

Catalysts for Change: Empowering Qualitative Doctoral Research through Public Engagement (Series 4)



Building an Ideal Urban Community: Lessons from Community Governance in China

Speaker: Yi Hua, doctoral researcher in Social and Policy Sciences, University of Bath

Date: 20 October 2026 (Tuesday)

Time: 2 - 3 pm

Venue: The Hetling Pump Room, Bath Medical Museum

Abstract

What makes a good community? In rapidly urbanising societies, increasing mobility and changing social relationships can make it difficult to build and sustain meaningful community connections. My research explores community governance in urban China through the implementation of a policy known as the "linkage policy", which aims to connect social workers, social organisations, volunteers, and charitable resources to improve community well-being. While the policy seeks to encourage community participation, tensions often arise between administrative control and grassroots initiatives. Drawing on fieldwork in China, I will share stories and examples of the positive qualities that help communities thrive, including care, trust, mutual support, and a sense of belonging. Participants will also be invited to reflect on their own experiences and draw the ideal community they have, or hope to have, in the future.

Biography

Yi Hua is a PhD researcher in the Department of Social and Policy Sciences at the University of Bath. She holds a Master of Social Work (MSW) from Washington University in St. Louis and a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) from East China Normal University. Before beginning her doctoral studies, Yi worked as a social worker in China for ten years. Her research focuses on community governance, community development, and the implementation of public policy in urban China.

Acknowledgement

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