

Computer Vision and GenAI for Public Space and Life

26th March 2026 (Thu)
04:30 – 06:00 pm (UTC+8)
Rm 221, Chen Kou Bun
Building, CUHK

Waishan will talk about how Imagery Big Data, Generative AI, and Computer Vision can improve the efficiency of observation, ideation, and evaluation in urban design. He will discuss: 1) how Generative AI can help with limited datasets like nighttime street scenes; 2) how Computer Vision can automate Gehl's PSPL survey on a large scale; and 3) how cross-view multimodal imagery data can forecast environmental and behavioural impacts of urban forms without GIS datasets. He will conclude by demonstrating how these use cases can be incorporated into computational design tools to connect urban analytics with design practice. The use cases reflect his long-term goal to promote "AI for the Public Good" at the intersection of design, analytics, and humanity. Urban analytics remains an emerging field that borrows methods from other disciplines. Many use cases are "data-hungry" and "modelling-heavy"—both of which significantly limit their broader use in urban decision-making. Still, advancements in publicly available urban imagery and efficient AI models could create a new paradigm that is more accessible, explainable, and high-throughput. Hopefully, the use cases Waishan presents can spark a discussion on how to thoughtfully combine urban theory, methodological, and pedagogical progress to realize this vision.



Waishan Qiu

**Assistant Professor, Department of Urban Planning and Design,
University of Hong Kong**

Waishan Qiu is an Assistant Professor and HKU-100 Scholar at the University of Hong Kong (HKU). Trained as an urban designer, his research utilises Computer Vision, Generative AI, and urban imagery data to investigate urban issues related to mobility equity, liveability, and sustainability. He has been involved in various data-driven research and smart city projects worldwide, including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the U.S., and China. Before joining HKU, he was an Associate at McKinsey & Company. He obtained a Ph.D. from Cornell, an M.C.P. from MIT, an M.Arch. with distinction from UCL, and a B.E. from Tongji. His previous lab experiences include the MIT Center for Advanced Urbanism, Senseable City Lab, and Harvard Evidence for Policy Design. He has co-authored 30+ SCIE/SSCI papers and served on the editorial boards of top journals, including Humanities and Social Sciences Communications and Scientific Reports (Nature Springer). He also actively participates in lectures, workshops, and exhibitions about smart cities.



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