



Creating knowledge together:

Sociograms, collective cooking and urban transformations in the Global South.

Presenters

Dr Camilo Umaña, Oñati International Institute for the Sociology of Law (Spain)

Dr Camilo Umaña is the Scientific Director of the Institute, a lawyer and human rights expert with extensive experience in public policy, academia, and civil society organizations from an interdisciplinary approach. He holds a PhD in Criminology from the University of Ottawa (Canada) and a PhD in Sociology of Law from the University of the Basque Country (Spain). His work reflects a deep commitment to practice-oriented research with real-world impact—placing the implementation of justice, social programs, and institutional reform at the heart of academic inquiry. He understands socio-legal scholarship as a powerful tool for critical thinking and collective transformation. For him, legal research must go beyond theory: it should generate concrete methodologies, practical knowledge, and hands-on tools to address the most pressing social problems.

The IISL, as a highly specialized and prestigious institution for the scientific community, serves as a scientific hub for teaching and training in socio-legal studies. The Research Lines articulate the trajectory of the institute, fostering exchange with the larger socio-legal community, for conducting research.

Professor Igor Ahedo, University of the Basque Country

The University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU) will be represented by Professor Igor Ahedo, Department of Political Science and Administration, Head of the Society, Politics and Culture PhD program and coordinator of the participatory democracy research group.

Prof Ahedo will share expertise on participation and the participatory construction and production of knowledge, exploring how participatory methodologies can move beyond consultation to create meaningful conditions for collective inquiry, reflection and decision-making. Sociograms will be discussed as a potential approach for mapping relationships, but also as spaces in which participants can identify shared concerns, make unequal power relations visible and develop situated interpretations of their own urban realities.

Sebastián Torres, Fundacion Casa B, Colombia

Sebastián leads research and public advocacy projects at Casa B. He is a lawyer with a master's degree in Human Rights and experience supporting social and community-based projects, specially on drug policy. His work spans the public and private sectors, focusing on community participation, institutional coordination, and strengthening local and regional initiatives. He has also served as an advisor on public policy design, human rights, and social innovation.

Dr Suraya Scheba, University of Cape Town

Suraya is a senior lecturer in Geography at the University of Cape Town. She is also an Urban Studies Foundation Fellow, affiliated to the University of Amsterdam during the Fellowship period in 2022. She is interested in urban socio-material struggles and emancipatory futures, and has explored this through a focus on the politics and struggles over water and housing infrastructure. A central research interest is urban occupations and movements, where she has sought to undertake more comparative and collaborative research across cities of the Global South, as a part of the City Occupied project. She aims to continue and advance this work, guided by a commitment to engaged scholarship, comparative dialogue, and the decentering of knowledge hierarchies.