



SALZBURG
GLOBAL
SEMINAR

PARKS FOR THE PLANET FORUM

The Child in the City: Health, Parks and Play

SESSION BROCHURE

Session 574

DATE

March 18 to 22, 2017

LOCATION

Schloss Leopoldskron, Salzburg, Austria

PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Nancy Smith

DONORS AND SUPPORTERS

Since 2015, the Parks for the Planet Forum has benefited from the generosity of the following donors and partners:



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SESSION INFO

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GENERAL INFO

Please visit:

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OVERVIEW

Cities are growing rapidly, with nearly 70% of the world's population expected to live in urban centers by 2050. Over 1 billion children already live in cities, where new births are increasingly concentrated. While cities are exciting centers of innovation and learning, cultural stimulation, and diversity, too many children are exposed to the downside – pollution and obesogenic conditions, poor housing, danger on the streets, and lack of access to nature and safe public places to play. These challenges impact most on vulnerable, marginalized, and underserved populations, and have long-term costs for families, communities and sustainable societies.

However, the huge resources, talent and momentum associated with modern urbanization could unlock critical opportunities. Reimagining cities through the eyes of – and needs of – the young child makes sense not only for health, education, and early childhood specialists but also for planners, developers, financial stakeholders, and governments. Smart investments and nature-based solutions could put human-centered design at the heart of urban transformation, with significant cross-sector, environmental and fiscal benefits.

Urban parks and public green spaces have practical and symbolic value for healthy and inclusive cities, functioning as open spaces with an equalizing function, where individuals from different backgrounds can build bonds across generations and cultures. Nature promotes physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing, not just through better air quality but by encouraging movement, discovery, and calm amidst urban chaos. Children can play freely, whatever their home situations, strengthening self-confidence and curiosity for success in later life. Evidence suggests that personal experience of nature in childhood is essential to generate a lifelong sense of connectivity and stewardship for the world's environment and resources. Urban parks and green spaces also play a critical role in promoting climate resilience – a role that will be increasingly important as cities continue to expand.

Healthy place-making is a powerful lever for creative and sustainable communities. Child-friendly design, infrastructure and investments will not only help young children thrive in cities but also benefit families, communities and business. Access and safety are fundamental to this end. People need viable walking and public transportation options to reach nature, urban parks and other green spaces. Holistic strategies can revitalize cities, children, and health by prioritizing, designing, planning and investing in natural public spaces as the building blocks for cohesive communities.



MULTI-YEAR SERIES

PARKS FOR THE PLANET FORUM

The Parks for the Planet Forum is a collaborative platform convened by Salzburg Global Seminar to position nature at the heart of human health and wellbeing, security and prosperity. Embedded in the IUCN Global Protected Areas Programme, the Forum advances action, investment and leadership to implement The Promise of Sydney and the Sustainable Development Goals. It combines high-level meetings on selected topics with an evolving multi-year work program that connects pioneering approaches across sectors and scales.



FORUM PARTNER



**IUCN
INTERNATIONAL UNION
FOR CONSERVATION OF
NATURE**

International Union for Conservation of Nature, founded in 1948, helps the world find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges: www.iucn.org. The 2016 IUCN World Conservation Congress adopted action recommendations on priority topics to keep up momentum to deliver the **Promise of Sydney**.

The **Promise of Sydney** is a 10-year road map adopted by 6000 participants from 160 countries at the IUCN World Parks Congress 2014. Affirming that “nature is the ultimate foundation of life, our economy and our aspirations, and underpins our human existence, cultural identity, health and prosperity,” it positions protected and conserved areas, including transboundary protected areas, as critical investments for planetary resilience and human wellbeing.

SESSION FORMAT

The Child in the City is the third session of the Parks for the Planet Forum, a platform for transformative leadership and action launched by Salzburg Global Seminar with IUCN-World Conservation Union.

The four-day program will take forward outcomes from the Forum’s inaugural 2015 session on *Nature, Health and a New Urban Generation*. Participants will take an imaginative approach, looking through the eyes of young children, to develop new collaborations that can benefit individuals, families and long-term social, economic and environmental resilience.

The highly interactive program will combine theory, policy and practice, highlighting diverse perspectives and opportunities for all to share, and build on, their knowledge and experience. There will be a combination of methodologies including presentations by and panel discussions among leading experts and skilled practitioners, use of case studies and evidence-based research, time in small thematic groups to drill down on key challenges and surface innovative approaches, opportunities to explore and ground new partnerships and collaborative projects, as well as joint work to craft new agendas and policy recommendations.



KEY QUESTIONS



Building on insights from previous sessions, the 2017 program participants will examine the following questions:

- How can parks and protected areas better meet the needs of, and be accessible for, all children – including the most vulnerable, marginalized and underserved – enabling and encouraging them to play, create and find joy in nature?
- How might parks and protected areas be more effectively designed to create understanding and a sense of community among diverse populations, with different cultures, languages and experiences, to promote democracy, equality, and social resiliency?
- How should the need to extend the built environment as population growth increases be balanced against the need to preserve the natural environment, for all the benefits it extends including climate resilience?
- What changes are required in education (formal and informal) to ensure children can spend time in nature and build on the resulting benefits in the classroom and experiential education?
- How can the long-term economic benefits of improved child health and development through access to nature be more clearly calculated and communicated to inform strategic investments?
- What allies and leaders are needed to help move an agenda to prioritize the “child in the city” and access to parks and play in city planning and policies?

RELATED SESSIONS

Nature, Health and a New Urban Generation

↳ SalzburgGlobal.org/go/557

Early Childhood Development and Education

↳ SalzburgGlobal.org/go/542





FELLOW TESTIMONIAL



CHÚK ODENIGBO
Independent Contractor,
Canadian Parks Council;
Co-Author, *The Nature
Playbook*, Canada

“Although the [2015] Forum was only three days long, it pushed us all in a direction – whether it simply reinforced the value of what we already did, or redirected our efforts to a magic yet untapped.

On a personal level, the Forum inspired me to really take a hold of the deficiencies in the subject matter at hand and challenged me to engage myself and find solutions...

There is so much more I plan to do as a direct result of the Parks for the Planet Forum, and I have many potential projects in the works.”

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

The Parks for the Planet Forum seeks to bring together cross-sector and cross-generational change-makers to address complex challenges.

The program will convene approximately 50 leading experts and game-changers from different generations and sectors. These will come from a range of intersecting disciplines and perspectives that touch the core issue of children in cities and associated planning, policy and investment decisions.

Representatives are expected to include: city designers, planners and infrastructure experts; nature conservation/ environment specialists; urban parks and community organizing stakeholders, covering cultural as well as natural assets; health sector professionals; economists; early childhood development and education specialists; policymakers; business representatives, investors, and entrepreneurs;. Together, participants will share experience and case studies to distill successful approaches that could be scaled up and scaled out, translated to diverse contexts and settings.



OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

Through the four-day program in Salzburg and follow-on activities, the Parks for the Planet Forum aims to:

- Set a new change agenda to promote access to nature, health and development for vulnerable children and communities in growing urban centers and cities.
- Agree strategic recommendations to be shared at the 15th World Congress on Public Health (Melbourne, Australia, April 2017) and other leading international forums.
- Craft a set of impact-oriented actions to be shared with and used by decision-makers and policy influencers; city designers and urban planners; public and child health advocates; early childhood educators and specialists; social justice and community organizers; and, donors and investors.
- Create innovative partnerships and imaginative projects to increase social, environmental, and human resilience, working through the eyes and needs of the child in the city.
- Share evidence and case studies, identifying successful approaches to be scaled up and scaled out in diverse contexts and settings.
- Expand the network of leading experts and change-makers that are part of the Salzburg Global/IUCN Parks for the Planet Forum.



SALZBURG STATEMENTS

THE SALZBURG CHALLENGE FOR NATURE, HEALTH AND A NEW URBAN GENERATION

In 2015, the Forum's first 40 participants adopted **The Salzburg Challenge for Nature, Health and a New Urban Generation**, which sought to catalyze and nurture new ways of working together to secure the right for all people to experience and be excited by nature and gain lifelong benefits for health and wellbeing from outdoor activities in varied and stimulating environments. Participants committed to fostering new leadership to conserve nature as the foundation for sustainability in an era of rapid global change.

To access the full recommendations of **The Salzburg Challenge for Nature, Health and a New Urban Generation**, and all other Salzburg Statements, please visit:
↳ SalzburgGlobal.org/go/statements



ABOUT SALZBURG GLOBAL SEMINAR

Salzburg Global Seminar is an international non-profit organization founded in 1947 to challenge present and future leaders to solve issues of global concern. More than 30,000 people from nearly 170 countries have participated in our programs over seven decades.

Our vision is to shape a better world by forging breakthrough collaborations to bridge divides. Salzburg Global designs multi-year programs to accelerate human, urban and conflict transformation and help organizations and change-makers achieve results at scale. We convene outstanding people across generations and sectors, aiming to catalyze transformative impact and long-term engagement through alliances, networks and projects on the ground. Our work is sustained through strategic partnerships, earned income and philanthropic support.

Our secluded and inspiring home of Schloss Leopoldskron in Salzburg, Austria – built in 1736 by the Archbishop of Salzburg, restored by the Salzburg Festival’s co-founder Max Reinhardt, used by Hollywood for sets in *The Sound of Music*, and now an award-winning hotel – allows us to welcome all participants in conditions of trust, openness and creativity.

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