The Urban Law Day is a specialised forum aiming to bring together a multidisciplinary circle of academics and practitioners interested in urban legislation, including planners, architects, policy makers, economists, urbanists, and lawyers.

The purpose of the Urban Law Day is to facilitate discussion, the exchange of views, networking, and the presentation of new research findings and emerging issues. The 7th Urban Law Day will take place on 10 July 2020. It will be hosted by the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (University of London) and will address forward-looking lessons for cities after COVID-19.

PURPOSE AND EXPECTED OUTCOME OF THE URBAN LAW DAY

The world is living through an unprecedented crisis as COVID-19 continues to spread, with hundreds of thousands of lives lost and over two hundred countries affected. In just a few months, the pandemic has transformed the way we live, work, travel and socialize.

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of strong institutions including the leading role of national governments and the equally crucial place of subnational and local governments in navigating appropriate responses and addressing issues on the ground and their role for developing future recovery strategies for the socio-economic impacts of the crisis.

The importance of coordination and cooperation among different levels of government and sectoral institutions has become crucial. This pandemic also threatens to destabilize governance institutions by undermining democracy, human rights, and the rule of law as manifested through the inability of governmental bodies (such as parliaments and courts) to physically convene for deliberations and the introduction of emergency measures some of which have been deemed to be autocratic and used to infringe fundamental rights and freedoms. In some cases, it also reduces the trust in governments (their ability to act, to inform, but also e.g. by increasing mistrust due to corruption or misuse of received funding and increases discrimination e.g. of certain population groups (being seen as “origin”, transmitters or spreading the sickness).

The Urban Law Day looks at law as an important forward-looking tool for policy implementation ordering behaviour, mediation of interests, building of legitimacy and protection of human rights. The Urban Law Day will try to identify lessons arising from the COVID-19 crisis for cities, decision makers and citizens and the conference attempts to address the following questions: what have cities learnt from this emergency? What kind of legal measures have been put to place? What has worked? How can we prepare our cities for the future pandemics?

The Institute of Advanced Legal Studies is part of the School of Advanced Study of the University of London with the mandate to promote research facilitation, advance innovation, and bridge research between academy and the professions. The Institute produces its own high impact research, and contributes to the generation and development of high impact research by others. The Institute brings together academic researchers, students, judges and legal practitioners from diverse backgrounds, enabling important opportunities for cross-fertilisation and has leadership involvement in strong networks both discipline-based and spanning geographical and jurisdictional differences.

Through its research projects and programmes the IALS leads and shapes research agendas, facilitates the identification of new research horizons and facilitates debate by providing opportunities and resources for cutting-edge research.