

## Placemaking (Bradford, 17 Oct 25)

University of Bradford, Henry Moore Institute, Oct 17, 2025

Deadline: Sep 8, 2025

Kirstie Gregory, Henry Moore Institute

Placemaking: The Past, Present, and Future of Public Sculpture and Urban Regeneration.

This one-day academic symposium will bring together new research from some of the leading voices in the history of public sculpture and its role in energising community-formation, urban regeneration, and civic pride.

Organised in partnership with the Twentieth Century Society, it will give new emphasis to public sculpture used to create distinctive, much-loved and used civic spaces such as market-squares and transport hubs. While there is a well-developed scholarly and public appreciation of public sculpture in domestic settings, principally in the context of post-war social housing, this symposium will look to extend these debates into other spaces where architecture and sculpture collide, such as shopping centres, peripheral landscapes, interventions in brownfield sites, informal memorials, and ecclesiastical and civic buildings.

Speakers are invited to address the power of placemaking through public sculpture to generate or reflect local and national identities, as well the potential of public sculpture to challenge urban environments, to disrupt or unmake place. Comparative studies between different regions of the UK or between the UK and overseas are welcomed as well as reflection on how public sculpture can challenge misconceptions around public reluctance to embrace avant-garde or abstract art.

In dialogue with Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture, this event will historicise our contemporary moment in order to examine how commissioning for public sculpture today has evolved from earlier models, what new challenges it addresses and who it seeks to represent. How can our cities' sculpture declare who is welcome in our public spaces? How can it imagine new forms of social and political identity?

Topics considered may include:

- Commissioning processes
- Public taste
- Modernism versus realism
- Interwar, postwar, and late twentieth century planning policy and funding for sculpture
- Public memorials and monuments
- Current heritage assets in need of protection
- Relocation of sculpture, recent successes and failures
- Examples of best practice in heritage protection
- Sculpture of or by women in public space

Submit a proposal:

We welcome submissions from a broad spectrum of critical and creative practice for individual 15-minute papers or a full panel.

Applicants are kindly asked to submit:

- a brief abstract (no more than 250 words)
- a short biographical note (100 words)

The deadline to apply is Monday 8 September 2025, 17:00

Please email your proposals to: [research@henry-moore.org](mailto:research@henry-moore.org)

If you would like to apply in another format, such as video or audio, this is also welcomed. Please contact [research@henry-moore.org](mailto:research@henry-moore.org) if you would like to discuss this.

Speakers will receive an honorarium of £100, and travel and accommodation costs within the UK will be reimbursed.

Reference:

CFP: Placemaking (Bradford, 17 Oct 25). In: ArtHist.net, Sep 2, 2025 (accessed Oct 15, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/50450>>.