The EU Centre at RMIT in conjunction with the Urban Research Centre and the Centre for
Applied Social Research present:

**From area-based initiatives to sub-regional collaboration: Reflections on urban regeneration activity within England**

Since the onset of de-industrialisation in England a plethora of different regeneration policies have been adopted to encourage economic restructuring and to improve socio-economic conditions within deprived areas. Such efforts have not been without criticism, including for their limited impact. Policy change remains on-going with the Coalition government promoting regeneration through new sub-regional governance structures and a new round of enterprise zones.

The transition towards sub-regional decision-making structures raises important questions about what can be expected from this new geographical scale of action. Perhaps positively, sub-regional structures were determined from the bottom up rather than imposed downwardly, as in the case of the former English regions. This raises the prospect of stronger collaborative approaches centred on area-based identities and place-based assets. In contrast, however, local political influences remain important and the powers and resources embedded in sub-regional local enterprise partnerships may render them unimportant.

This presentation draws on recent interview-based research within the Black Country sub-region of the West Midlands. The Black Country consists of four local authorities and is recognised as being the first large scale urban industrial landscape. Despite receiving every national government regeneration initiative over recent decades, by the late 1990s the Black Country faced the continuing prospect of de-population and on-going economic decline. In the period since a stronger Black Country regeneration approach has emerged. From this perspective the Black Country provides an important case study through which to reflect more generally on sub-regional potential within England, but also further afield. Important topics of interest include how a sub-regional approach was forged, what it has achieved, what have been the difficult aspects and what are the future requirements.

**Biography**

Dr Steven Henderson is an honorary fellow at the University of Melbourne. Previously Steven was a post-doctoral research fellow at King’s College London and the University of Reading, before becoming a lecturer at the University of Wolverhampton. By working between geography and planning and by drawing on empirical research, Steven has published on topics including peri-urban dynamics, brownfield redevelopment and urban regeneration initiatives.

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**Event details:**
Thursday 18 April, 2013
12:30pm - 2:00pm
RMIT City campus,
RMIT Building 8, level 7, room 6
Melbourne

**Speaker:** Dr Steven Henderson
Honorary Fellow, School of Earth Sciences
University of Melbourne

Free Event. All Welcome. A light lunch will be served.
Please RSVP to eucentre@rmit.edu.au for catering purposes.