



Call for Papers

**The Department of History, University of Ibadan in collaboration
with the French Institute for Research in Africa (IFRA-Nigeria) and the Institute of
African Studies, University of Ibadan**

is organising:

An International Conference

With the theme:

Urban Myths and Experiences in Africa

Cities are built environments where people converge to live, work, exchange, and interact. As such, they constitute tangible economic, social, and political centres. Yet cities are not only material spaces. They are also shaped by the ways people imagine, dream about, narrate, and experience them across different scales of time and space. Cities are produced as much through concrete infrastructures and institutions as through practices and imagination.

For instance, it is precisely because cities have long been perceived as places of opportunity, wealth, and social mobility that they have attracted many people — sometimes to the point where the very dream of urban life becomes difficult to sustain. Today, cities are home to more than half of the world's population, with approximately 4.4 billion people living in urban areas worldwide. By 2050, urban centres are expected to accommodate an additional 2.5 billion inhabitants, nearly 90 percent of whom will live in Asia and Africa. People are drawn to cities for employment, education, political participation, cultural life, and more generally the promise of a better future. Yet urban imaginaries extend far beyond these practical motivations. They are also nourished by collective myths, media (mis)representations, and projections about what the cities are, were or could be. Urban myths thus emerge from both everyday experiences and broader aspirations toward meaningful lives.

This international and multidisciplinary conference on African urban studies seeks precisely to examine the extent to which such urban myths have shaped spaces, practices, and ways of life across African cities. How are these urban myths produced, circulated, and experienced? Through which actors, narratives, images, and practices are they disseminated? In what ways are they

entangled with material urban realities and everyday practices? And how do the lived experiences of urban dwellers reinforce, challenge, or transform the myths surrounding life in the city?

We welcome abstracts that speak to the nexus between urban myths and urban experiences in Africa, whatever their thematic entry could be (housing, security, health, transport, urban governance, etc.). We invite them to raise question around the following themes lines:

1. Production of urban myths in Africa: actors, diffusion, and transmission
2. Lived urban myths in Africa: practices and performances of urban myths
3. From dream to nightmare: live, death and transformation of African urban myths

Participants are expected to submit their abstracts for consideration by 15 July 2026. Participants will receive feedback on selected abstracts for presentation on 28 July 2026. The conference is scheduled for 5-6 October 2026 at the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria.

Conference Fees: Local Participants (Academics) - ₦30,000

Local Participants (doctoral students) – ₦15, 000

International Participants (Academics/researchers) \$100

International Participants (doctoral students) \$50

Abstracts and panel proposals should be sent to urbanconf2026@gmail.com

For further enquiries about the conference, you can reach the conveners at the same email address.

Conference Contact: Pr Muritala (+234835796606) or Mr Yemisi (+2348149026502) - WhatsApp only