

New Orleans: Model City?

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Can New Orleans evolve into a model city of urban innovation in the post-Katrina landscape? On Friday (Oct. 1), a major conference sponsored by Tulane and the Rockefeller Foundation will examine six key areas — health care, education, new business, technology, housing and urban planning — that could transform the city.



Judith Rodin, president of the Rockefeller Foundation, will be a keynote speaker at Friday's conference, "New Orleans as the Model City for the 21st Century: New Concepts of Urban Innovation." (Photo from the Rockefeller Foundation)

For Judith Rodin, president of the [foundation](#), who will be a keynote speaker, it's a chance to see how the city has changed. The foundation provided funding for the event, which is featuring panels by national experts in each topic area.

"The Rockefeller Foundation has been committed to the tireless rebuilding effort in New Orleans, and is excited to come back to the city and Tulane five years after Katrina to see and to learn from the progress that the city has made," Rodin said.

More than 200 participants have signed up for the conference at the Roosevelt Hotel New Orleans, representing the city's universities, nonprofit organizations and governmental units.

The topics up for discussion “parallel the areas that Tulane has put an emphasis on since the storm,” said Christine Hoffman, executive director of corporate, foundation and research relations at Tulane, who has helped organize the event.

Hoffman identified “the strengths that bubbled up through Tulane after Katrina” as innovations in public education reform, sustainable design of urban infrastructure, community health care, housing and community development, green technology and the growth of an entrepreneurial economy.

Rodin said, “New Orleans has truly become the model of how to use innovative thinking, leadership and urban policy in all areas ranging from education to entrepreneurship to infrastructure, and this conference is an enormous opportunity to bring together leaders in urban innovation to share, learn and think about how to continue the momentum.”