The City As a Living Research Laboratory

Where do universities fit into this civic governance picture? The answer should be obvious: urban universities by definition sit at the heart of a living research laboratory. To understand cities today, researchers need to only leave campus and explore the city around it. But this answer may not be so obvious after all.

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University scholars are often eager to partner with cities to research and consider solutions for growing urban challenges. Scholars and researchers often say they would rather see their research resolve real-world problems than hypothetical scenarios. They are more enthusiastic about using research to solve problems than the presidents and other officials who actually run the university.

The administration's priority, on the other hand, is to the institution itself. Sometimes the universities' interests coincide with those of its city, and sometimes not. Universities want to be known as centers of teaching and research, not as consultants to a city government. As institutions, universities must place their own interests above solutions to urban challenges. Researchers, freed from these institutional constraints,

are more excited to deal with these challenges. The two imperatives are not necessarily contradictory, but they do provide a context for thinking about the role of universities in their home cities.

By the same token, scholars themselves often have research interests that go beyond immediate civic problems, and so want to make sure that the city remains an actual partner, and not a client. Using the city as a living laboratory allows researchers to collaborate with other organizations and focus on the impact of their research on city residents.

For example, in Dublin, Ireland, the Dublin Institute of Technology is developing a new campus in the core of the city, along with a new major medical center to create clusters of knowledge. And in Singapore, six universities are tackling issues such as clean water distribution, exporting technologies to expand the economy, integrated housing, and floating platforms. The universities work closely with government planning agencies to make the city livable and to address environmental concerns. While universities worldwide can try to support local activism, they need common tools and a common space to have a real impact.

## IV. The Role of the Research University: Chicago's Perspective

As the world has become more globalized, so have universities. According to the presidents of the three major research universities in Chicago—Northwestern University, the University of Chicago, and the University of Illinois—top universities recognize that they need to think of themselves as global institutions. Globalization has enabled new partnerships

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and facilitated collective research on important global issues. Universities around the world are forming partnerships with other universities and research institutions to foster student and faculty exchange, support specific research projects, and enable long-term collaboration. Both public and private universities need to consider self-interest and mutually advantageous work when pursuing collaboration with other universities, research institutions, or



Host university presidents (right to left) Robert A. Easter of the University of Illinois, Morton O. Shapiro of Northwestern University, and Robert J. Zimmer, president of the University of Chicago, in a conversation moderated by David Hiller, president and CEO of the Robert R. McCormick Foundation (far left).

government. But the role of the research university is being reexamined in the twenty-first century, causing leaders to consider new approaches to adopt and new issues to pursue.

### Community Partnerships

Universities live in their local communities, sharing and contributing resources, growing along with the surrounding area, and facing some of the same challenges. Universities can be engines of economic growth in a city, creating jobs and attracting talented national and international students, who may stay and settle in the surrounding community. Universities in a major city can encourage studies in academic subjects that will lead to careers needed in the global economy such as engineering, sciences, and finance.

Historically, relationships between the university and the city government have been complicated. Yet universities often consider how they affect the local community and how they can learn from the community. There is much promise in universities thinking of themselves as partners with the local community. A university hospital is an obvious way in which the community and the university can interact. And in the field of public preK–12 education, universities can operate charter schools for economically disadvantaged children or provide teacher training programs geared to their specific environments.

While Chicago’s universities agree it is important to be valuable partners for the community, and they

strive to do so, they remind critics that community service is not their primary aim. A research university is created for a larger purpose—to be an educational and research institution, and to have an impact on the world.

### International Collaborations

International collaborations among universities working on similar projects can be very effective. The University of Chicago, for example, has long been working on freshwater supply, both locally and globally. It developed a research partnership with Ben Gurion University of the Negev, developing new processes, filters, and building materials needed for clean water. This partnership has a potentially significant impact on the world’s freshwater supply. While Ben Gurion University has had a long history researching these issues, the University of Chicago has the capacity to develop ideas using molecular engineering and other innovations. The collaboration between the two allows each to leverage its assets. But only when projects are mutually advantageous will bilateral agreements be fruitful and long-lasting.

### Financing the Institution

A discussion about the role of research universities in the twenty-first century would be incomplete without recognizing the importance of being able to finance the institutions. Universities in the United States operate under several different financial models, often with a combination of tuition, endowments, private donations, contracts, and state support. All universities, public and private, are facing financial constraints, to the point that they must consider whether research or education should be their priority. Some large public universities have been hit by falling state appropriations, and have had to consider whether and how they can continue public education on the scale they once envisioned.

Research universities wrestle with balancing efficient production of research and its link with graduate teaching. Basic research is very costly, and is neither predictable nor efficient, but it had led to some of the world’s greatest discoveries. Grant-driven and project-based research, on the other hand, may be more efficient but narrow. These two approaches to research pose new questions for tackling issues related to urbanization, particularly as scholars seek to finance their own projects.

## V. Researching Global Urban Challenges

Increased urbanization affects cities around the world in a multitude of ways, but four areas of study and policy seem to dominate research universities' agendas. Urban education, health, vitality, and sustainability are basic requirements of human civilization. If a city cannot educate its residents, provide quality healthcare, stimulate economic activity, and keep its environment clean, the city will not flourish. It is clear that these four pillars of urban research are of great significance to universities around the world, from Singapore to Brazil, Canada to South Africa, and Sweden to India.

### Urban Education

The role of the research university in meeting the challenges of urban pre-K-through-12 education can be viewed through a variety of lenses. The university can be seen as a researcher and evaluator of education policies, as a direct education provider contributing to a pipeline of teachers and other educators, or as a community developer supporting a local education system.

#### Researching Education Policy

The biggest challenge for universities studying education policy is being able to apply their theories to a variety of contexts. Any theory dealing with transformational change must recognize many outside variables such as teacher talent, incentive programs, government standards, institutional infrastructure, geography, and demographics. These policies must be replicable in other countries, societies, and cultures. While some scholars, working globally, find fundamentally similar challenges common to the human condition, most issues are contextually specific.

In addition, universities struggle to identify the best way to measure the impact of their research on education policy. Scholars who want to see results can only do so by collaborating with others outside the university who have a real stake in the issues such as school districts, state agencies, and the philanthropic community. Some professors argue that while publishers and software producers have a huge influence on the education of children, they rarely engage in discussions about policy. Ultimately, people tend to work within their own individual circles instead of with other levels of the system. To develop effective change



Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel gives introductory remarks at the conference.

in urban education, there must be more collaboration between different areas of the educational system.

#### The Role of Data and Innovative Technologies

Big data and innovative technologies to analyze the data are helping research universities address global urban challenges. This is particularly useful in the case of disadvantaged neighborhoods. Often, research universities are located in big urban centers, but that does not mean that the benefits of the institution reach residents in poorer neighborhoods. While youth achievement goals and educational outcomes can be shaped by being located near elite schools, proximity alone will not solve this dilemma. Connecting urban sociology with the sociology of education is not obvious. A research university can more easily connect with its peers around the world than with its local community. While many universities are involved with research and evaluation projects that could benefit their urban environments, they don't necessarily seek out those projects.

Some scholars believe it is vital to the success of prestigious universities that they be connected to their surroundings, embedded in their urban space, and a part of the local social life. Many ideas exist for increasing this interaction such as integrating student housing with private and public housing in the neighborhoods, or sharing sports and cultural facilities to serve local residents as well as students. But most universities argue that it is not their responsibility to grapple with urban challenges such as dealing with pre-K-to-high school education. These institutions



argue that parents pay tuition for their children to learn, not for social services to the community.

Every country wrestles with this dynamic in the context of its own education systems, urban environments, and government. While affirmative action would be considered unconstitutional in Turkey, Chilean universities make their own admission decisions. In France, there is a clear distinction between elite schools and general public universities; this wouldn't be allowed in Sweden.

Schools and crime are another area where access to data has been effective for researchers in universities. In Chicago, for example, research has shown that youth violence is often not premeditated but is a reaction to a confrontation or an impulsive decision. There is no data that poverty levels alone indicate a propensity toward violence. And other factors that can be collected through big data such as school attendance records, can help identify opportunities for interventions.

Data analysis has also been useful in studying children with autism, who often present symptoms similar to children with intellectual disabilities and, as a result are treated incorrectly. While experts realize that intervention with autistic children can drastically improve their lives, knowing the exact age at which to begin the intervention hasn't been clear. Analysis of large datasets has helped track positive cognitive and behavioral outcomes and help governments make better decisions regarding these children.

Technology also allows professors to engage with students in informal ways outside of the classroom. Students can be reached via phones, computers or other electronic devices just about anywhere—in schools, at museums, in theaters—to answer questions as well as to provide researchers with valuable information. The combination of a large geographic area and dense, diverse populations makes cities especially useful for research purposes.

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Obtaining large data sets is not necessarily easy, however. Every university has different policies, including policies on privacy. Researchers need to

## Enhancing Social Mobility through Education in Israel

Tel-Aviv University in Israel recently used data analysis to help address socioeconomic segregation and access to education. By creating an algorithm that calculated individual circumstances, such as race and income, with neighborhood disadvantages, the university identified students who were then eligible for special opportunities. This led to increased geographic, socioeconomic, and ethnic diversity, making the university more diverse and enhancing social mobility despite spatial segregation.

persuade individuals to share personal details by convincing them that they will receive something in return such as a more efficient transportation system or a safer environment. In many less developed countries, useful data has not even been gathered. And if cutting edge research relies on analysis of large sets of data, to what degree can developing nations succeed without investing in the infrastructure needed to gather and analyze information?

### Translating Research into Practice

It is difficult to develop long-term agreements between researchers and university administrators to translate research into practice. But some faculty have developed strategies to engage in practical applications of their research. Each strategy involves different actors—scholars, government, the school system, administrators, the public—in addition to various paths and approaches. In some countries such as in Chile, it is hard to effect change without being in an influential government position. In addition, scholars are often criticized by practitioners who feel their research isn't directly relevant or usable for the problem they are trying to solve.

Developing partnerships can be helpful for scholars interested in translating their research into practice. They can form research alliances with teachers and other educators, developing and maintaining data archives together and collaborating on goals, but each with distinct and separate roles. Or they can develop research partnerships that are more collaborative at every stage. Partnerships come with trade-offs such as independence versus collaboration, parity of investment, local relevance versus scalability, and timeliness of research versus depth of analysis.

## Consortium on Chicago School Research

The University of Chicago eliminated its school of education and established instead a consortium to conduct research on urban education. The research-practice partnership is a university-based institute that engages practitioners and policymakers to work on common problems. The consortium has built a data archive and conducted longitudinal studies. Possibly as a result, between 1992 and 2013 the graduation rate in the Chicago Public Schools improved from 46 percent to 69 percent. The consortium has also sponsored charter schools, published influential books, and established a teacher education program.

Most research universities are not designed for significant impact on pre-K-through-high school education. This leads higher education institutions to ignore sectors of society, producing greater inequalities and failures in public schools. For universities to genuinely impact children's success, they need to restructure their research.

### Urban Health

A second issue of deep concern to urban areas worldwide is health. Universities serve as providers of health care through their hospital systems and through community engagement, but they also research advancements in medicine and global public health.

#### Healthy Communities

Unhealthy communities lead to unsuccessful cities. Researchers have found direct correlations between poverty, health, education, and success. The communities with the greatest disparities are the greatest threats to urban health. By addressing obesity, disease, maternal health, and neurological issues like dementia, some research universities invest in community development through health care.

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But many communities don't want to be defined as "underserved," in need of assistance. They prefer to be trained and educated so that they can provide for themselves. Universities have an opportunity to support these ambitions by working with residents to collect their own data and share their own stories

regarding their needs. Universities can then help translate the needs into policies to present to government. They can also help advance awareness through campaigns, urban planning projects, and innovative digital communications.

#### Data and Innovation in Health Research

In recent years new health care research methods have emerged due to developments in technology, including the ability to analyze large sets of data in a variety of ways. At the University of Chicago, for example, the combination of dedicated staff, increased internet connectivity, informatics, and new funding opportunities has created a platform for observational and interventional studies. With the consent of patients, data is collected during hospital stays and after discharge to track health outcomes.

Computer models and data analytics help researchers understand the relationships between the environment, urban infrastructures, and society. New data mapping can measure access to services, travel times to obtain them, and the health of the people using transportation. Results show that people who live near transportation hubs tend to be healthier. Data mapping has found correlations between obesity and food deserts in urban areas, which in turn can inform government policies for access to fresh food. Indeed, technology also provides doctors with important information regarding patients' dietary or medical needs.

At National Taiwan University, researchers use data to study the impact of urbanization and the role of government on population health. They collect data using the World Bank's indicators to understand trends



Ikbel Achour, senior research scientist with the University of Illinois Hospital and Health Sciences System, listens during the conference.

## Asset-Based Community Development

The asset-based community development model started in Chicago to engage residents of different professions to build healthier communities. The ABCD method of development economics emphasizes the resources of a community as a primary factor in economic growth, taking into account the broad social and economic contexts of developing communities. The ABCD model and urban health systems are fundamentally linked, as it has been shown that economic growth and the health of populations mutually impact each other in dynamic ways. The ABCD model represents an exciting way in which the major research university can play a major role in improving urban health.

and their association with development factors such as the relationship between immunizations and mortality rates. Many indicators are considered, including political stability, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, the rule of law, and the control of corruption. After analyzing the data, they found that better governance reduces mortality rates.

The “big data paradigm” has made significant impacts in health data collection. But having access to large amounts of data is not enough. Researchers still struggle to obtain data that is accurate and consistent.

### Global Health Research

In many leading urban research universities, scholars conduct research on health issues that don't directly affect the local community, but rather communities halfway across the world. But improving global health requires more than humanitarian care and medical disaster relief. It means empowering communities through academic knowledge, research, and educational training.

Whether professors in Chicago are researching maternal deaths in India and Ghana, or tracking life expectancy in Nepal—one of the poorest countries in the world with a life expectancy of 68 years—the opportunity for scholars to lead in research that produces policy changes or international recognition is important for the research university as well. In addition, sometimes a program, such as one conducted by a professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago on tracking air pollution in Ukraine, can be extended to many other countries around the world.

### Evaluating Impact

Health research is often evaluated by measurable changes such as the engagement of health care professionals, the acceptance of a new practice by the local community, and initiatives that can be sustained and supported long-term. But researchers working on health issues worldwide recognize that difference in cultures affects the implementation of projects. Those seeking immediate solutions or results may be disappointed.

Most important, to engage industry leaders and the government, scholars need to work with opinion leaders and decision-makers as well as the communities they are trying to serve. Consumer awareness, data, and the confidence of policymakers are more likely to result in the social and behavioral changes that scholars seek.

### Urban Vitality

In the context of the conference, urban vitality is a multi-disciplinary research topic that includes a city's capacity to address urban infrastructure, economic opportunities, inequality, social justice, effective governance, and human capital. In addressing vitality, a university can be seen as a center of culture, as a producer of research and knowledge, and as an institutional actor, via the university's own infrastructure and economic activity. Universities are also key conveners that can connect institutions and communities on topics of urban vitality and foster cross-sector collaboration. True vitality in a city means vitality that reaches all urban areas.

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Urban vitality literature is still evolving. It often includes connections between infrastructure, diversity, urban development, economic opportunity, and social justice. Some universities aspire to ensure opportunities for community participation, even though they are not designed to do this kind of work. So the question remains, how can traditional research universities in urban areas think about urban social justice? And should they?

Some universities connect with the community through the support of the faculty, deans, and staff who believe it is in their best interest. They frame



Ho Kong Chong, associate professor of sociology and vice dean of research at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, National University of Singapore, poses a question during the conference.

issues in ways that connect the cities, governments, and communities with the urban challenges they are trying to resolve.

### Big Data and Urban Vitality

As with health and education research, the ability to gather and analyze large amounts of data in a variety of ways is particularly useful for understanding urban vitality. Housing shortages, crime rates, and labor force participation are tracked and broken down using various demographic and geographic statistics. Proposed solutions to reduce crime rates, for example, can be deduced by calculating variables such as the cost of living, gentrification rates, and access to transportation in a given area. Gathering information on a region and its economy, immigration trends, available safety nets, and the political infrastructure is essential for studies on key urban issues.

Even small data can be suitable for big problems. Big data can be noncomparable and not always capture dimensions of bigger questions. Social scientists who are developing new methodologies to study urban problems, especially related to labor issues, have found correlations with instability, low-paid work, violations of labor standards, and safety regulations. These substandard conditions characterize large sectors at the core of urban economies. Using respondent-driven sampling, for example, allows researchers to develop real-time analyses of emerging social problems and possible policy solutions.

But researchers shouldn't rely on access to data alone to reveal solutions. Scholars are often forced to use the data that is available, which is not necessarily the data that is needed. They also have to obtain permission to use the databases. And finally, obtaining and interpreting real-time data accurately is very difficult since situations may change rapidly.

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Some disciplines are less data-driven in general. Researchers can't always measure cumulative effects if there is no historical data to collect. Further, researchers warn, data is not always neutral. Questions asked about livability and satisfaction in a city, for example, will vary tremendously from one community to another. When credible data isn't available, evidence-based policy requires field work, anecdotal evidence and community voices instead. These play a big

### Addressing Poverty in Mumbai

The Tata Institute for Social Sciences in Mumbai, India, uses an interdisciplinary approach to Social Sciences, with a focus on human services. The university interfaces with state and civil society as part of its mission to respond to inequality and social justice. Mumbai is known for its local versus rural migrant issues, which create tension and limit people's sense of their right to the cities' resources. For poor and migrant populations, it isn't possible to own property in the city. For example, 60 percent of the population lives in slums where there are no basic services. Municipalities don't feel responsible for providing services, reinforcing the sense that those populations don't have a right to be there. People are then pushed to the edges of the city.

The Tata Institute of Social Sciences is located in these fringes, where over 77 percent of the population lives in slums and most children are not attending school. Tata seeks to involve this population in the shaping of the city, which means re-organizing the power structure. It collaborates with community-based organizations, the judicial sector, health institutions, and corporations. They address issues of infant mortality, access to elementary education, infrastructure deficits, and the lack of basic services. They try to move communities from a sense of powerlessness to engaged participation.

role in answering the “why” and “how” questions that researchers traditionally look to data to answer.

### Translating Research to Practice

Urbanization has left development behind in cities like Nairobi, Kenya, resulting in critical failures in public policy and serious market failures in allocating land and providing sustainable housing. Urbanization exacerbates the gap between the rich and poor, leaving many without access to social services, public services, medical care, and food. In Africa, population growth in urban areas comes mainly from migrant populations leaving impoverished rural areas. But the urban economy is not structured to provide jobs for so many people, as it is driven mostly by a service sector for which the migrant people aren’t qualified. The rural migrants then create informal slum-like settlements in mainly dangerous condition. The traditional government response has been to tear these settlements down and push people back into rural areas.

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***Urbanization exacerbates the gap between the rich and poor, leaving many without access to social services, public services, medical care, and food.***

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Cities need to change structures that are holding back this section of the population. Most can be gainfully employed as domestic workers, but are not able to participate in city life or benefit from services. Aga Khan University in Nairobi has a project focusing on how to make these slums livable. They are close to the centers of employment, but still in suboptimal and dangerous locations. The challenge is to provide housing, schools, and hospitals in a densely populated area while maintaining positive social participation and interaction.

Universities can become central drivers in helping local governments think about these issues and the social and economic ramifications of their policies. They can create a respectful dialogue on how to make spaces more livable and gather the data necessary to help government make the most effective decisions. The real challenge is translating research and findings into policy and practice and policy for entire populations.

Sometimes short-term results aren’t very remarkable, but that doesn’t mean that the programs and strategies aren’t working. Longitudinal studies conducted over months or years are need to measure the

## Education Justice Project

Prisoner education is a great force for tackling urban challenges. In 2008, a professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign saw a need to confront the challenge of incarceration, particularly as it relates to poor and marginalized populations. While most prisons in Illinois are in smaller towns rather than cities, the majority of convicts come from urban communities and return to the cities when they are released. Incarceration negatively impacts economic vitality of urban communities.

After preliminary study, the university established the Education Justice Project, which began offering university courses and credits to inmates at the Danville, Illinois, Correctional Center and worked with the families of the incarcerated through open houses and awareness workshops. Students of the project have shown a less than 4 percent recidivism rate, and graduates are engaged, responsible, and eager to speak publicly about social justice and crime. Programs are continually monitored, evaluated and fine-tuned through data analysis and other assessments.

effectiveness of a new program or strategy. Results can show outcomes that are far more positive than seen in the short term.

### Universities Serving as Anchors in the Community

Urban universities can serve as anchors in the community through close partnerships, with both parties becoming informed and influenced by the other. They can look for projects that are mutually beneficial, collaborate on issues that cut across community sectors and various university departments, and then engage other stakeholders for their ideas and feedback.

Should first-class research universities care about the vitality of their neighborhoods? Some universities argue that neighborhood vitality is relevant to the university. The university loses faculty and students if the neighborhood does not appeal to them. But sometimes communities are not eager to have the university engaged, for fear that the institution will commandeer land and properties and transform neighborhoods and cultures. A clear communications strategy that reveals a mutually beneficial approach is necessary to establish credibility and successful collaborations.

### Urban Sustainability

Urban sustainability is one of the most pressing issues for cities worldwide. The definition of a sustainable



Rajiv Dusane, professor and dean of International Relations, Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, speaks during the conference.

city is debated, with different goals and numerous indicators of progress. In 1987 the UN's World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Commission) defined sustainable development as:

*development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts: the concept of needs, in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs.*

While this definition enforces the idea that sustainable development relies on the concept of a city as a system, indicators can often fail to identify the complexities and tradeoffs involved in sustainability. For example, some metrics focus on public health indicators such as lifespan and cancer rates, but may fail to take into account other important aspects of city life such as access to jobs and good schools. There needs to be agreement on the scope and complexity of sustainability and vitality in a given city before it can develop meaningful measurement of success or failure.

All cities must consider both resources and quality of life when planning for the future. Interaction, conversations, and collaborations between researchers, citizens, decision makers, and other stakeholders can help to develop research and support systems for the realities facing cities. The similarities among world

cities in infrastructure and communications mean that cities can learn from each other, much as peer-to-peer learning works in education. A city-to-city approach to this subject allows a comparison of how different actors communicate in various urban environments. Linking cities into a network of partnerships and learning will help cities learn from one another in a more sophisticated way than the current sister-cities movement. However, while a city-to-city approach is helpful for environmental sustainability and climate change, it may be less so for economic development, since cities compete with one another, and need to develop economically according to local needs and strengths.

### Landscape Architecture

There is a clear relationship between healthy landscapes and healthy people. Studies show that the brains of people working in an urban landscape integrate sensory information in a more complex way than those of people in mountain and water landscapes. To know if urban landscapes promote vitality, researchers need to know the landscape type, the size and variety of spaces in the city, the customs of the city residents, and the street and building patterns. Cultural differences can also drive perceptions of urban landscapes and produce different methods of interpretation.

For example, Qi, a traditional Chinese concept that means vitality or flow, can have an environmental application. In an urban landscape, Qi masters determined indicators of Qi in landscape structures, including plants, light, visual quality, wind, and noise disturbances. In Latin America, urban growth builds out from the center into the periphery, which is different from growth in from many other regions. Because of these cultural and historical differences, planners must share knowledge and experience, realizing that particular solutions may not apply to every context.

### Transportation

Scholars agree it is difficult to discuss urban sustainability without talking about transportation. Transportation research is vast and complex, including issues such as traffic congestion, crowding and efficiency in public transportation, and bike lanes. But regardless of the city or country, to be sustainable transportation must be built on good governance, with access to financing, reliable infrastructure, and sensible neighborhood design.

Sustainability also requires attention to three urban meta-issues: environment, efficiency, and equity. All three are profoundly influenced by the role of the automobile in urban communities. Large cities cannot be served by roads and cars alone. Achieving transportation sustainability involves fundamental rebalancing of the use of private versus public transit and mechanized versus motorized transit. For short trips, walking and biking are by far the best way to move people. But in large cities, not all trips will be short enough. Since public transit can be much more efficient than private transportation, an excellent transit system is an essential element of a thriving large city. The challenge is to build a cost-effective system that is sufficiently competitive with the automobile to provide an attractive alternative for drivers.

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***The challenge is to build a cost-effective system that is sufficiently competitive with the automobile to provide an attractive alternative for drivers.***

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The fundamental problem for many cities is that most trips are to places where public transit doesn't exist or isn't as convenient or efficient as a car. The viability of public transit is actually an urban form and design problem. Fortunately, there are a few elements of sustainable solutions, all which provide areas of study for university researchers to explore. Technological advances such as automated vehicles are just one example. Other examples include new pricing models that make purchasing sustainable and environmentally friendly products more rational; design of urban areas that enables people to be moved



The public sessions drew over 150 attendees.

around more sustainably, and building better and more reliable public transit systems. Research universities also have the ability to gather and analyze data to measure the effects of these new developments.

Finally, other infrastructure should be built with transit in mind, but it often is not. Cities should be regarded as systems, with an integrated approach to all design. Cities, perhaps working with universities, need to understand the way people live and develop solutions that will allow a city to be successful in a future in which we will have to do more with less.

### **Effecting Policy Change**

A network of urban sustainability directors around the world can help to share best practices and case studies. So can transnational municipal networks. In both cases, they need sophisticated understanding of the differences between cities: What works well in one city may not work as well in another. Integrating research university resources with public resources can provide organizational efficiency, as seen in a joint library created by the city and university in Birmingham, England. Universities can also assist with public education, as policy changes must be accompanied by education and sound information so that citizens can understand and embrace new policies that may affect their lives.

For researchers to contribute most effectively to questions of urban sustainability, universities and cities need to share knowledge globally and need to promote education that deals as much with behavior and lifestyle as with technology and engineering. Researchers need to undertake thousands of small experiments in cities around the globe and then share the results among all the cities. Actionable information and change are coming faster than research, so researchers need support and location-to-location translation that can support critical moments in planning.

## **VI. International Collaborations: The Way Forward**

Are international collaborations on urban challenges among the world's leading research universities realistic? Presidents from universities in Brazil, Sweden, and Turkey agree that some collaborations have been successful. It is important to exchange ideas and best practices. But they warn that collaborating universities



The closing panel discussion, “International Collaborations: The Way Forward,” was moderated by (left to right) Robert A. Easter, president of the University of Illinois, and featured Peter Gudmundson, president of the KTH Royal Institute of Technology; Umran Inan, president of Koç University; and Carlos Ivan Simonsen Leal, president of Fundação Getulio Vargas.

deal with a multitude of ideas, and that governance structures and local influences play a role in their ability to organize and implement changes. Ultimately, decisions are best made on a case-by-case basis.

Strategic partnerships with major players at the international level, including student exchanges and deeper partnerships among faculty, are very important for research universities in the global era. But universities are now focusing more on the quality of the partnership than the quantity of agreements signed. Researchers are the core of the universities, because they find and develop major breakthroughs. Administrators want to provide the best possible environment to encourage their creativity and discovery.

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***Strategic partnerships with major players at the international level, including student exchanges and deeper partnerships among faculty, are very important for research universities in the global era.***

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At some universities, community work is conducted through student clubs rather than by top researchers. While some universities agree that they should be a resource for the communities, they don't feel it is the role of the university to necessarily be active in all social issues, nor should communities expect that of them.

Student exchange is the international collaboration that appears to work best. Universities feel the exchange of professors works less well, and joint research is least successful.

## The Way Forward

### Look to the Future, Not the Past

While scholars and university administrators can learn from each other through exchanges and dialogues, they must recognize that they come from different disciplines. There may be some common questions and goals, but they work in different ways, in different countries and with different cultures. It would be irresponsible to assume that what one university is doing in its community can be applied to another university. But it is nevertheless important to learn from each other, see examples of what is happening around the world, and be open to look at future opportunities rather than rely only on past experiences to dictate actions.

### Collaborate As Opportunities Arise, Not Universally

Research universities have independence of mind, but not of budget. Many universities would love to explore more opportunities or models for collaboration. But it is better to have a few deeper relationships that are productive, substantive, and long-term, rather than several lighter interactions under the guise of partnerships. Collaborations are far more effective when they come with a common budget, an external funder, and mutual trust.

Collaborations don't need to be only with other universities. University partnerships with corporations can be just as interesting and lead to important results as well. Collaborations in general should start with the goal in mind, questioning how building on each other's strengths and assets will make the two greater than one.

## Conclusion

The conference, Global Urban Challenges: The Role of Research Universities, was not intended to result in an action plan for immediate implementation. The conference was rather an exploration for the future. It enabled participants, scholars, university administrators, urban planners, and government officials to frame the challenges of current and future urban issues, particularly related to education policy, health



care, urban vitality, and environmental sustainability. They exchanged ideas and research expertise, forged institutional and individual collaborations, and discussed their methods of translating research findings into improved urban policies. Participants explored the complex relationships between universities and their communities and government, and the role each can play in advancing solutions to twenty-first century global urban challenges.

## Acknowledgments

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs is grateful to Northwestern University, the University of Chicago, and the University of Illinois for cohosting this important conference and unique dialogue. The Chicago Council also extends its sincere gratitude to the universities from around the world who sent representatives, administrators, and scholars to attend the conference.

Many people played important roles in developing the agenda, framing the issues, and working tirelessly to transform a vision into a reality. Much appreciation goes to the numerous professors from Northwestern University, the University of Chicago, and the University of Illinois who took part in numerous planning meetings and who co-chaired thematic committees. Staff from the four host institutions dedicated to this project included Ivo H. Daalder, Marshall M. Bouton, Rachel Bronson, Richard Longworth, Juliana Kerr, Arthur Sussman, and

Melissa Guinan from The Chicago Council on Global Affairs; Morton O. Schapiro, Devora Grynspan, and Heather Pardee from Northwestern University; Robert J. Zimmer, Ian Solomon, and Kasia Batorski from the University of Chicago; and Robert A. Easter, Christophe Pierre, and Dedra Williams from the University of Illinois.

This report would not have been possible without the contributions of session rapporteurs: Ikbel Achour, Senior Research Scientist, University of Illinois at Chicago; Andrea Jett Fletcher, Senior Program Office, Civics Program, The Robert R. McCormick Foundation; Molly O'Donnell, Director, Emerging Leaders Program, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs; and Noah Toly, Director of Urban Studies and Associate Professor of Politics and International Relations, Wheaton College.

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*The Chicago Council on Global Affairs is an independent, nonpartisan organization. All statements of fact and expressions of opinion contained in this report are the sole responsibility of the conference participants and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Chicago Council on Global Affairs or of the project partners or funders.*

# Appendix I: Host Institutions and International Partners

## Host Institutions



## International Partner Institutions

Aga Khan University  
Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Israel  
Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China  
ETH Zurich, Switzerland  
Fundação Getulio Vargas, Brazil  
Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, India  
Koç University, Turkey  
KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden  
Nanjing University, China  
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore  
National Taiwan University, Taiwan  
National University of Singapore, Singapore  
Peking University, China  
Sciences Po, France  
Stellenbosch University, South Africa  
Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India  
Technion University, Israel  
Tel Aviv University, Israel  
Universidad Diego Portales, Chile  
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico  
Universidad Panamericana, Mexico  
Università Commerciale Luigi Bocconi, Italy  
Université Paris Diderot, France  
University College Dublin, Ireland  
University of Birmingham, United Kingdom  
University of Cambridge, United Kingdom  
University of Toronto, Canada  
University of Warwick, United Kingdom

# Appendix II: Conference Agenda

Monday, November 18, 2013

## Working Group Session I: Understanding University Relationships with Key Institutions in Addressing Challenges Posed by Urbanization

At Northwestern University

The opening working groups focused on the current structures and models in place for university interactions with government and other nonprofit and for-profit institutions, the evolving nature of the relationships, and recommendations for the future of the relationships. The discussions covered the challenges and the risks of such relationships, and the possible changes to existing structures and models that would enhance the effectiveness of the interactions. Each of the sessions focused on several specific issues of urban health, education, and vitality as illustrative of models of interaction.

Concurrent Working Group Sessions

### Urban Health: A Community-Based Model for Leveraging the Resources of the University

The panel will explore some of the similarities between local and global problems, and the use of academic research, education, and service in improving health. One such approach that will be discussed is ABCD, a methodology of development economics that emphasizes the resources of a community as a primary factor in economic growth, taking into account the broad social and economic contexts of developing communities. The ABCD model and urban health systems are fundamentally linked, as it has been shown that economic growth and the health of populations mutually impact each other in dynamic ways. The ABCD model represents an exciting way in which the major research university can play a major role in improving urban health. Some key questions that will be explored include: What is the relationship between urban development and the health of populations in cities? How can research in urban development and urban economics contribute to the strengthening of local health

systems and communities? What is the relationship between university-based research and university-led community engagement projects? What does the current direction of urban development economics indicate for the future of urban health?

**Chairs: Sola Olopade**, Clinical Director, Center for Global Health, and Professor of Medicine and Family Medicine, University of Chicago and **Ronald T. Ackermann**, Director of the Center for Community Health in the Northwestern University Institute for Public Health and Medicine

**John Kretzmann**, Director, Asset-Based Community Development Institute and Research Associate Professor, Northwestern University

**Doriane Miller**, Associate Professor of Medicine and Director, Center for Community Health and Vitality, University of Chicago Medicine

**Deborah Punttenney**, Research Associate Professor, School of Education and Social Policy, Northwestern University

### The Research University and Urban Education

This session will address questions of why there is a disparity between the quality of higher education and public K–12 education. Are there any promising examples of research universities that today are having a significant impact on urban education, and what is the nature of such impact? What is it about the contemporary political-economic environment—or about how universities operate—that is enabling or hindering effective university impact on urban education environments?

**Chair: Jim Spillane**, Spencer T. and Ann W. Olin Professor in Learning and Organizational Change, Northwestern University

**Marco Oberti**, Chair of the Sociology Department, Sciences Po

**Charles Payne**, Frank P. Hixon Distinguished Service Professor in the School of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago

**Steve Tozer**, Professor and Director, University of Illinois at Chicago Center for Urban Education Leadership

## New Roles for the Urban University in Fostering Cross-Sector Collaboration

Internationally, processes of urbanization, economic liberalization, and globalization have changed the face of cities and their place in the broader socioeconomic landscape. Along with some social benefits, these changes challenge urban vitality and resiliency across a number of dimensions. These changes have also been accompanied by changing relationships among the state, market, and civil society actors. In many cases, this has entailed important shifts away from “traditional” governing arrangements, with increased reliance on market processes and public-private partnerships to shape and implement policy. Shifts in the roles and relationships of state, market, and non-state actors create new challenges. In this context, the urban research university has a potentially powerful role to play.

**Chair: Robert Chaskin**, Associate Professor and the Deputy Dean for Strategic Initiatives at the School of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago and **Scott W. Allard**, Associate Professor in the School of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago

**Derek Douglas**, Vice President for Civic Engagement, University of Chicago

**Rebecca Ginsburg**, Associate Professor of Education Policy at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

**Manish Jha**, Professor and Chairperson in the Centre for Community Organisation and Development Practice, Tata Institute of Social Sciences

Reception Following Working Group Sessions at Northwestern University

## Opening Dinner

Welcome by **Morton O. Schapiro**, President, Northwestern University

Tuesday, November 19, 2013

## Welcoming Remarks

**Ambassador Ivo H. Daalder**, President, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs

**The Honorable Rahm Emanuel**, Mayor, City of Chicago

## Discussion with Host University Presidents: The Role of the Research University: Chicago’s Perspective

**Robert A. Easter**, President, University of Illinois

**Morton O. Schapiro**, President, Northwestern University

**Robert J. Zimmer**, President, University of Chicago

**Moderator: David Hiller**, President and CEO of the Robert R. McCormick Foundation

## A View from the City: Managing Urban Challenges Worldwide

This plenary session featured a diverse group of former mayors and municipal officials who were at the heart of addressing urban challenges as they saw populations increase in their cities. Many cities around the world were not built to accommodate the large number of inhabitants that are currently drawn to them. Working under budget constraints and political gridlock, these officials identified new opportunities for collaborations with universities and other entities to identify long-term solutions for their cities’ challenges.

**Moderator: Julia Stasch**, Vice President of U.S. Programs, MacArthur Foundation and former Chief of Staff to Mayor Richard Daley

**Washington Fajardo**, Secretary of Cultural Heritage, Urban Intervention, Architecture and Design of the City of Rio de Janeiro

**Dick Gleeson**, City Planner, City of Dublin

**Heng Chye Kiang**, Former Board Member for Singapore’s Urban Redevelopment Authority and Dean, School of Design and Environment, National University of Singapore

## The Future of Cities

**Saskia Sassen**, Robert S. Lynd Professor of Sociology, Department of Sociology, and Co-Chair, Committee on Global Thought, Columbia University

In conversation with **Richard C. Longworth**, Senior Fellow, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs

## Working Group Session II: Research Methodologies and Case Studies

The working groups explored research methodologies, the use of data, and ways that researchers and policy-makers could collaborate to guide research and policy. The working groups also looked at case studies from around the world where researchers have identified best practices and effective outcomes.

### Concurrent Working Group Sessions

#### Innovative Approaches to Improving Urban Health

Cities provide unique opportunities and challenges with respect to health. Whereas the health challenges to cities once dominated, today the reverse may be true, with unique opportunities to mobilize large populations and data on those populations to improve health and advance biomedical science clustered in cities, and even central to their economic success. Nevertheless, cities still have important health problems related to poverty and other adverse socioeconomic conditions, infectious disease, and the sheer complexity of their health care systems. This session discussed several innovative approaches to advance our understanding of, and to improve, health in cities.

**Chair: David Meltzer**, Director, Center for Health and Social Sciences and Chief of the Section of Hospital Medicine, University of Chicago, and Principal Investigator of the Chicago Learning Effectiveness Advancement Research Network

**Charles Catlett**, Senior Computer Scientist, University of Chicago and Argonne National Laboratory

**Chang-Chuan Chan**, Director, Global Health Center and Associate Dean, College of Public Health, National Taiwan University

**Abel Kho**, Assistant Professor, Northwestern University and Principal Investigator of the Chicago Health Atlas

## Urban Education: Innovative Research Methodologies

One key way in which universities can address modern education challenges is through the use of cutting-edge research methodologies and emerging large administrative datasets. In this session, each presenter describes research that uses innovative research methodologies and data to address a different urban education challenge. The questions studied are of global interest and represent a range of methodologies, public policy areas, and disciplinary perspectives, and highlight the role of the research university in helping to address serious challenges in urban education around the world.

**Chair: Kim Graber**, Professor, Kinesiology and Community Health, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

**Sigal Alon**, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Tel-Aviv University

**Nicholas Burbules**, Professor, Department of Educational Policy Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

**David Figlio**, Director, Institute for Policy Research, and Orrington Lunt Professor of Education and Social Policy and of Economics, Northwestern University

**Jens Ludwig**, McCormick Foundation Professor of Social Service Administration, Law, and Public Policy, School of Social Service Administration and the Harris School; Director, University of Chicago Crime Lab; and Co-director, University of Chicago Urban Education Lab

#### Urban Vitality: Integrating Big Data and City/Neighborhoods with University Researchers

Researchers and policymakers face common challenges: both, for example, are working to adjust to how quickly the world is changing (for example, in terms of data collection, analysis and transmission possibilities) and to solve problems that have persisted and grown more varied and costly over decades. The presentations will address the interdisciplinary collaborations as well as the university-neighborhood/city collaborations to help identify critical, relevant policy problems that such collaborations can address. While Big Data certainly plays an important role, the presenters will be exploring the broader dynamics of collaborative research, as opposed to 'silo-ed' research

in which academics identify policy issues of interest to them whether or not useful or important to the policy community.

**Chairs: Michael Pagano**, Dean, College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs, University of Illinois at Chicago and **Roseanna Ander**, Executive Director, Crime Lab, University of Chicago

**Mario Small**, Dean of the Social Sciences Division, University of Chicago

**Nik Theodore**, Professor of Urban Planning, University of Illinois at Chicago

**Deborah Youdell**, Director of the Public Service Academy, University of Birmingham

Reception Following Working Group Sessions

## Dinner and Keynote Address

Introduced by **Robert J. Zimmer**, President, The University of Chicago

**The Honorable Shaun Donovan**, United States Secretary of Housing and Urban Development

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

## Working Group Session III: Translating Research into Policy and Practice

At the University of Illinois at Chicago

What methods are being used to translate research into policy and practice? How do researchers evaluate their impact? What are some best practices for engaging industry and government as partners? What are issues of bringing projects to scale and what are possible roles for the research university? How have barriers been overcome for putting the best research into practice?

Concurrent Working Group Sessions

### Translating Global Health Initiatives into Policy, Programs, and Practice

Global Health is more than humanitarian care and medical disaster relief. Focus should be centered on empowering communities through academia, research, and education training. This panel is com-

prised of individuals whose objectives are not only to render aid globally, but to present information and lessons learned from the field that relate to health care issues that can benefit from cutting edge translational policies, programs and practices.

**Chairs: Timothy Erickson**, Professor of Emergency Medicine and Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs, University of Illinois at Chicago and **Stacie Geller**, G. William Arends Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Director, Center for Research on Women and Gender, College of Medicine, University of Illinois at Chicago

**Damiano Rondelli**, Michael Reese Professor of Hematology, Chief of Hematology/Oncology and Director Blood & Marrow Transplant, University of Illinois at Chicago

**Daniel Hryhorczuk**, Professor and Director of Environmental Global Health, University of Illinois at Chicago

**Gregorio T. Obrador**, Dean and Professor of Medicine, Health Sciences Faculty and School of Medicine, Universidad Panamericana

## Urban Education: Bringing Research to Practice

Policymakers and practitioners in education are increasingly under pressure to use data and research to guide their efforts. This provides an opportunity for researchers to support educational improvement through outreach and partnerships, but requires effective strategies for bridging the separate worlds of research and practice. This session provided an analysis of approaches researchers have used to impact educational policy, and describe successful examples of new models of collaboration between educational researchers and school practitioners.

**Chair: Penny Sebring**, Co-Founder, University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research

**Elaine Allensworth**, Lewis-Sebring Director, University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research

**Cynthia Coburn**, Professor, School of Education and Social Policy, Northwestern University

**Jose Weinstein**, Director of the Doctorate of Education, Universidad Diego Portales in Chile

## Urban Vitality: Evaluating Success in Bringing Research to Practice in Urban Social Issues

This session discussed case examples of research that have been translated into policy and programs to benefit cities. It asked: What lessons can be learned from these examples about how to best move research into practice and how to evaluate the resulting policies and programs?

**Chair: Fay Lomax Cook** Professor of Human Development and Social Policy and of Political Science; Faculty Fellow, Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University

**Alex O. Awiti**, Director of the East African Institute of the Aga Khan University

**Ho Kong Chong**, Associate Professor of Sociology and Vice Dean (Research) at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, National University of Singapore

**Lincoln Quillian**, Professor of Sociology and Faculty Fellow, Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University

**James Rosenbaum**, Professor of Education and Social Policy and of Sociology; Faculty Fellow, Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University

## Urban Vitality: Research to Practice in Urban Sustainability

Rapidly growing cities must employ new energy, food, water, sanitation, and transportation systems if they are to support healthy human life far into the future. A comparative analysis can help highlight innovative solutions and, more important, identify the structural elements that may be preventing global urban centers from making the necessary changes to meet sustainability goals. This panel generated new ideas about the best ways to compare cities from a sustainability perspective, and asks participants to explore their own ideas about these issues. We will ask, what works? What doesn't? And why?

**Chairs: Brian Deal**, Associate Professor of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and **William Sullivan**, Professor, Landscape Architecture, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

**Chang Chun-Yen**, Professor of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture, National Taiwan University

**Vladimir Cvetkovic**, Water Resources Engineering, KTH Royal Institute of Technology

**Eric Miller**, Professor, Department of Civil Engineering, University of Toronto

## Presentations on Working Groups

**Welcome: Michael O'Grady**, Executive Vice President and CFO, Northern Trust

**Moderator: Arthur Sussman**, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs

**Respondents Include:**

**Kweku Bentil**, Vice Provost, Aga Khan University

**John Bryson**, Professor of Enterprise and Competitiveness, University of Birmingham

**Jorge Las Heras**, Vice Dean, School of Medicine, Universidad Diego Portales

**Firoz Khan**, Senior Lecturer, School of Public Leadership, Stellenbosch University

**Liang Benfan**, Director of the Global Joint Research Center for Low-Carbon Cities, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

## Welcoming Remarks and Lunch

**Welcome: Paula Allen-Meares**, Chancellor, University of Illinois at Chicago

## International Collaborations: The Way Forward

### Closing Luncheon Presentation

**Moderator: Robert A. Easter**, President, University of Illinois

**Peter Gudmundson**, President, KTH Royal Institute of Technology

**Umran Inan**, President, Koç University

**Carlos Ivan Simonsen Leal**, President, Fundação Getulio Vargas

## Closing Remarks

**Rachel Bronson**, Vice President, Studies, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs

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to its members and the public on these issues. Long  
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