

**\*\*\*\*\*CALL FOR PAPERS\*\*\*\*\***

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## **EdgeNet Workshop and Field Discussions: Umeå, Sweden 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> 27<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

[EdgeNet](#) is the Regional Studies Association network for research on peripheral places and regions. We are an international and interdisciplinary research network focused on peripheral regions, and why they matter. EdgeNet aims to advocate and amplify impactful research on the diverse places that are 'non-core' or on the 'edge' of core activities, including but not limited to rural, peri-urban, post-industrial, de-populating, and remote areas. In collaboration with policy makers, practitioners and local communities, we aim to explore new ways of analysing our edgy spaces that can help us to understand where we are now, how we got here, and what we can do in the future.

This year, we are going to Umeå for our Edgenet on Tour, 3 day workshop. The format that we follow is for one day full of papers/ paper ideas; and then the opportunity to discuss these ideas in depth out in the field. We will update our site with details soon, please see the details of our EdgeNet Cornwall event in 2023 [here](#) for an idea of what to expect.

Taking advantage of some fascinating examples of peripheral development being explored by our Umeå hosts, which open many complex questions, this year we will focus our summer workshop on questions around natural capital and green industrial revolutions, with an emphasis on **Temporality, Hope, and Over/Under investment in peripheral areas**. Papers should consider novel analyses of development questions, policy learning from other regions, and empirical and theoretical material which address solutions and approaches to economic, societal, and environmental challenges in peripheries. You might like to consider past and present examples of major investment opportunities that were grabbed or missed, or places which have been simply overlooked. We welcome empirical and theoretical contributions to the following indicative questions.

- What happened, why, and what can (edgy) policy learn moving forward?
- Are there any particular factors, or structures which have meant that resources have become (or failed to become) operationalised?
- What are the long-term effects of over/under investment, and how do places go from being super-central, to peripheral?
- And where do people figure in all of this? Do people who live in areas that experience heavy investment always benefit? If not, why not?

**Call for papers:** if you are interested in joining us in Umea, please submit your paper proposals by **Feb 28<sup>th</sup> 2025** to Joanie Willett [J.M.A.Willett@Exeter.ac.uk](mailto:J.M.A.Willett@Exeter.ac.uk)

Let us know if you plan a full paper, or a 2000 word extended abstract (you can change this decision later, if required) and we will let you know of our final decision by 31<sup>st</sup> Jan 2024.

Please note: We warmly welcome Early Career scholars, and are offering 2 x £500 bursaries available for travel and accommodation to help you to join us.

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**Edgy Matters Special Sessions: RSA annual conference, Porto, Portugal, 6-8 May, 2025**

This Edgy Matters special session is convened by EdgeNet, the RSA's research network on peripheral places and regions. We aim to convene critical conversations among a growing community of researchers who are working to reinvigorate the study of peripherality within (and beyond) regional studies. For 2025, we ask whether reducing non-core regions to a 'left behind' condition minimises their (potential) role/s in collaborative responses to global challenges. To be marginal is to have limited agency at the edge of core spaces of political life – but also to forge identities, find empowerment, and articulate values. How might social, economic and geographic “margins” represent new fronts for transformative thinking and action?

We invite papers that engage with questions of peripherality, broadly conceived, and challenge the social, spatial, economic, environmental, and temporal inter-relationships that shape how peripheries are imagined, governed, lived and felt. We are especially interested in 'edgy' contributions that bring fresh methodological and conceptual insights, or introduce new areas and ideas to RSA audiences. Perspectives 'from the margins' and scholars who may themselves feel 'on the edge' of regional studies are also warmly welcomed.

Potential topics might include:

- 'Edgy' examples of social, cultural and political change in non-core areas
- Role of peripheral spaces and non-cores in broader national sustainability transitions, or in response to global challenges
- Theorisations of lived, felt and/or imagined peripheralism (e.g. rural, remote, post-industrial, topological, peripheries-within-cores).
- Reinterpreting the relationships between cores and peripheries.
- Peripheries as spaces of exploitation, extraction, collaboration, and innovation.
- Peripherality in territorial policy, place-based policy and sustainable developmental pathways.
- Local economic futures and territorial well-being in peripheral places.

**\*\*\*\*\*EdgeNet Events: 2024/5\*\*\*\*\***

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We have a number of upcoming activities and warmly invite you to join our conversations. Two of our events are online, and our flagship edgy workshop is in person (in Umea, Northern Sweden). We will also be convening a special session at the [RSA annual conference](#) in Porto, Portugal, 6-8 May 2025. A call for conference papers will be circulated soon.

## **Online policy series: Green Dreams in Peripheral Development.**

From time immemorial, people have used peripheries to extract different types of resources. Some peripheries became valuable because of particular structural conditions, whereas others were rich in desirable and valuable ecologies and geologies. *Green Dreams in Peripheral Development* explores these issues, convening policy-makers, practitioners and academics. We seek to collectively ask questions about the lived experiences, migrations, planning and development challenges that arise when peripheries are used as a resource, and to co-produce principles and next steps for policy.

### **Green Dreams Policy Huddle: Weds 29<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2-3.30 EU Time**

The Policy Huddle is designed to enable networking and knowledge exchange between academics and policy practitioners with an interest in green infrastructure projects and their impacts on peripheral places. Invited speakers will give short talks and provocations about their work, needs, challenges and opportunities, and we will facilitate group discussions about how to collectively address these issues.

The outcomes of these conversations will set the agenda for our Green Dreams in Peripheral Development Webinar

This event will take place on Zoom. We will circulate an Eventbrite page with full details and sign-up information shortly.

### **Green Dreams in Peripheral Development Webinar: Weds 14<sup>th</sup> May 2-3.30 EU time**

Building on the policy huddle, this event asks what's next for green development and peripheral places. Expert speakers will talk about their work and experiences, followed by a chaired discussion and audience Q&A.

This event will take place on Zoom. We will circulate an Eventbrite page with full details and sign-up information shortly.

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See above call for papers.