

**Urban Research Based Action Network  
Node Guidelines  
November 2015**

Starting an Urban Research Based Action Network (URBAN) node gives you the opportunity to bring academics and community leaders together locally and be part of a national network where you can learn, share resources, and work together on the basis of common values. URBAN is building a new and exciting field of collaborative research committed to equity and social justice and you will have the opportunity to support and influence its development.

In advance of submitting an application, prospective nodes will learn about the work of URBAN and its existing nodes. Prospective node leaders work closely with local university and community stakeholders to determine if there is an interest in creating a node, what local challenges there are, and how node members might benefit from a joint research partnership.

**Step 1: Learn about URBAN**

*Learn about URBAN's mission*

Information about URBAN's mission can be found on the [URBAN website](#) as well as in [URBAN's concept paper](#). The set of [principles for collaborative research](#) that have emerged from URBAN's Boston Node serve as an example of how the university and community partners who comprise local nodes take responsibility for articulating their shared aims.

*Learn about URBAN's nodes*

URBAN's four local nodes and three discipline nodes represent a diverse array of approaches to engaged scholarship, all tailored to the unique geographic and disciplinary contexts within which they operate. Reading about the work of each may be helpful as you begin to envision what an URBAN node in your locale might look like.

*Attend an URBAN event*

URBAN's local and discipline nodes hold numerous events through the year. These range from monthly meetings of local nodes to sessions at professional conferences. Event listings can be found on the main page for each URBAN node.

*Conversation with URBAN National*

Once you have a sense of how URBAN operates and what an URBAN node in your locale might look like, you are ready to have a preliminary conversation with one of the URBAN co-chairs, Jose Calderon, Professor Emeritus, Pomona College; Dayna Cunningham, Executive Director of the Community Innovators Lab at MIT; Michelle Fine, Professor, CUNY Graduate Center/Public Science Project; Celina Su, Gittell Chair in Urban Studies, CUNY Graduate Center; Mark R. Warren, Professor, UMass, Boston.

**Step 2: Local Fact Finding**

*Determine if there is an interest*

An important step in advance of submitting an application is to determine if there is indeed an interest among engaged scholars and community activists in creating a node. Having conversations with these potential new node members is a critical first step.

### *Organize a Planning Team*

If there is interest from engaged scholars and community activists, you then organize a Planning Team. This team should be comprised of at least two leads representing one or more academic institutions in your city. Although it is not required, it would be ideal for at least one member of this planning team to be a community activist.

### **Step 3: Submit an Application**

Applications should be sent to Celina Su, Marilyn J. Gittell Chair in Urban Studies at the City University of New York Graduate Center, at [csu3@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:csu3@gc.cuny.edu). Please address the following in your application:

- Brief overview of motivation for creating a node, what it will seek to accomplish, and potential academic, community partners, and otherwise that the node will engage.
- What does your node seek to accomplish in its first year?
- Brief bios of the Planning Team. Please include background on each member's experience in research based action and how each sees URBAN connecting to their current work.
- Please identify a person who will fill each of these roles
  - o Node Chair. This person will be expected to join bi-monthly URBAN National Planning Team conference calls
  - o URBAN website liaison. This person will be responsible for sending information about the work of the node to the URBAN website coordinator. This might include event listings, meeting summaries, resources, etc. This person can be a faculty member, staff member, student, or community partner.