13th Congress AISU

Genoa, 7-10 September 2027

THE WOUNDED CITY
LA CITTÀ FERITA

Urban spaces as sites of conflict, life, and memory

Gli spazi urbani come luogo di conflitto, vita, memorie

The Italian Association for Urban History and the Genoa Congress

The Italian Association for Urban History is one of the leading European scholarly associations devoted to the study of **urban history in all its dimensions**. Since its foundation in 2001, it has promoted an interdisciplinary approach and sought to move beyond the boundaries of national historiographies, fostering an understanding of urban history open to dialogue with civil society.

Over the years, AISU's biennial congresses have devolped into events of **significant international visibility**: more than 700 scholars from around the world participated in the most recent edition (Palermo 2025).

On the occasion of the 13th edition—organized with the support of the University of Genoa, Department of Architecture and Design (DAD)—we aim to build on this well-established format by complementing the traditional structure of **parallel academic sessions** (held during the day) with an open **cultural festival, partly addressed to a wider public** (in the late afternoon and evening).

Theme: *The Wounded City/La città ferita*

Cities have always been more than merely settings for human events—often marked by conflicts of varying intensity. They are themselves among the most sensitive and enduring outcomes of those events and conflicts. Urban transformations bear the material and symbolic traces of the tensions that have traversed them: wounds produced by armed conflicts, political and social crises, natural disasters, and processes of exploitation or exclusion, as well as by projects of reform, reconstruction, and refoundation.

What is at stake goes far beyond the material control of spaces or buildings. Urban "wounds" affect the symbolic dimension of places, the rules governing their appropriation, and the very forms of civic coexistence. Among the issues involved are rights of citizenship and processes of identity formation, access to political institutions and to the social uses of space, the management of shared resources and the provision of public infrastructures. These also include cultural memory and practices of sociability, the horizons of the collective imagination and shared customs, as well as the dynamics of artistic, literary, and technological production that contribute to shaping the urban experience in distinctive ways.

Contexts and variables may differ widely depending on historical periods, geographical settings, and scales of analysis. Yet—whether in times of war or peace, under authoritarian regimes or more liberal political orders, in moments of growth as in those of crisis or emergency—the city appears as a space constantly exposed and vulnerable, crossed by tensions that challenge its structures, balances, and meanings. From this perspective, urban places are never neutral backdrops or simple containers; rather, they constitute fields of force in which programs of domination and claims to

autonomy, planning ambitions and material urgencies, practices of exploitation and capacities for resilience—as well as forms of cohabitation, solidarity, mediation, and political imagination—polarize and take shape.
It is within this unresolved tension between trauma and reparation, fracture and recomposition, that the theme of the congress is situated.
The congress will be organized around **six thematic macro sessions**, conceived as spaces for interdisciplinary dialogue and exchange.

1. Governing and Controlling the City: Powers, Institutions, Negotiations
2. Attacking and Defending the City: Crises, Emergencies, Disruptions
3. Living in the City: Interests, Practices, Uses of Space
4. Narrating and Representing the City: Memories, Identities, Contested Heritage
5. Imagining and Experimenting with the City: Programs, Challenges, Visions of the Future
6. Agorà (events open to the public)

The call system

Two calls are planned. The first—**Call for Sessions and Public Events** (see below)—is open to proposals for academic sessions, round tables, and public initiatives addressed to a broader audience. On the basis of the selected proposals, which will form the core structure of the congress's scientific programme, a second call—**Call for Contributions** (15 July–18 October 2026)—will be launched. This will be open to proposals for papers, posters, and other contributions to be integrated into the sessions.
Publishers, journals, and scholarly associations are also warmly invited to propose exhibition spaces for the presentation of their publications.

Further information: https://aisuinternational.org/genova-2027-home/
Contact: genova2027@aisuinternational.net



THE MACRO SESSIONS

1. Governing and Controlling the City: Powers, Institutions, Negotiations

Riccardo Ferrante (Università di Genova, DIGI), **Stefano Gardini** (Università di Genova, DAFIST), **Andrea Longhi** (Politecnico di Torino, DIST), **Elena Manzo** (Università degli Studi della Campania Luigi Vanvitelli, DADI), **Guido Zucconi** (Università Iuav di Venezia).

This macro session explores the many ways in which cities have been—and continue to be—governed, managed, and controlled over time, with particular attention to the relationships between political power, institutions, and urban space. The wounds of the city may arise both from practices of violent imposition and from processes of discipline, reform, or reorganization: from the material construction of government buildings (palaces, fortifications, infrastructures) to the everyday management of urban life, from legal and fiscal mechanisms to symbolic strategies of political legitimation. Proposals are welcome that analyze how domination over the city has been expressed not only through coercion but also through the production of order, consensus, and representations, often resulting from negotiations and compromises among the various actors involved.
Topics may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Architectures and spaces of power**: public buildings, seats of government, administrative infrastructures, institutional geographies.
- **Governing the city**: practices of governance, legal and fiscal frameworks, policies of public order and social control.
- **Reform and renewal initiatives**: projects of transformation, disciplinary programs, modernization agendas.
- **Symbols and representations of power**: civic rituals, iconographies, monuments; symbolic investments and strategies of representation.
- **Forms of opposition and resistance to power**: protest movements, revolts, acts of dissent, alternative political cultures.

2. Attacking and Defending the City: Crises, Emergencies, Disruptions

Cristina Cuneo (Politecnico di Torino, DIST), **Ludovica Galeazzo** (Università degli Studi di Padova, DBC), **Massimiliano Savorra** (Università di Pavia, DICAr), **Stefano Zaggia** (Università degli Studi di Padova, DICEA).

The city as a site of open wounds lies at the center of this macro session. Wars, sieges, revolutions, and uprisings—as well as natural disasters, economic crises, and public health emergencies—have profoundly shaped urban forms and social relations. Proposals are welcome that investigate how violence—physical, structural, or symbolic—becomes inscribed in urban spaces, redefining their boundaries, hierarchies, and functions, and how cities react, adapt, or are refounded in the aftermath of moments of rupture. Particular attention will be given to the connections between crisis and innovation, destruction and reconstruction, trauma and reparation.
Topics may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **War and urban violence**: armed conflicts, sieges, revolutions, and uprisings; wartime destruction; militarization of urban space.
- **Urban defense and security**: fortifications, systems for mitigating risks and vulnerabilities, emergency strategies for safeguarding urban populations.
- **Moments of rupture and turning points**: epidemics, famines, natural disasters; urban abandonment; economic crises, civil conflicts, social clashes.
- **Urban reconstruction and refoundation**: postwar or post-disaster reconstruction; processes of reorganization after traumatic events; policies of reparation and compensation.
- **Internal fractures**: civil conflicts; walls, barriers, and barricades; occupations, expulsions, and the demolition of buildings and neighborhoods as punishment or as collateral effects.

3. Living in the City: Interests, Practices, Uses of Space

Denise Bezzina (Università di Genova, DAFIST), **Paola Lanaro** (Università Cà Foscari Venezia), **Luca Mocarelli** (Università degli Studi di Milano Bicocca, Dipartimento DEMS).

This macro session focuses on everyday practices and on the ways inhabitants appropriate, use, and contest urban space, understood as a field of tensions and deeply rooted inequalities, within which they are both exposed and vulnerable, yet also active in opening up and, at times, healing the city's wounds. Markets, streets, neighborhoods, and informal or marginal spaces can serve as key sites for observing tensions related to work, mobility, housing, and inequalities of gender, class, and ethnicity. Proposals are welcome that examine the city as a lived space, shaped by conflicts of interest that may appear minor but are nonetheless decisive in shaping social relations and highly influential in broader processes of urban transformation.
Topics may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Conflicts of everyday life**: places of work and sociability as arenas of confrontation, negotiation, and cooperation, but also of competition and control.
- **Economic and social stratifications**: differences in status, class, ethnicity, and religion; processes and strategies of producing, legitimizing, and challenging inequalities.
- **Gender-based discrimination**: asymmetries in access to resources, services, and opportunities in urban life; forms of expression, resistance, and female agency.
- **Poverty, marginality, and vulnerability**: processes of material and symbolic exclusion; policies and practices of assistance, control, stigmatization, and the criminalization of hardship.
- **Public/Private**: expropriations, speculative practices, and privatization; regimes governing the appropriation and inappropriability of urban space; definitions, regulations, and boundaries within the city.

4. Narrating and Representing the City: Memories, Identities, Contested Heritage

Emanuela Garofalo (Università degli Studi di Palermo, DARCH), **Andrea Maglio** (Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II, Dicea), **Laura Stagno** (Università di Genova, DIRAAS), **Duccio Tongiorgi** (Università di Genova, DIRAAS).

The city is also a repository of memories—selective and conflicting—where the wounds of the past may be removed, displayed, reinterpreted, or instrumentalized. This macro-session seeks to interrogate the processes through which the past is preserved, erased, or re-signified within urban space. Monuments, ruins, toponyms, heritage sites, and landscapes can be read as arenas of symbolic contention in which divergent and often incompatible narratives compete. Proposals are welcome that explore tensions and conflicts related to memory, processes of heritage-making and identity formation, as well as the role of the urban imagination in critically engaging with the wounds of the past.
Topics may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Divided memories and contested heritage**: competing narratives of the past; processes of patrimonialization and monumentalization; conflicts over the preservation of cultural heritage.
- **Traumas and removals**: rewritings and resemanticizations of the past and its traces; practices of silencing or erasing memory.
- **Writing and describing the city**: diaries, chronicles, guides, histories; the city as an object of study.
- **Representing the city**: urban imagery, symbolic constructions, artistic, cartographic, literary, and media representations of urban space.

5. Imagining and Experimenting with the City: Programs, Challenges, Visions of the Future

Marco Doria (Università di Genova, DIEC), **Giovanni Cristina** (Università degli Studi Roma Tre, FilCoSpe), **Elena Svalduz** (Università degli Studi di Padova, DBC), **Ines Tolic** (Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna, DAR).

This macro session looks at cities as laboratories for the incubation, development, and experimentation of forms of knowledge and programs oriented toward the future—a future often marked by the wounds of the present and the past. Utopias and dystopias, projects of political and technological renewal, artistic practices, and forms of urban activism draw upon expectations, forecasts, and fears that shape processes of urban transformation and involve civil society to varying degrees. Proposals are welcome that address these themes in their multiple dimensions, with particular attention—regarding the present—to the role of public history and public engagement practices in fostering a shared reflection on the social, environmental, and political challenges facing cities.

Topics may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Utopias, dystopias, and urban imaginaries**: mythic constructions, visions of the future, utopian projections.
- **The city as laboratory**: political, economic, and social experimentation; urban spaces as testing grounds for new technological and infrastructural models.
- **Artistic and cultural practices**: urban arts, creative cities, places of production, circulation, and consumption of culture.
- **Urban activism and civic participation**: social movements, practices of active citizenship, grassroots initiatives, and forms of mobilization around the future of cities.
- **Toward a public urban history**: participatory research, public uses of urban history, and co-production of knowledge about the city and its wounds.

6. Agorà

Enrica Bistagnino (Università di Genova, DAD), **Anna Boato** (Università di Genova, DAD), **Cristina Candito** (Università di Genova, DAD), **Marco Folin** (Università di Genova, DAD), **Andrea Giachetta** (Università di Genova, DAD), **Giampiero Lombardini** (Università di Genova, DAD), **Lucina Napoleone** (Università di Genova, DAD), **Federica Pompejano** (Università di Genova, DAD), **Valter Scelsi** (Università di Genova, DAD).

For the first time, and on an experimental basis, the AISU conference opens to proposals for events and activities of a non-academic nature, engaging with public history. Proposals may take a wide range of formats —debates, talks, screenings, performances, exhibition displays, and multimedia installations—provided they are methodologically grounded and critically informed. Proposals at an early stage are welcome and may be further developed in dialogue with the organizers.

During the congress, a dedicated time slot (approximately 6.00–7.30 pm) will be reserved for selected proposals, to be presented in public venues and open to a broader audience. In light of the experimental nature of this initiative, the organizers reserve the right to discuss and adjust proposals with applicants in accordance with spatial and logistical constraints.

Possible formats include:

- **Talks, debates and round tables**
- **Exhibition displays**
- **Video screenings and multimedia installations**
- **Performances and shows**

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The call for sessions, round tables and public engagement events for the next AISU Conference is now open. Proposals are welcome within any of the six macrosessions structuring the conference programme.
Proposals must be submitted to the Scientific Committee via the online form available on the conference website (https://aisuinternational.org/genova-2027-macrosessioni/) **by** ~~24 May~~ **10 June 2026**. The results of the call will be announced by 5 July. A second call will subsequently open for the submission of papers, posters and other contributions within the selected sessions.
Further information: https://aisuinternational.org/genova-2027-home/
Contact: genova2027@aisuinternational.net

Guidelines for proposers

The conference will be held exclusively in person: proposals will be accepted only if at least one of the proposers is present. Only contributions actually presented at the conference will be included in the final publication.

Sessions

- **Each session chair may submit only one proposal**. Multiple submissions are not permitted.
- Proposals must be jointly submitted by **at least two chairs from different institutions**; international co-convenorship is encouraged.
- There are **no restrictions** regarding topic, disciplinary field, or academic status. Proposals should adopt a **historically grounded, problem-oriented approach** and demonstrate clear historiographical and methodological awareness.
- Accepted abstracts will be **published in the Book of Abstracts** (AISU Proceedings series). **Full papers, subject to peer review, will be published** in the post-conference volumes (AISU Insights series).
- Depending on the number of participants, sessions may be scheduled in **one, two, or three 90-minute slots** (corresponding to 4–5, 8–10, or 12–15 participants, respectively).

Roundtables

- **Each coordinator may submit only one proposal**. Multiple submissions are not permitted.
- Proposals may be submitted by **one or more coordinators**; joint proposals involving coordinators from different institutions are particularly encouraged.
- There are **no restrictions** regarding topic, disciplinary field, or academic status. Proposals should adopt a **historically grounded, problem-oriented approach** and demonstrate clear historiographical and methodological awareness.
- Accepted abstracts will be **published in the Book of Abstracts** (AISU Proceedings series). **Full papers will not be included** in the post-conference volumes.
- Depending on the number of participants, roundtables may be scheduled in one or two 90-minute slots (4–6 or 8–12 participants, respectively).

Public events (session Agorà)

- AISU does not provide funding for the proposed activities: all organizational costs will be borne by the proposers, who may rely on the full logistical support of the congress organizers.
- Depending on the number and nature of proposals, the organizers will identify the most suitable venues. In preparing the proposals—especially in the case of non-conventional formats (performances, installations, screenings, exhibition displays)—applicants are required to specify as clearly as possible their spatial requirements and any other logistical needs necessary for the implementation of the activity.

Publishers and exhibitors

During the congress, one or more spaces will be set up for the exhibition of **recent publications and other related materials related to urban history**. Publishers, journal editors, and cultural and academic associations are warmly invited to submit expressions of interest, specifying any particular requests or requirements (genova2027@aisuinternational.net).
The organizers will make every effort to accommodate as many applications as possible, depending on the number and quality of proposals received, and reserve the right to agree with selected participants on the most appropriate exhibition formats.

Timeline

	DA	A
First call (sessions, roundtables, Agorà events)	April 6	~~May 24~~ June 10, 2026
Notification of the call results		by July 5, 2026
Second call (papers, posters, Agorà contributions, exhibition spaces)	July 15	October 18, 2026
Notification of the call results		by December 6, 2026
Procedure for participation grants	January 7	January 31, 2027
Early registration	February 1	March 14, 2027
Standard registration	March 15	April 30, 2027
Late registration	May 1	June 14, 2027
Submission of registration form and final abstract		by June 15, 2027
Congress	September 7	September 10, 2027
Final paper submission		by October 15, 2027

Participation fees

	Early	Standard	Late
	01.02 - 14.03.2027	15.03 - 30.04.2027	01.05 - 14.06.2027
Junior member*	140	170	200
Senior member *	190	220	250
Junior non-member *	270	300	330
Senior non-member *	370	400	430
Accompanying	80	100	120

* The fee includes the welcome cocktail, coffee breaks, lunches, the conference dinner, and a selection of optional activities.
** This fee is reserved for accompanying persons and includes the welcome cocktail, the conference dinner, and a selection of optional activities.

Organizational Structure

Congress Chair

Marco Folin

Scientific Committee

Denise Bezzina (Università di Genova, DAFIST), **Pelin Bolca** (Politecnico di Torino, DIST), **Alfredo Buccaro** (Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II, DiARC), **Donatella Calabi** (Università Iuav di Venezia), **Chiara Calderini** (Università di Genova, DICCA), **Giovanni Cristina** (Università degli Studi Roma Tre, FilCoSpe), **Cristina Cuneo** (Politecnico di Torino, DIST), **Marco Doria** (Università di Genova, DIEC), **Riccardo Ferrante** (Università di Genova, DIGI), **Marco Folin** (Università di Genova, DAD), **Stefano Gardini** (Università di Genova, DAFIST), **Ludovica Galeazzo** (Università degli Studi di Padova, DBC), **Emanuela Garofalo** (Università degli Studi di Palermo, DARCH), **Paola Lanaro** (Università Cà Foscari Venezia), **Andrea Longhi** (Politecnico di Torino, DIST), **Andrea Maglio** (Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II, Dicea), **Emma Maglio** (Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II, DiARC), **Adriano Magliocco** (Università di Genova, DAD), **Elena Manzo** (Università degli Studi della Campania Luigi Vanvitelli, DADI), **Luca Mocarelli** (Università degli Studi di Milano Bicocca, Dipartimento DEMS), **Giacomo Montanari** (Università di Genova, DIRAAS), **Michele Piana** (Università di Genova, DIMA), **Heleni Porfyriou** (Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, ISPC), **Marco Pretelli** (Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna, DA), **Fulvio Rinaudo** (Politecnico di Torino, DAD), **Massimiliano Savorra** (Università di Pavia, DICAr), **Laura Stagno** (Università di Genova, DIRAAS), **Donatella Strangio** (Sapienza Università di Roma, MeMotef), **Elena Svalduz** (Università degli Studi di Padova, DBC), **Rosa Tamborrino** (Politecnico di Torino, DIST), **Ines Tolic** (Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna, DAR), **Duccio Tongiorgi** (Università di Genova, DIRAAS), **Stefano Zaggia** (Università degli Studi di Padova, DICEA), **Guido Zucconi** (Università Iuav di Venezia).

Scientific and Organizational Coordination

Enrica Bistagnino (Università di Genova, DAD), **Anna Boato** (Università di Genova, DAD), **Cristina Candito** (Università di Genova, DAD), **Emanuela Garofalo** (Università degli Studi di Palermo, DARCH), **Andrea Giachetta** (Università di Genova, DAD), **Giampiero Lombardini** (Università di Genova, DAD), **Andrea Maglio** (Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II, Dicea), **Lucina Napoleone** (Università di Genova, DAD), **Federica Pompejano** (Università di Genova, DAD), **Massimiliano Savorra** (Università di Pavia, DICAr), **Valter Scelsi** (Università di Genova, DAD), **Elena Svalduz** (Università degli Studi di Padova, DBC), **Ines Tolic** (Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna, DAR).

Scientific Secretariat

Coordination**: Erica Bacigalupi** (Università di Genova, DAD).
Lorenzo Fecchio (Università di Genova, DAD), **Cecilia Moggia** (Università di Genova, DAD), **(Luca Placci** (Università di Genova, DAD).

Administrative Secretariat

Coordination**: Marcello Trucco** (Università di Genova, DAD).
Monica Credici (Università di Genova, DAD), **Manuela Megna** (Università di Genova, DAD).

