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Annual Conference 2016

Welcome from the chair of conference

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**Royal
Geographical
Society**

with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

It's my great pleasure to welcome you to the RGS-IBG conference at the home of the Society in central London – and I'd like to offer a particular welcome to our international guests and to participants from other disciplines.

As Conference Chair, I have had the privilege of setting the conference theme and organizing the plenary sessions. The theme of 'Nexus Thinking' draws attention to the urgent need to address the interconnected challenges of food, water and energy security, through integrated research that spans the social and environmental sciences, in ways that go beyond separate disciplinary, sectoral and policy silos. But the nexus idea can be extended beyond these specific issues to include the application of geographical thinking to a much wider range of issues as demonstrated by the richness and diversity of our Conference programme.

As always, the Society's Research Groups have provided the impetus for many of the sessions and I am grateful for the energy and enthusiasm with which they have embraced the Conference theme.

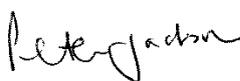
We have an exciting programme including field visits and exhibitions, sessions for post-graduate students and early career researchers, collaborative work by geographers and artists, meet-the-author sessions and lectures sponsored by some of our leading academic journals.

The Conference opens on Tuesday evening with a presentation on 'Meeting Nexus Challenges' by Andy Stirling from the Science Policy Research Unit at Sussex, reflecting on the current ESRC Nexus Network initiative. Further plenary sessions will be held on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday lunchtimes, with presentations by Julie Guthman, Ananya Roy and Tim Jackson. Each talk will be followed by two short responses from disciplinary experts with time for questions and general discussion. These sessions provide a great opportunity to bring Conference participants together, offering a counterpoint to the more specialised discussions that occur throughout the rest of the day.

The Conference takes place during the International Year of Global Understanding, a joint initiative of the IGU, the International Council for Science and the International Social Science Council about which further information will be available on registration and throughout the conference.

In closing, I would like to thank Catherine Souch, Sarah Evans, Hannah Smith and Stephanie Wyse at the RGS-IBG who have been working tirelessly on all of the administrative tasks and detailed planning that are involved in organizing the Conference.

I hope you have a rewarding and enjoyable Conference.



Peter Jackson, University of Sheffield
Chair of the RGS-IBG Annual International Conference 2016