The Food Geographies Working Group (FGWG) invites proposals for the RGS-IBG Annual International Conference 2020 being held in London from Tuesday 1 to Friday 4 September 2020

Professor Uma Kothari will chair the conference with the theme of “Borders, borderlands and bordering”

Creating, marking, enforcing, transgressing, blurring and dismantling borders of all kinds are ceaseless, pervasive processes across time and space. A glance at a political map of the world reveals geography's historical complicity in reinforcing a sense of a bordered world within which discrete cultures, ‘natural’ histories and landscapes are contained, and made symbolically manifest.

A critical exploration of borders and bordering practices is timely and salient. From the building of a new Mexico-US wall, the collection of bio-metric data in India, the establishment and dismantling of economic trade barriers and the creation of national parks that delimit human and non-human mobility, borders continue to order, classify and categorise ideas, identities, people, places, things, landscapes and the non-human. Borders are constituted in multiple ways: geological stratifications, different ecosystems, landscapes, climate change and epochs invoke physical and temporal demarcations. And, borders are multi-scalar, from the granular and the body to planetary boundaries.

You can find out more at https://www.rgs.org/research/annual-international-conference/chair-s-theme/

In keeping with this theme, the Food Geographies Working Group would particularly welcome sessions exploring:

- Brexit and food, particularly focussing on the implications of new international barriers to trade and movement of labour
- Strategies to promote healthy and sustainable food within specific boundaries – such as neighbourhoods, cities or regions.
- New re-localised community food purchasing and food redistribution and waste reduction models
- Food governance and policy at a local/regional/national level
- Finding space for Urban Agriculture within Cities, particularly around upscaling practices
- Grassroot practices promoting food knowledge and food security
- Boundaries between conventional and organic agriculture
- Methodologies addressing borders and boundaries in food geographies
- Drawing borders to define grassroots food communities and mobilise them into action
- Food Knowledge borders: Whose voice matters in working towards food policy and programme change?
- Methodological borders: Are there borders in the role of the academic in the food movement?
- Borders of food classification – such as meat/plant boundaries.
- Urban periphery – the interface between the city and the countryside
- De-colonising food geographies
- Sessions from ECRs or PhD students exploring areas within the food geographies field

However, we are also open to sessions that engage food geographies more broadly and the conference theme. A summary of the group’s interests can be found here: https://foodgeographies.wordpress.com/about/

Sessions may take the form of presented papers, panels, practitioner forums, discussions or workshops. Innovative sessions and formats are encouraged.

Proposals should include-

(i) Title of session;
(ii) Name of Co-sponsoring groups, if applicable
(iii) Name and Contact Details for Session Convenors
(iv) Abstract, outlining scope of session - 200 words max.
(v) Number of session timeslots that are sought
(vi) Indication of preferred organisation of session, e.g. 4 x 20min presentation, plus 20min discussion or 5 x 15min presentation, with 5min question for each, we welcome creative formats. Sessions last 1 hour 40 mins.

(vii) Indication of any non-standard arrangements,

For 2020 RGS are keen to significantly improve virtual and distance participation in the conference, as part of our wider commitment to making the conference as sustainable as possible. We’re keen to hear from you about what you’ve seen work well at other conferences as we explore potential options, so please contact us with suggestions. If you are planning a session and would like to include virtual or remote elements, please get in touch to discuss.

The deadline for proposals for FGWG sponsored sessions is Monday 6th January 2020. Proposals for, or questions about, FGWG sponsored sessions should be sent to Mark Stein, Food Geographies Working Group Conference Officer markstein2010@live.co.uk