

MANCHESTER
1824

The University of Manchester

Manchester Urban Institute

ANNUAL REPORT 2024 - 2025



mui@manchester.ac.uk

mui.manchester.ac.uk

CONTENTS

3.

OVERVIEW

4.

**AN ENRICHED
RESEARCH
ENVIRONMENT**

5.

**COLLABORATION
& DEVELOPMENT**

6.

**EVENTS &
ACTIVITIES**

7.

AT A GLANCE

8.

**LOOKING
AHEAD**

9.

**CALL TO
ACTION**

OVERVIEW



Manchester Urban Institute is an interdisciplinary research centre at The University of Manchester.

We address the key questions that shape cities in the 21st century to realise more inclusive, equitable and socially sustainable urban environments for current and future generations.

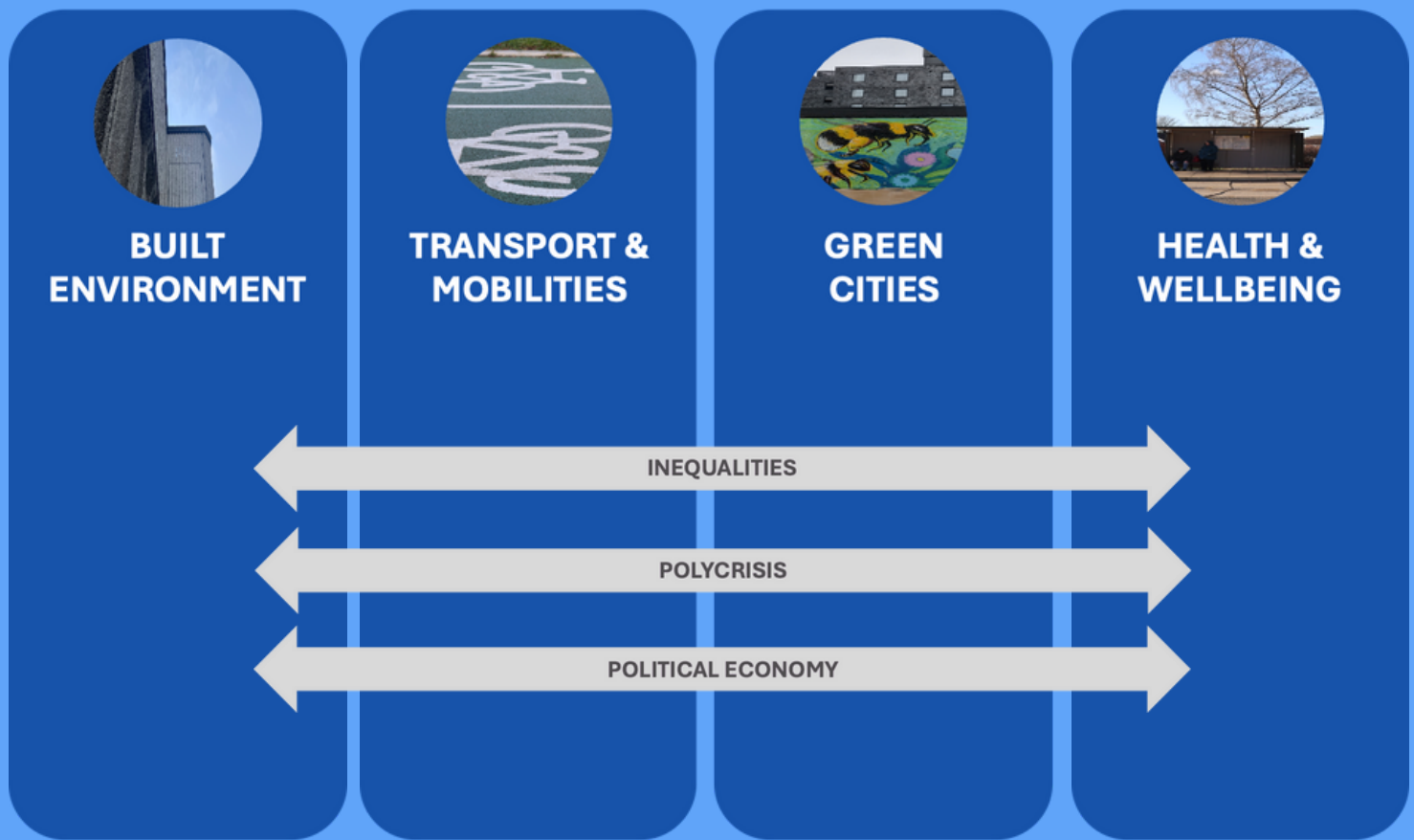
Aligned with The University's core values, we build partnerships among researchers, communities, policymakers and industry. These collaborations drive co-produced solutions at local, national and

global levels, ensuring our research leads to meaningful, evidence-based outcomes.

MUI draws on expertise from across The University of Manchester's three Faculties to bring together diverse interdisciplinary perspectives. We use innovative methods and action-based approaches to inform impactful policy and practice.

This report highlights some of our key achievements over the last academic year.

AN ENRICHED RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT



The academic year 2024 - 2025 has been a period of transformation and development for MUI.

Under the leadership of incoming Director, Professor Karen Lucas, and a new management team, we have reshaped our research environment to strengthen collaboration, enhance external partnerships and deliver greater impact.

MUI's research is structured across four Research Challenge Areas intersected by three cross-cutting themes.

This renewed research environment was shaped through a collaborative consultation process during 2024 and 2025, ensuring that it reflects the priorities and perspectives of our diverse constituencies.

COLLABORATION & DEVELOPMENT

In the last year, MUI has grown its global footprint and delivered tangible change closer to home.

Recent collaborations extend from Los Angeles to Dhaka, while partnerships with organisations including **Transport for Greater Manchester, Arup, Stockport MDC**, and community partners such as **42nd Street and The Dandelion Community** strengthen our local impact.

We hosted study visits from **QEERI** (Qatar), **K2** (Sweden), and **The Cooperative Housing Federation of Norway**, and engaged with global policymakers, including a Dutch ministerial delegation.

MUI supported an international urban forum constituting members of our Postgraduate Researcher (PGR) Network and counterparts from **UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs**, laying foundations for long term professional cooperation and development.

We were awarded funding for two major international conferences through **The University of Manchester Hallsworth Fund**. These are planned for 2026 and will continue to expand our global reach.



EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Supporting the next generation

MUI is a launchpad for emerging researchers. In 2024 / 2025, we:

- Launched an Early Career Researcher (ECR) Network
- Expanded our PGR Network to 55 members
- Funded nine ECRs and PGRs to present at international conferences
- Appointed ECRs as deputy leads across key research challenge areas
- Initiated a new blog series to amplify ECR and PGR perspectives.

Catalysing change

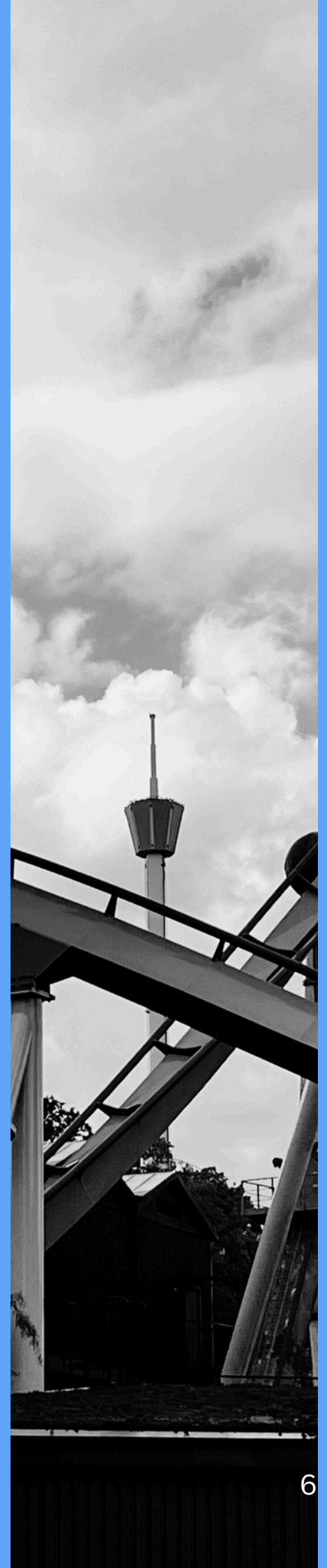
MUI convened forums to bridge divides between research, policy and lived experience, creating space for new ideas and equitable collaboration:

- Built Environment and Mental Health Innovation Lab
- Urban Futures Forum
- INTALInC Urban Transport project launch
- Monthly urban film series, interdisciplinary research cafes, and policy focused seminars.

Influencing policy

We have worked to connect people, linking research with practice, and people with policy, to put ideas into action:

- A 12-month PDRA secondment to TfGM influencing Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040
- Development of participatory planning models used by Local Authorities
- Strategic frameworks co-created with GMCA and Wigan MDC
- Input into national transport policy debates via Select Committees and advisory boards



AT A GLANCE

Redefining our research environment

4

Research
Challenge
Areas

3

Cross-cutting
themes

3

Internal Away
Days

3

Thematic
launches

Research support

4

Internal
networks

14

Affiliated
networks

1

Innovation
Lab

£3.5K

Conference
grants

£350K+
Secured research
income

Organisation & communications

200

Internal
members

700

Mailing list
members

1

New
Team

35

Community
partners

4

Research
Associates

22

Published
newsletters

1

New
website

50

LAB
members

Events, Workshops & Seminars

4

Research cafes
& forums

1

Film
series

25

Workshops &
seminars

Internationalisation

4

Academic
visits

1

International
Advisory Board

17

IAB
members

1

International
PGR colloquia

5

International
seminars

LOOKING AHEAD



In 2025 / 2026, we will focus our energies where they matter the most.

MUI's refreshed strategic plan, launching in the next academic year, sets five clear objectives:

- 1) **Create integrated understandings** of urban systems and their impact on society
- 2) **Foster inclusive collaboration** for researchers at all career stages, facilitating collaboration across disciplines
- 3) **Partner with stakeholders** to shape innovative, evidence-based solutions

4) **Translate research into practice** to influence policy and development

5) **Identify new funding** for research that enhances community wellbeing

We'll do this through a focused programme of internal away days, public events, major grant bids, international fellowships, and new participatory frameworks with partners across Greater Manchester and beyond

JOIN MUI TO BUILD INCLUSIVE, EQUITABLE AND SOCIALLY SUSTAINABLE CITIES

We're proud of what we've achieved in 2025 / 2026, but we're even more excited about what comes next. We're calling on researchers, practitioners, communities, businesses and policymakers to get involved.



mui.manchester.ac.uk



mui@manchester.ac.uk



Manchester Urban Institute

SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENT, EDUCATION
AND DEVELOPMENT
THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER