

*Call for Papers*

**Platformization and speculation(s): The rise of a new speculative urbanism**

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The rapid expansion of platform economies is reshaping different aspects of urban life and is tightly linked to logics of data extraction and capital accumulation (Sadowski 2020, Mezzadra & Neilson 2017, Srnicek 2017). Moreover, platformization entails different forms of speculation which take over a leading role in transforming urban spaces. Speculations can be characterized as a “set of economic and socio-cultural practices seeking return on investment under conditions of uncertainty” (Leitner & Sheppard 2023: 360). These conditions and productions of uncertainties have been predominately studied in the global South (Goldman 2011, Nowak 2023). However, we find it useful and promising to apply this conceptual lens and its multiple methodological settings to reflect on actors and outcomes of platformization in the global North, on the one hand, and to study urban transformations, on the other hand.

The relation between platformization and speculation becomes particularly visible in areas such as housing (short-term rentals, Airbnb), mobility (Uber), care (Care.com) and food delivery (Deliveroo). In each of these domains, the so-called platformization has different implications, but externalization and flexibilization are conditions that certainly belong to the common impacts of platform economies.

Despite their significance, the implications for spatial, social, economic and administrative systems under conditions of speculation in times of platform capitalism remain underexamined. Against this background, we invite authors to contribute theoretical insights, empirical analyses, and critical perspectives that explore the intersections of platform economies and speculative urbanism.

We particularly welcome contributions that address the following questions:

- How are platform economies linked to global speculative geographies, and how does speculation as a framework/ lens help to understand these phenomena?
- What are the (spatial, social, economic) impacts of the ongoing platformization of urban life?
- How do speculations as a *modus operandi* or as technique operate in times of platformization?
- What methods contribute to explore these aspects?
- How do different stakeholders (society, workers, users, city administration etc.) cope with the (new) challenges posed by platform economies?
- Can we initiate learning processes on how to cope with platform economies between the different domains (housing, mobility, care, food)?

This session aims to foster an interdisciplinary dialogue on these pressing issues. We invite researchers across urban studies, geography, sociology, and related disciplines, to engage with the growing impact of platform economies and speculative urbanism. It is our intention to produce a special issue in a journal out of this panel.

#### References

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