

# Participant Profiles

Class of 2025

LSE **Cities**

Executive MSc in Cities



# EXECUTIVE MSC IN CITIES

For the last decade, LSE Cities has brought together some of the world’s leading urban thinkers and practitioners in its annual Urban Age programme in cities across the globe, from Mumbai to Johannesburg, Rio de Janeiro and New York. Internationalism is at the core of our research and teaching.

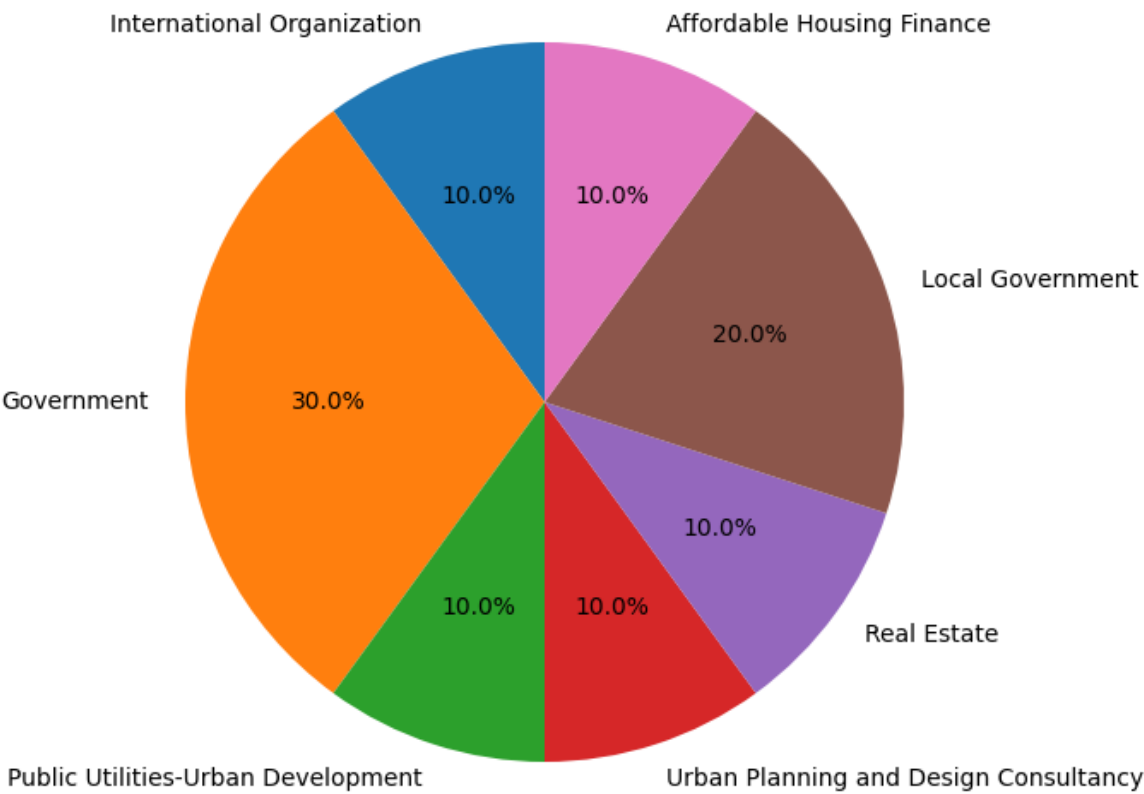
Now in its tenth year, the Executive MSc in Cities will see 11 exceptional professionals from 11 cities convene for five teaching modules to explore how they and their organisations can deliver effective change in their cities.

Representing diverse sectors including government, urban design, planning, social development, infrastructure, and architecture, the class of 2024 embodies the necessary sectoral diversity to deal with the cross cutting challenges and opportunities that today’s cities are facing.

[exec.lsecities@lse.ac.uk](mailto:exec.lsecities@lse.ac.uk)

# 2025/26 COHORT PROFILE

## SECTORS REPRESENTED



## GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION





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*Sustainable Urban  
Development Specialist*

*United Nations Human  
Settlements Programme  
(UN-Habitat)*

*Bissau, Guinea-Bissau*

# Ana Paula Debastiani

Ana Paula Debastiani is a Sustainable Urban Development Specialist with UN-Habitat, in Guinea-Bissau, África. She provides technical assistance to projects focused on climate-resilient urban planning, governance, capacity-buinding, and community participation, including the EU-funded “Green and Inclusive Cities” initiative. Prior to this, she served as a Sustainable Urban Development Analyst for UN-Habitat in Cabo Verde.

Ana Paula holds a PhD in Environment and Development (Federal University of Paraná, Brazil) and has worked in international cooperation with organizations such as IICA, supporting local governance, sustainable agriculture, and gender equality. Her experience spans Brazil, Ireland, the Netherlands, and West Africa, combining academic research and field-based implementation. She is particularly committed to inclusive urban transformation, bridging policy and community-level action. Ana Paula holds a degree in Management and a Master’s Degree in Regional Development, both from the Federal Technological University of Paraná, Brazil (UTFPR). Over the years, she has developed her academic and professional experience with an multidisciplinary approach.



*General Manager of  
Strategy & Research*

*Architecture & Design  
Commission*

*Riyadh, Saudi Arabia*

# Bader Alrasheed

Bader currently serves as General Manager of Strategy & Research at the Architecture and Design Commission of Saudi Arabia, where he shapes policies, regulations, and strategies for the Architecture & Design sector. Leading research and advisory functions, he focuses on urban transformation and the critical role of design in sustainability adoption. He advocates for clear, measurable sustainability strategies, emphasizing collaboration and knowledge-sharing among stakeholders to drive innovative, sustainable urban development solutions.

Earlier in his career, Bader developed technical expertise as an electro-mechanical engineer at General Electric, contributing to engineering research and development. He then developed his strategic skills at Accenture Strategy, addressing complex business challenges through management advisory. This diverse background blends technical proficiency with strategic insight, enabling Bader to tackle challenges with creativity and precision.



## Katlego Mathebe

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Katlego Mathebe is a City Councillor with over a decade of experience in Local Government from South Africa. Following the 2016 General Local Government Elections, she was elected the Speaker of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality Council. She later served in the Executive Mayor's cabinet as a Member of the Mayoral Committee (MMC) responsible for Environment and Agriculture Management and subsequently as MMC for Roads and Transport, a position she held until September 2024. In recognition for her dedication, ethical leadership, long, and distinguished service, she was conferred the honorary title of Alderman in the Country's capital, the City of Tshwane.

Her professional experience spans several years across various private and public institutions such as Eskom Ltd, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), Santam Ltd, Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA), where she served as an Internal Audit Manager, Financial Accountant, Internal Auditor, and Personal Assistant, respectively.

Katlego Mathebe studied at the Nelson Mandela University and University of South Africa, and holds a National Diploma in Office Administration, a qualification in Internal Auditing, an Advanced Course in Diplomacy Studies, and Advanced Course in Intelligence Management.

*City Councillor*

*City of Tshwane*

*Pretoria, South Africa*



## Maria Paulina Chaparro Garzon

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Urban and Regional Planning Leader with extensive experience in urban planning instruments and large scale projects in the public sector. As a public servant, I have specialized in infrastructure planning, urban policy, territorial regulation, and sustainable development, supported by a strong foundation in urban law. I have a proven ability to lead complex, multi scale initiatives by integrating diverse perspectives and fostering collaboration among government agencies, the private sector, and communities.

Currently serving as Urban and Regional Planning Lead at Empresas Públicas de Medellín (EPM), I design and implement strategies to optimize land use, infrastructure expansion, and territorial governance across Antioquia. My work builds on Medellín's internationally recognized trajectory as a model of urban and social innovation, where participatory planning, and sustainable infrastructure have transformed the city into a global reference. Being part of this ecosystem has given me the opportunity to learn from Medellín's successes and challenges, applying those lessons to regional projects that ensure infrastructure development aligns with regulatory compliance, sustainability objectives, and community priorities.

Previously, I structured major mobility and urban regeneration projects at Metro de Medellín and Ruta N, expanding sustainable transport and fostering innovation districts. Recognized twice with the Leopoldo Rother Award by the Colombian Biennial of Architecture and Urbanism, I bring expertise in planning methodologies, mobility systems, and territorial management. With a background in Architecture and a Specialization in Urban Law, my career combines technical, regulatory, and design knowledge with strong leadership in advancing sustainable urban innovation.

*Urban and Regional  
Planning Lead*

*Empresas Públicas de  
Medellín - Grupo EPM*

*Medellín, Colombia*



## Michelle Foster

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Michelle Foster is executive director of the National Association of State and Local Equity Funds (NASLEF). As NASLEF's first full-time executive director, Foster is tasked with building on NASLEF's strengths and creating opportunities for members. She has extensive experience in affordable multifamily deal and fund structuring having previously served as equity data manager at Cinnaire, analyzing more than \$2.3 billion in equity investments. Prior to her work at Cinnaire, Foster engaged communities in a dynamic career as an urban planner, including crafting and implementing pioneering land use policy and streamlining entitlement processes. Foster is a recognized leader within her community and serves on the following boards Michigan Rural Development Council, Community & Home Supports, and the City of Ferndale Planning Commission. She earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from Saginaw Valley State University and a master's degree in urban planning from Wayne State University, fascinated by the cyclical influence of behavior and built design.

*Executive Director*

*NASLEF*

*Detroit, Michigan, USA*



## Mohammed Mubarak

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Mohammed Mubarak is an Urban Designer at Urban Strategies Inc. in Toronto, where he works on a wide range of planning and design projects that shape cities across Canada and internationally. His role encompasses developing urban frameworks, public realm strategies, and large-scale master plans, with a strong focus on visualization, design excellence, and integrating community aspirations into complex urban environments.

Before moving to Canada, Mohammed built his career across the Middle East and North Africa, leading and contributing to architectural and urban design projects from concept development through to implementation. His work in the region reflects a balance of technical expertise and creative vision, engaging with diverse urban contexts and development challenges.

Mohammed holds a Master's degree in Design from Cardiff Metropolitan University in the UK, where he studied on a full scholarship, and a Bachelor of Science in Architecture and Urban Planning from Helwan University in Cairo. His academic and professional interests converge around the relationship between politics, public space, and social interaction, with a particular focus on how design can act as a catalyst for civic life.

In addition to his professional practice, Mohammed was selected for the prestigious EastWest: The Art of Dialogue fellowship, which brought together emerging leaders from Egypt and the United States. Through this program, he engaged with high-profile figures in politics, business, art, and public relations, gaining unique exposure to international dialogue and leadership development. His performance led to his appointment as an ambassador of the fellowship, a role through which he continues to champion cross-cultural understanding and collaboration.

*Urban Designer*

*Urban Strategies Inc.*

*Toronto, Canada*





## Mohammed Farooq Adenugba

Mohammed Farooq Adenugba is a chartered architect, entrepreneur, and currently serves as the Special Adviser to the Executive Governor of Ogun State on Housing, OPIC, and Special Projects. In this role, he helps shape the state's built environment, leading housing initiatives, infrastructure renewal, and sustainable urban interventions. He coordinates inter-agency execution of high-impact projects, facilitates private-sector participation, and advises on spatial policies that promote liveable and inclusive development.

Before his government appointment, Farooq was the Founder and Co-Principal of Realtecture Nigeria Limited, a multidisciplinary practice specialising in architecture, construction, and real estate. His portfolio spans public housing estates, commercial developments, boutique hotels, tourism infrastructure, and stadium projects, many of which explore the intersection of design, heritage, and economic resilience.

He holds a Master's degree in Architectural Studies from Robert Gordon University (UK) and a Bachelor's degree in Architecture from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Ghana.

As a Crown Prince of Ago-Iwoye and the first son of His Royal Majesty, the Ebumawe, Farooq blends tradition with innovation. He is passionate about using design as a tool for empowerment and continues to champion accessible housing and resilient infrastructure across Africa.

*Special Adviser to the Governor on Housing, OPIC & Special Projects*

*Ogun State Government*

*Ogun State, Nigeria*



## Rania Ahmed Nazmi Mostafa Kamel

Rania Nazmi is heading the Strategic Consultancy department at Savills Egypt. Her role involves consulting reputable real estate developers and investors on their large-scale mixed-use projects, offering market analysis, financial feasibility, valuations, etc. To date, she has advised on c. 10 million square meters of built-up area across various asset classes. In addition, her role at Savills includes consulting on mega-scale projects and city-wide developments; key projects include advising on Egypt's New Capital, which spans over 950 million square meters of land, as part of a multidisciplinary consortium of experts. Her experience also includes working on the adaptive reuse of several properties in Historic and Downtown Cairo.

Prior to joining Savills, Rania had a long career in investment banking and private equity with leading institutions in Egypt, such as Beltone Financial and Compass Capital and multinational development financial institutions, namely the International Financial Corporation ("IFC").

Rania holds a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science from the American University in Cairo ("AUC"). Rania is a Chartered Financial Analyst ("CFA") charterholder and a member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors ("MRICS").

*Head of Strategic Consultancy*

*Savills Egypt*

*Cairo, Egypt*



## Salem Afeworki

Salem Afeworki is a global sustainability leader with 16 years of experience helping organizations reduce their environmental impact while fighting climate change. She has worked for government, businesses and international organizations in four continents, bringing practical solutions to complex environmental challenges.

Currently, Salem serves as Energy and Sustainability Services Division Manager for the City of Costa Mesa, California. In this role, she manages citywide programs that track greenhouse gas emissions, develop clean energy initiatives, and electrify the city's transportation systems. Her work has brought more than \$2 million in grant funding and energy savings to Costa Mesa.

Before joining city government, Salem founded Value Sustainability, her own consulting company in Southern California. Through this business, she provided sustainability strategy services to major organizations including Los Angeles County's Transportation Authority and the Port of Long Beach. Throughout her career, she has held senior leadership positions at Burbank Water and Power, KPMG, Jacobs Engineering, and the United Nations.

Salem's outstanding work has earned significant recognition. She was named to the "40 Under 40 Global in Climate Change Advocacy" list and selected as a North America Ambassador by One Young World. She holds undergraduate and master's degrees from universities in Eritrea and Spain, and has received professional certificates from MIT, UC Berkeley, and Stanford University. Salem speaks multiple languages and consistently delivers results that benefit communities, the economy and the environment.

*Energy and Sustainability Services Manager*

*City of Costa Mesa, California*

*Aliso Viejo, California*



## Simten Birsöz İnanc

Simten Birsöz İnanc is the Coordinator of Foreign Affairs at the Istanbul Planning Agency, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, where she leads global partnerships, impact initiatives, and SDG localization efforts. She has driven milestone projects including Istanbul's first Voluntary Local Review, the launch of the city's Climate Vision and Climate Platform, and award-winning social impact programs.

With over 19 years of experience in urban innovation, diplomacy, and inclusive policy design, she serves as Secretary General of YERELİZ - Local Monitoring Association, co-founding the Sustainable Urban Development Network in Türkiye and advancing civil advocacy through nationwide training programs. Previously, as Coordinator of Migration Policies at IMM, she developed Istanbul's first Social Cohesion Action Plan and secured over €2M for migrant-focused COVID-19 relief.

From 2009 to 2019, she led international relations at Şişli Municipality, gaining global recognition for inclusive governance and community development. Her public sector career began as Advisor to the Governor of Bartın, where she supported regional development and EU-funded initiatives.

A member of multiple international advisory boards and a jury member for the Metropolis Global Cities Book Awards, she holds an MA in European Studies, a BA in International Relations, and will begin the Executive MSc in Cities at the London School of Economics in 2025.

*Coordinator of Foreign Affairs*

*Istanbul Planning Agency, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality*

*Istanbul, Turkey*





# Woaud Al Araimi

Woaud Al Araimi is an Architectural Engineer at the Central Design Department of Muscat Municipality, bringing over 15 years of experience across both the public and private sectors. She holds a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Architectural Engineering from Sultan Qaboos University. In addition to her professional practice, she is actively involved in urban research, and in 2023, she was part of Cohort 5 of the URBAN95 hosted by the LSE, where she proudly represented the city of Muscat.

*Architectural Engineer*

*Muscat Municipality*

*Muscat, Oman*

LSE Cities is an international centre at the London School of Economics and Political Science that carries out research, conferences, graduate and executive education and outreach activities in London and abroad. Its mission is to study how people and cities interact in a rapidly urbanising world, focusing on how the physical form and design of cities impacts on society, culture and the environment. Extending LSE's century-old commitment to the understanding of urban society, LSE Cities investigates how complex urban systems are responding to the pressures of growth, change and globalisation with new infrastructures of design and governance that both complement and threaten social and environmental equity.

[lse.ac.uk/cities](https://lse.ac.uk/cities)  
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