



# Annual Report 2020

---



**Global Research  
Programme on Inequality**

---



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Summary	2
Organization	3
Communication	3
Dissemination	3
Events and Activities	4
Research and Collaboration	4
Resourcing	5
Strategic Work	5
Publications	5

---

### Summary

The Global Research Programme on Inequality (GRIP) is a radically interdisciplinary research programme that views inequality as a fundamental challenge to human well-being, and works to foster co-designed processes of knowledge creation to understand and address the multiple dimensions of rising inequalities. GRIP was founded on 15 October 2019 following the signing of an agreement between the [University of Bergen](#) (UiB) and the [International Science Council](#) (ISC), and became operational at the beginning of 2020 as GRIP's Secretariat was established.

Despite the challenging circumstances that 2020 has brought about impeding the planned activities and initiatives, in its first year GRIP has managed to successfully establish vital organizational structures and initiate its work; has created a completely new visual profile along with new content on its website and social media profiles; initiated numerous dissemination activities introducing GRIP to new audiences, academic circles and policy makers; carried out and participated in numerous physical and digital events; expanded its network and created alliances and strategic partnerships; produced several funding applications working on its resource planning; and developed new research initiatives and forms of collaboration.

This report provides a brief overview of activities carried out during 2020, key events and a status on current developments.

*All images: Johnny Miller, Unequal Scenes.*



## Organization

The GRIP Secretariat was established in the first half of 2020. The [GRIP Secretariat](#) is composed of an executive director, research coordinator, outreach officer (50% position) and a higher executive officer (50% position). It carries primary responsibility for facilitation and implementation of GRIP activities, administration of the programme, development of working plans and communication.

A comprehensive selection of relevant candidates for GRIP's [Development Team](#) (DT) was carried out during the first half of 2020. Potential members were selected based on their achievements and relevance in relation to engaging multiple dimensions of inequality, their standing in the international scientific community and to ensure a geographical, disciplinary and gender balance. In consultation with both ISC and UiB, the final list of DT members was made and at the end of 2020 GRIP's DT was established with Jan Erik Askildsen, Mathieu Denis, Divine Fuh, Jason Hickel, Maddy Powder, Elisa Reis, Martina Rieker, Rachel Sieder and Nandini Sundar as the constitutive members.

In order to facilitate GRIP's collaboration with the UiB academic environment, a [UiB Programme Committee](#) was established. Representing various key departments and research environments, the tasks of the committee are to both communicate GRIP initiatives to the wider UiB research environment and to support GRIP activities. Regular meetings with the UiB Programme Committee have been held throughout 2020 and the committee has provided valuable suggestions and input on the various GRIP activities.

## Communication

A new graphic profile for GRIP was developed taking into consideration the visual image and design requirements of ISC and UiB.

A new website was constructed (<https://gripinequality.org>) and new social media profiles were created ([Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#)). GRIP has been actively producing and adding content on its social media profiles, and as of April 2021 GRIP has 796 followers on Twitter and 1049 followers on Facebook. GRIP's videos on YouTube have been watched a total number of 843 times. The website has since April 2020 had more than 14 850 visits from 140 different countries. Among the top-ten countries is a geographical spread from Brazil, Mexico, and the US to South Africa, India, and Germany.

An important part of GRIP's communication work has been directed at making GRIP visible to both research and policy environments, by participation in various events and through GRIP's dissemination activities.

## Dissemination

In the beginning of 2020, GRIP circulated a newsletter to detail the transition process from [CROP](#) to GRIP, sum up the last activities of CROP, and introduce the objectives of the new research programme.

Along with the eruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, GRIP initiated a miniseries "[COVID-19 and Inequalities](#)" addressing both the implications of the pandemic for inequality, and seeking to map how multiple inequalities have impacted the trajectory of the pandemic from a global perspective. Following up on the success



# Global Research Programme on Inequality

of the first miniseries a new miniseries [“Inequality in the \(Post\)-Pandemic City”](#) was established in September 2020 in order to explore the longue durée implications of the pandemic on urban orders and the various dimensions of inequality.

In total, the miniseries have included 30 interviews with key experts (researchers, practitioners, activists and professionals) covering most world regions and with topics ranging from health governance, migration, the global economic crisis, the racialization of pandemics, the implications for development cooperation, securitization, surveillance and urban preparedness. The miniseries were widely shared on social media, drawing over 6000 unique visits to GRIP’s new website. GRIP cooperated closely with ISC and UIB on the promotion of the miniseries and the miniseries were widely shared both on [ISC webpages](#) and featured in special [SDG Bergen](#) articles.

GRIP has also made recordings of several interviews with scholars and policy makers, such as [Alfredo Brillembourg](#) from Urban Think Tank on how urban design can contribute to fighting inequality; and with [Carolyn Medel-Anonuevo](#), Head of the Education Unit of the UNESCO Regional Office for Southern Africa on the challenges of achieving SDG Goal 4 on education for all.

## Events and Activities

Several events planned for 2020 had to be cancelled or postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the GRIP inaugural events/workshops in South Africa, France and Mexico, as well as the SANORD Conference. While these are now slated for 2021/2022, we

have nevertheless managed to host and participate in numerous events both in physical and digital formats.

In February 2020 GRIP participated at the international SDG Conference in Bergen, and organized [the key inaugural event; hosting a session on inter-disciplinary approach to inequality challenges](#). GRIP was also tasked with leading the Programme Committee for the SDG Conference Bergen 2021 and throughout 2020 continuously worked on the conference programme, placing inequality and SDGs as central topics. In May 2020 GRIP organized [a webinar on COVID-19 and Inequality](#), focusing on the economic inequalities and the possible equitable responses to the pandemic.

In August 2020 GRIP was one of the organizing partners and the host for two panel sessions during [Bergen Exchanges on Law and Social Transformation](#). The first session [“Urban Inequality and Securitization”](#) critically engaged and probed the relations between multiple forms of urban inequalities and securitization brought on by the pandemic. The second session, [“Knowledge Inequalities and Possibilities for Decolonizing the Academy”](#), examined hegemonic understandings of knowledge regimes and global academic hierarchies.

## Research and Collaboration

While the exceptional circumstances of 2020 made it difficult to launch new research activities, GRIP managed to establish new collaborations through its various initiatives, develop new research project applications, and start to build up an extensive network of



[affiliated researchers](#) - many of whom will be engaged in the upcoming research activities of GRIP.

## Resourcing

Together with University of Cape Town (UCT) and University of Ghana, GRIP coordinated and headed an application for [Worldwide Universities Network](#) (WUN) funding on corona research in May 2020 and another application for WUN RDF Sustainable Recovery research in October. These applications served as an important groundwork for other upcoming calls. GRIP was also a partner in another WUN application, headed by Dr. Zarina Patel (UCT), which received funding for the project "[The New African Urban University](#)", which focuses on strengthening the role of African universities to co-produce urban knowledge to advance sustainable cities.

In addition, GRIP submitted two funding applications to UIB calls, both of which were successful: In September, a project application "[Speculative Urban Futures](#)" was submitted to UIB Global Societal Challenges initiative. This inter-disciplinary project will probe the possible urban futures, particularly exploring inequalities and migration. Another successful funding application was submitted to UIB SPIRE that secured a visiting researcher grant for Dr. Cecilie Sachs Olsen from the Royal Holloway Center for the GeoHumanities.

## Strategic Work

GRIP has been continuously working on expanding its network through interviews, miniseries, events, and dissemination activities. In addition, GRIP representatives have had

numerous meetings with various stakeholders such as representatives of GIZ, NORAD, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Centre for Cities, WiSER in Johannesburg, as well as many universities and research centres in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas. In the capacity of GRIP, the Executive Director has been appointed to the Board of [Institute for Humanities in Africa](#), as well as to the Board of [the Global Societal Challenges](#) initiative at UiB.

GRIP has contributed with input on strategic policy documents such as for example UNESCO Recommendations on Open Science, ISC Priorities for Science and others.

## Publications

Tasked with finalizing publications initiated by CROP, GRIP has been following up several book projects. In total four books were published this year - "[The Politics of Social Inclusion](#)" by Gabriele Koehler et al.; "[Child Poverty and Social Protection in Central and Western Africa](#)" by Gustave Nébié et al.; Sustainability Science, Poverty and Development in Argentina in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century by Alberto D. Cimadamore et al. and "[Tax Justice and Global Inequality: Practical Solutions to Protect Developing Country Revenues](#)" by Krishen Mehta et al. GRIP is also in continuous communication with the publishers in finalizing other forthcoming publications.

In addition, members of GRIP Secretariat have published articles and opinion pieces in both [national](#) and international newspapers and journals, introducing GRIP to a wider public. GRIP's Executive Director has also been [active publishing and disseminating research](#) in this period.



International  
Science Council



## Global Research Programme on Inequality

GRIP Secretariat  
Faculty of Social Sciences  
University of Bergen  
PO Box 7800  
5020 Bergen, NORWAY  
[gripinequality.org](http://gripinequality.org)  
[gripinequality@uib.no](mailto:gripinequality@uib.no)