

Zollküche
117 Zollstrasse
8005 Zurich

Approaching (Left-Behind-)Places Through Geography and Art

With Rachel Franklin and
Verity-Jane Keefe

May 26, 2026
6:15 PM
with apéro

In what ways can knowledge from the social sciences and contemporary art relate to and complement one another? – This *Public Exploration* brings together geographer Rachel Franklin and visual artist Verity-Jane Keefe. Both have worked with and about places and communities described as ‘left behind’.

In discussions about urban and regional development, ‘left-behindness’ is associated with densification and socio-spatial centralisation. The term has also gained attention in policy debates. However, it is often unclear how well it reflects the complex realities of peripheralised places and communities.

What approaches and methods are needed to understand these realities? How can the experiences and perceptions of local residents be included? What impact can more nuanced knowledge have on policymaking?

Building on talks by Rachel Franklin and Verity-Jane Keefe, this event will stimulate discussion about how quantitative data, participatory approaches and artistic processes can complement each other.

PUBLIC EXPLORATION

Please note that photos and videos will be taken during the event. We may publish these on our LinkedIn channel, on our website, or use them for event coverage. If you do not wish to be photographed, please contact our event team on site. The venue is accessible for people with disabilities.

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Rachel Franklin has a research focus in spatial demography and the interplay between spatial analytics and demographic change, in particular quantifying patterns, sources and impacts of spatial inequality. She is the Executive Director of the Center for Geographic Analysis (CGA) at Harvard University and Professor in the Center for Urban and Regional Development Studies (CURDS) at Newcastle University.

Verity-Jane Keefe has an artistic-research practice predominantly situated in the public realm, with a socially-engaged, site specific focus, looking at the complex relationship between people, power and place. She is a lecturer at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, and one of the current artists in residence at the University College London.

Site Plan

