



Course Code & Title	LISS298 Participatory Research Methods				
Convenor(s)	Dr Kate Schreckenber, Department of Geography				
Institution	King's College London	Department		LISS DTP	
Academic Year	2023-24	Term		2	
Number of sessions	5	Research Platform	Qualitative Research (QuL)	Length of Session(s)	2 hours
Day, Date		Start : End		Room Location	
Tuesday 27 February 2024 Tuesday 5 March 2024 Tuesday 12 March 2024 Tuesday 19 March 2024 Tuesday 26 March 2024		14:00 - 16:00		Online	
Enrolment Links:	Available to book on SkillsForge from Tuesday 12th December 2023 . Click to log in and register: https://training.kcl.ac.uk/kcl/#/he/dev/eventDetails;;em.providerCode=LISS,providerOrgAlias=kcl,number=298; Questions? Visit our Training FAQ here: Frequently Asked Questions - LISS DTP (liss-dtp.ac.uk)				

Course Description:

This course aims to provide students with a theoretical and practical understanding of participatory research methods. Originally developed for use in action-oriented development projects, ‘Rapid Rural Appraisal’ (RRA) and then ‘Participatory Rural Appraisal’ (PRA) methods are increasingly popular among researchers, both rural and urban. Often now labelled Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) they focus on researchers learning from and with the individuals or communities they study, often with the aid of visual methods. However, there may be trade-offs between staying true to the community empowerment ideals underpinning PLA methods and the more extractive information needs of some research, particularly in a comparative setting.

Learning Outcomes. At the end of this course, students should:

- Understand the history and evolving philosophy of participatory research methods
- Be able to critically assess the advantages and challenges of using participatory research methods indifferent contexts
- Feel confident to apply some participatory research tools in their own research

Course content: In the spirit of participatory research, I envisage this course to be co-produced by myself and the students. The session titles below are suggestions which will be refined during the first (and subsequent) sessions to reflect students’ interests. Each session will be two hours long. The first hour will be a more theory-oriented discussion of readings in the style of a reading group. The second hour will be more practical and allow us to review one or more tools in the ‘participatory research’ toolbox with a view to



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students practising these with each other or their friends and family in the week between sessions. I hope to bring in one or two guest speakers to talk of their own experience applying PLA approaches.

1. 'Handing over the stick' – In this session we will reflect on the underlying philosophy of participatory research methods, and practise Participatory Maps.
2. Entry into a community, gatekeepers and saboteurs – We will reflect on co-production of research with local stakeholders, and practise Timelines and Transects.
3. Sequencing and combining participatory and other research methods – We will discuss how to sequence different participatory research tools and how to combine them with other research methods, and practise Wellbeing Ranking, Matrices and Seasonal Calendars.
4. Feeding back to participants and aggregating data for research purposes – We will reflect on the particular challenge of using participatory methods for 'rigorous' research in a comparative setting, how to feedback findings to participants, and practise Venn Diagrams and Systems Diagrams.
5. Participatory research in a Covid-constrained world – We will use this session to think about innovative ways in which participatory ideas and tools could be applied in a Covid-constrained world (e.g. can research become more participatory and potentially allow shifts in ownership through virtual collaboration?), and to give students time to reflect on how they can integrate participatory approaches into their own fieldwork plans.

Reading List:

- *Arnstein, S.R. 1969. A Ladder of Citizen Participation. *Journal of the American Planning Association* 35(4), 216-224.
- Biekart, K. and Gasper, D. 2013. Reflections: Interview with Robert Chambers. *Development and Change* 44(3), 705–725.
- Chambers, R. (1983) *Rural Development: Putting the Last First*. Harlow: Longman.
- *Chambers, R. 1994. The origins and practice of Participatory Rural Appraisal. *World Development* 22(7), 953-969.
- *Chambers, R. 1994. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA): Analysis of Experience. *World Development* 22(9), 1253-1268.
- *Chambers, R. 1994. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA): Challenges, potentials and paradigms. *World Development* 22(10), 1437-1454
- Chambers, R. (1997) *Whose Reality Counts? Putting the First Last*, London: Intermediate Technology Publications.
- Cooke, B. and Kothari, U. (eds.) 2001. *Participation: The New Tyranny?* London: Zed Books.
- *Cornwall, A. 2008. Unpacking 'Participation': models, meanings and practices. *Community Development Journal* 43(3), 269-283.
- Dickens, L. and Butcher, M. 2016. Going public? Re-thinking visibility, ethics and recognition through participatory research praxis. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 41, 528-540. doi: 10.1111/tran.12136
- MacKenzie, C.A., Christensen, J. and Turner, S. 2015. Advocating beyond the Academy: dilemmas of communicating relevant research results. *Qualitative Research*, 15(1), 105-121.
- Pereira, L. et al. 2020. Transformative spaces in the making: key lessons from nine cases in the Global South. *Sustainability Science* 15, 161-178.



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- Pretty, J.N., Guijt, I., Thompson, J. and Scoones, I. 1995. Participatory Learning and Action: A trainer's guide. London: IIED. Available at: <https://pubs.iied.org/6021IIED/>
- *Participatory Learning and Action website (<https://www.iied.org/participatory-learning-action-pla>) has many useful links to the former PLA Notes publication. (please take a particular look at PLA Notes 50 at <https://pubs.iied.org/9440IIED/>)
- Schreckenber, K., Torres Vitolas, C.A., Willcock, S., Shackleton, C., Harvey, C.A. and Kafumbata, D. 2016. Participatory Data Collection for Ecosystem Services Research: A Practitioner's Manual. ESPA Working Paper Series No. 3. 127pp. Available at: <http://www.espa.ac.uk/files/espa/PRA-Manual.pdf>

Eligibility:

The course is likely to be of most interest to students on LISS Pathways 8 and 9 (The Environment and Urban Life).

Students must be registered PhD students at either King's College London, Imperial or Queen Mary University of London.

Pre-course preparation:

Please read the items on the reading list marked with an *

Number of students:

Minimum number required to run: 5

Maximum number of places available: 16