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Disrupting the transport geographies of the UK? A research agenda for Advanced Air Mobilities

Session Organisers: Dr Adam Michael Packer, Institute for STEMM in Culture and Society (ISTEMMiCs), University of Birmingham, Dr Louise Reardon, Institute of Local Government Studies (INLOGOV), University of Birmingham, Prof Fern Elsdon-Baker, Institute for STEMM in Culture and Society (ISTEMMiCs), University of Birmingham A burgeoning subfield of geographical and social science inquiry is emerging in response to the development of Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) technologies for civilian use, such as drones, Electric Vertical Take-Off and Landing Vehicles (eVTOLs), and electric/hydrogen-fuelled aircraft. These technologies promise transformational changes for aviation, transportation systems, and connectivity distinct from recent ‘on-ground’ digital and mobility innovations. There is an innovation ecosystem actively shaping (and being shaped by) the proposed uses of these novel air technologies. Examples include drone medical supply deliveries, better integration of regional transport and mobility, and possible decarbonisation of commercial domestic aviation. The growing industry and government interest in actualising such usages is further evidenced by the UK's ‘Future Flight Challenge’ test and demonstration programme. This is a multi-phase programme which funds multisectoral partnerships and research collaborations to integrate these technologies into existing aviation systems. The data, software, algorithmic, human, infrastructural, and technological dimensions that factor into advancing AAM technologies span the interests of transport and digital geographers alike as well as social scientists broadly. Empirically, the advancement of AAM technologies taps into recent debates in digital and transport geography on the spatial implications of automated systems, robotics, and Artificial Intelligence (AI). But there are also fundamental questions that arise from AAM innovation processes, such as the governance of transitions in mobility systems, the role of the state, the accessibility of transport, inclusion in innovation, and the nexus of science and society. Given the fundamental changes AAM innovations pose to society, this session seeks to introduce and develop a research agenda that critically engages with the significant challenges and implications of AAM technologies. Reflecting on the diverse societal and geographical questions that arise

from AAM technologies as well as critical perspectives from within existing aviation research, this session invites theoretical and empirical contributions that begin to unpack critical questions of interest towards the study of novel sustainable air transport-based technologies or innovations and their implications. We welcome contributions that cover topics relating, but not limited to: geographical theories, concepts, or terminologies/vocabularies of analytical value to the study of advanced air mobilities approaches that explore the spatial implications of civilian uses of AAM technologies politics and governance of advanced air mobility innovation and its links to the wider mobility system new GIS and mapping techniques required to support AAM technology deployment critical intersectional perspectives on civilian uses of these technologies (e.g., feminist, postcolonial, queer) perspectives from the global South on civilian uses of AAM technologies studies reflecting on the incumbent aviation system to explore issues in future aviation intersections with and role in wider sustainability and Net Zero agendas

Catégorie

Conference session

Date de début

Tue, 08/27/2024 - 09:00 - Fri, 08/30/2024 - 17:00

Ville

London

Lieu (salle, adresse)

Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore, London, SW7 2AR

Organisé par

Royal Geographical Society - Institute of British Geographers

Source

https://www.rgs.org/research/annual-international-conference

Informations pratiques

If you are interested in joining this session, please email a title, abstract, and keywords, along with details of all authors (e.g., name, affiliation, email address), to Adam Michael Packer (a.m.packer@bham.ac.uk) and Louise Reardon (l.h.reardon@bham.ac.uk) by 12th February 2024.

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