

PNRR M4 C1 INV.3.4 SUB-INV.T4
INIZIATIVE EDUCATIVE TRANSNAZIONALI – TNE D.D. n. 16, 03/10/2023



CALL FOR APPLICATIONS
UTA-Do and Wagon2Africa Polito host
UTA-Do African Cities Summer School 2026
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Calling all early-career academics, researchers, activists, and artists interested in urban theory in Africa!

Apply now to be a part of the 2026 UTA-Do African Cities Workshop, supported by the Polytechnic of Turin through the Wagon2Africa TNE project
TNE23-00067 WAGON2AFRICA - CUP E17G24000420006

Date: 9th -13th Feb, 2026

Location: Addis Ababa

Application: Only applications submitted to [this Google Form](#) will be reviewed.

Deadline for application: September 30, 2025

UTA-Do, with Wagon2Africa and the Urban Center

The [Urban Theory Africa-Doing \(UTA-Do\) African Cities Workshop](#) is an annual critical urban studies week-long (southern hemisphere) 'summer school,' which aims to contribute to making African urban scholarship and imagination more inclusive. Our workshop is supported by public events throughout the year, and a virtual network of alumni and 'friends of UTA-Do'. Through these efforts, UTA-Do works to democratize access to the resources required to shape and produce information about African cities.

The organisers behind UTA-Do believe that the "think-feel" of "doing" urban studies – actions, practices, and performances – are crucial. For these reasons, our workshop incorporates emergent humanities thinking, intersectional activist politics, and sensory engagement with cities through immersive musical experiences and ethical field trips. These complement conventional

urban theory discussions on topics such as the future of urban infrastructure, urban financialization, climate emergencies, and urban politics and governance. Since 2022, UTA-Do has built a burgeoning network of urban researchers, architects, planners, activists and artists within and beyond the continent, and continues to strengthen this community. After two successful summer schools in Nairobi (2022 and 2023), UTA-Do has expanded to other cities. Our 2024 session was hosted in Dar es Salaam, and organisers convened two related workshops in Cape Town in 2025. In 2026, through a partnership with the [Urban Center](#), UTA-Do will take place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The Urban Center is a social enterprise committed to advancing inclusive dialogue and collaborative thinking around urban planning and architectural practice. Positioned at the intersection of research, community engagement, and creative practice, the Center serves as a platform for co-producing knowledge, fostering public debate, and generating practical, locally informed solutions to urban challenges.

UTA-Do 2026 is in partnership with [Wagon2Africa](#), a transnational education initiative funded under Italy's National Recovery and Resilience Plan (TNE23-00067 WAGON2AFRICA - CUP E17G24000420006) **The Water-Energy-Food Nexus 2 Africa (Wagon2Africa) project aims to forge a robust network between Italian and African universities**, fostering cooperation and sharing best practices around the critical Water-Energy-Food (WEF) nexus. International collaboration is paramount for exchanging knowledge, and in this partnership, we privilege indigenous expertise and mutual learning. The **Wagon2Africa** consortium, led by [Politecnico di Torino](#), comprises 10 Italian universities, bringing diverse skills and educational expertise.

The 2026 program

- Keynote lectures from leading theorists, including **Iromi Perera** (Colombo Urban Lab), **Sabine Mohamed** (Johns Hopkins University) and **Biruk Terrefe** (University of Bayreuth)
- Methods workshops and academic skills building
- Dedicated time for writing academic and non-academic pieces
- Mentoring opportunities
- Immersive engagement with activism and the arts
- Field trips
- Lots of great Ethiopian food, music and a (thankfully not academic) party!

This year, there will also be a dedicated track for scholars who are interested in producing academic journal articles for [Urban Studies Journal](#) (USJ).

Participation and scholarships

UTA-Do is primarily tailored for emerging scholars, as well as activists and artists who are interested in urban theory and practice. Participation in our 2026 summer school is free, with a selection process to follow an online call for participants. We tentatively plan to accept 10 local participants residing in Ethiopia, 10-15 participants based in African countries, and 5 international participants from other continents who are working on African cities. In 2026, **Wagon2Africa will offer 10 full scholarships specifically for participants based in and travelling from the following countries**, which are part of the Wagon2Africa programme:



Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Somalia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Madagascar, Mauritius, Burundi, Rwanda, and Sudan.

For those wishing to be considered for the scholarships, additional information will be required as part of the application process. Selection will be undertaken by the UTA-Do team, and will take into account a range of factors.

For scholars wishing to be considered for the dedicated journal writing track, we will expect the submission of an extended abstract for the proposed paper. Please note that those participating in this track are expected to submit a paper to *Urban Studies* Journal within six months of their completion of the summer school. Support will be offered throughout the writing process.

How to apply

Only applications submitted to [this Google Form](#) will be reviewed.

Selection Criteria

1. Motivation letter
2. Relevant curriculum vitae and academic background
3. Demonstrated interest or professional experience in the summer school's themes
4. A bachelor or higher-level degree in related fields (a prerequisite for scholarship eligibility)
5. Abstract of a paper (for the *Urban Studies* writing track)

More Information

More information on the previous three UTA-Do workshops, and their programmes, are available through this link: <https://sites.google.com/view/uta-do/home>

2026 Team

Our current team includes:

1. Wangui Kimari (American University-Nairobi & African Centre for Cities)
2. Liza Cirolia (African Centre for Cities)
3. Andrea Pollio (Politecnico di Torino & African Centre for Cities)
4. Francesca De Filippi (Politecnico di Torino)
5. Biruk Terrefe (Bayreuth University)
6. Mwangi Mwaura (University of Oxford)
7. Medhanit Tadesse Ayele (African Centre for Cities)
8. Yasmin Abdu Bushra (Addis Ababa University, College of Technology & the Built Environment)
9. Maheder Gebremedin (The Urban Center)
10. Bemnet Demissie (The Urban Center)

For more information, please contact: andrea.pollio@polito.it

