



**FRIEDRICH NAUMANN
FOUNDATION** For Freedom.

IAF

Smart City & Beyond

How Technology & Urbanism Will Shape The Future

26 March – 2 April 2023

Gummersbach, Germany

Abstract

Using Apps for finding a shop or restaurant or looking for some friends nearby is already a reality and millions of people all around the world are using those conveniences every day. By using “big data” and digitalization our cities can turn from mere clusters of people to smart cities—and help us to manage today and future challenges of growing cities in fields such as administration, urban planning, environment, economic development, and others. And in fact, many cities all around the world have implemented smart traffic systems or social media platforms to enhance communications in building blocks and whole neighborhoods. But this is just the beginning. Besides mobility, transportation, and communication, social topics such as transparency, participation, and better decision-making will be among the further developments of smarter cities.

While there is much debate about the technological future of smart cities, the political perspective is often absent. This leads to the fact that Smart City workshops tend to rather be showcases of individual case studies rather than discussion platforms about the future of cities. Yet, these debates are necessary. Because especially in times of a pandemic density and therefore the very concept of urbanization came into question. This workshop will provide a unique space to approach and discuss the topic of smart cities from a holistic perspective. Based on a first-principles approach, this seminar will bring together technology, urbanization, and governance—and allow participants to dive into a variety of topics, ranging from urban planning and urban design to the meaning and economics of cities, innovation, institutional competition, and governance, entrepreneurship and progress, as well as the ethics of privacy.

The seminar will give participants a distinctly liberal perspective on the topic of “Smart Cities”—and therefore exceed traditional conversations about smart cities. Instead, it aims to offer a holistic perspective of economic, political, technological, architectural, environmental, philosophical, and psychological considerations. It will thus explore conceptually the relations between decentralized decision-making, polycentric governance (i.e. institutional competition), innovation and progress, as well as the opportunities and threats of Smart Cities—ranging from privacy and the future of work to climate change and the reduction of a citizen’s carbon footprint.

These core pillars will shape the program

- Urbanism: Why Cities Are (and should be) the Future!
- The Happy City: Urban Spaces & Well-being
- Order Without Design: Urban Planning vs. Neighborhood Control
- The Pandemic City: Density in a post-COVID-19 World
- Beyond Apps: How Software Eats the World
- Big Tech & Control: Democracy, Control & Participation
- The Future of the City: From Charter Cities to NEOM

Objectives

This highly interactive workshop will provide participants with the unique opportunity to:

- broaden their conception of “Smart Cities”.
- understand the economic and political driving forces behind the global super trend of urbanization.
- discuss different approaches and best-practices to local governance of Smart Cities—and how cities could be used as centers for administrative innovation and competition.
- assess the institutional arrangements necessary for urban development from a holistic perspective.
- develop a distinctly liberal perspective of the future of the city related to their role as drivers of political, social, environmental hubs of innovation, progress, and prosperity.

Target Group

This seminar is ideal for urbanists from all backgrounds. Participants should have an interest in in architecture and urban planning, digitalization and technological trends, public policy and/or administrative and governmental decision-making. This means that this program would be suitable for politicians and local decision-makers, representatives of political parties, architects and city planners, software developers and entrepreneurs, academics in corresponding fields, and think tanks and NGOs that work in or take specific interest in digitalization and urban policy.

Facilitators



Sven Gerst

Sven Gerst is a PhD Student in Political Philosophy at the Department of Political Economy at King's College London. His research mainly focuses on matters of global justice, democratic responsibility, and individual accountability. At King's College London, Sven also teaches courses on political and economic philosophy, environmental economics, meta-ethics, and contemporary issues in applied ethics. He holds a M.Sc. in Philosophy from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) as well as a M.Sc. in Management from the University of Mannheim. Previously, he also studied at Harvard University, St. Petersburg State University, and National Taiwan University.



Frederic Spohr

Frederic Spohr is responsible for the Friedrich Naumann Foundation's projects in Korea. Previously, he headed the offices in Thailand and Myanmar. Before joining the Naumann Foundation, he reported from Southeast Asia and India as a correspondent for the German business newspaper Handelsblatt. He holds a Master's degree from the University of Cologne and attended the Cologne School of Journalism for Politics and Business.

The Foundation

We, the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, promote individual liberty, free and open societies and free markets in Germany and throughout the world. To us freedom is the guiding principle in policy making. We believe that free and open societies are the only societies that allow human beings to decide for themselves what is best, to develop their full potential and to pursue their dreams. This is what we mean when we claim to value human dignity. And it is freedom that produces prosperity. Together with our counterparts – who all share a similar set of values – we support initiatives in Germany and abroad that serve to enhance respect for the rule of law, private property and human rights, that foster tolerance and that strengthen economic freedom rights and democracy.

The programmes of the Foundation's International Academy for Leadership (IAF) form an integral part of our international work and offer Liberals from all parts of the world opportunities to engage in dialogue, an exchange of ideas, networking and mutual cooperation. We aim to inspire.

Venue: International Academy for Leadership (IAF)
Theodor-Heuss-Straße 26
51645 Gummersbach
Germany

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