Exploring the trans-local nature of cultural scenes

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Supervision

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Geographers have long been interested in trying to understand how specific neighbourhoods, scenes, and movements develop and evolve within cities. In recent years increased attention is being paid to the connections between cities and trans-local flows of ideas, people and practices. Translocalism is a nuanced way to 'ground 'globalisation and to think about contemporary forms of global mobility by identifying 'local to local 'placemaking connections and processes. To date, studies have focused on specific cases and forms of trans-local flows including people, products, policy, knowledge, urban practices, social movements and cultural identities. However, there is still scope to explore the mechanisms that underpin trans-local flows.

In cities such as London, Santiago and Toronto cultural scenes help to attract residents, workers and tourists, contribute to city branding and redevelopment initiatives and have been critiqued for encouraging gentrification. Yet, despite their purported uniqueness and authenticity, these scenes contain a remarkably similar mix of urban aesthetics (graffiti alleys), shops (record stores), movements (DIY urbanism), communities (craft collectives) and people (artists, baristas, influencers). As vital sites for the production, curation and consumption of cultural products, these scenes are ideal places to study the creation and diffusion of knowledge, practices and values across space and the tensions between local authenticity and global uniformity.

We are looking for PhD students to co-design a project around this broad topic. Qualitative methods will be used and students are encouraged to develop an approach which reflects their own interests and connections. Potential questions could include:

1) Can we determine the extent to which these scenes are actually homogenous (aesthetics, actors, practices)?
2) In what ways do mechanisms, including social media, curation and travel enable and encourage trans-local flows and uniformity?

3) What are the implications of trans-local flows for actors (producers, residents, consumers, community groups), spaces (cities, neighbourhoods, streets, buildings), products (goods, services, experiences) policy agendas and broader social and political movements?

Funding Details

Three years of funding will come from the South Coast Doctoral Training Partnership scheme (SCDTP). In addition to covering the costs of programme fees, the SCDTP studentship also provides a basic annual maintenance grant of £18,622 (2024/25 UKRI rate). This is not classed as income so is therefore not liable for tax. Students will also have access to a Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) to fund attendance at other training courses, conferences or to purchase essential equipment for your research.

Application Details

For entry in the 2024/25 Academic Year, the deadline for the receipt of applications will be 19 January 2024 (17.00 GMT).

For all studentships, students must have qualifications of the standard of a good honours degree at first- or upper second-class level, from a UK academic higher education institution. Degree qualifications gained from outside the UK, or a combination of qualifications and/or experience that is equivalent to a relevant UK degree, may be accepted.

The South Coast DTP is able to accept applications from UK and International applicants to all of our accredited disciplines/pathways, however due to UKRI funding conditions, awards to non-UK residents are capped at 30% of our overall allocation.

To be classed as a home/UK student, candidates must meet the following criteria:
Be a UK National (meeting residency requirements below), or
Have settled status, or
Have pre-settled status (meeting residency requirements below), or
Have indefinite leave to remain or enter

If a candidate does not meet the criteria above, they would be classed as an International student.

To apply for funding you will need to complete 2 applications forms. You will need to complete an online application form for your programme of study via your chosen institution's website. You will also need to complete an SCDTP Funding Application form. Further details can be found on the 'Apply 'page.

For more details please see the SCDTP website (https://southcoastdtp.ac.uk/). Informal enquiries may be made to the project supervisors.