

Strengthening the values of food in times and spaces of fragility

AESOP
Sustainable Food Planning
XII Conference

Venice
21-24 october 2026

Save the date

Description of the Conference theme

We are living in a period marked by profound ecological, social, economic, and geopolitical emergencies that are deeply reshaping food systems and exposing structural vulnerabilities within contemporary urban and regional contexts.

These conditions reveal persistent failures, including the uneven progress in guaranteeing the right to equitable and sustainable food for all. At the same time, they call for a critical reflection on the plurality of values that diverse actors and local communities attribute to food: as heritage, livelihood, culture, and care, but also as a site of commodification, geopolitical tension, and technocratic intervention.

Within this complex landscape, sustainable food planning practices are increasingly required to position themselves critically among often divergent, contested, and non-neutral value systems

In this context, the XII AESOP Sustainable Food Planning Conference invites scholars, practitioners, activists, and policymakers to explore how food values are mobilised, negotiated, and transformed across spaces and scales of fragility. Food has become a central arena for urban and territorial policies, involving a growing number of actors with heterogeneous interests and priorities. As such, food activates a dense and conflictual constellation of values, intertwined with the environmental, social, economic, and political fragilities that characterise many contemporary territories. Climate change, war, political instability, and widening inequalities challenge not only food systems, but also the institutional, spatial, and governance frameworks through which food is planned and managed.

The conference seeks to investigate how urban and regional food planning can bridge tradition and change by mediating between place-based knowledge, community practices, and emerging socio-technical responses.

Particular attention is given to the spatial dimension of food policies and practices, understood as a means to integrate policy frameworks with territorial and urban projects, producing place-based and context-sensitive responses that acknowledge specific conditions.

Key questions guiding the conference include:

- . How do values rooted in food heritage, cultural practices, and local ecologies inform contemporary planning approaches?
- . How are socially innovative initiatives and agroecological urbanism practices reimagining food systems in contexts of precarity, disruption, and uncertainty?
- . How can food planning support community agency while respecting diverse food identities and mediating conflicts around food and space?
- . What institutional transformations are needed to safeguard food commons, promote socio-ecological justice, and enable alternative forms of production, distribution, and governance to take root?

We welcome contributions that critically engage with these questions, illuminating the political, social, ecological, and spatial dimensions of food planning amidst fragility, and advancing debates on how food values can sustain transformative pathways toward more resilient, caring, and democratic food systems.

Track of the Conference

1. Negotiating the values of land, soil and water
in planning practices

2. Planning and design approaches
to food urbanism in fragile territories

3. Reclaiming urban food governance
and the right to food

4. Critical thoughts on the role and impact
of technology and AI in food planning

5. Mitigating forms of patrimonialisation
and foodification

6. Bridging research and practice
for a food transition

Conference Timeline

23 December 2025	> pre-call
2 February 2026	> open call (paper/ session/ poster/ phd workshop)
17 April 2026	> deadline for abstract/posters
27 May 2026	> notification of acceptance
30 Settembre 2026	> deadline for full paper
19-21 October 2026	> Iuav Venice Food Week
21-24 October 2026	> Aesop 2026 Conference