

Full bio

Tolu(Allah) Oni is Clinical Professor of Global Public Health and Sustainable Development at the University of Cambridge and Founder & CEO of UrbanBetter. She also holds an Honorary Professorship in Public Health at the University of Cape Town, where she lived and worked for more than a decade.

Born in Lagos, she is a pan-African British public health physician and urban epidemiologist living in the diaspora, with affinities in Nigeria, South Africa and the UK, and a deep commitment to advancing health across the African continent and globally. Her career spans medicine and urbanism, science and science diplomacy, academia and advocacy, the global South and North. She has learned to navigate these intersecting worlds with urgency and care, fostering coordinated approaches between science, policy and society.

Her research employs mixed, participatory and transdisciplinary methods to design creative, long-term strategies that address complex urban, population and planetary health challenges in rapidly growing cities. For the past 15 years, she has worked at the intersection of urbanisation, climate and health, guided by a single conviction: we cannot medicalise our way to a healthy future. Instead, we must design urban environments that both confront the climate crisis and sustain health.

She has served as a scientific adviser to several organisations including the World Health Organization, International Society for Urban Health, UK Research and Innovation's Planetary Health board and the World Obesity Federation. She sits on the editorial boards of *PLOS Global Public Health*, *Lancet Planetary Health*, *Cities and Health* and the *Journal of Urban Health*.

With more than 150 academic publications, she has been profiled in *The Lancet*, *Science* and the *British Medical Journal*. She is a Fellow of the International Science Council and the African Academy of Sciences, a Next Einstein Forum Fellow and a World Economic Forum Young Global Leader.

Under 200 words

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Born in Lagos, she is a pan-African British public health physician and urban epidemiologist in the diaspora, with strong ties to Nigeria, South Africa and the UK. Her career spans

medicine and urbanism, science and diplomacy, academia and advocacy, bridging the global South and North. She works to connect science, policy and society through participatory, transdisciplinary methods that generate creative, long-term solutions to complex health challenges in rapidly urbanising cities.

For over 15 years, her research has focused on the intersection of urbanisation, climate and health, driven by the conviction that healthier, more equitable futures must be designed into the very fabric of our cities to simultaneously address the climate crisis and sustain population health.

A Fellow of the International Science Council and the African Academy of Sciences, she is widely published and has been profiled in *The Lancet*, *Science* and the *BMJ*, and is a World Economic Forum Young Global Leader.

Under 100 words

Tolu(Ilah) Oni is Clinical Professor of Global Public Health and Sustainable Development at the University of Cambridge and Founder of UrbanBetter. An Honorary Professor at the University of Cape Town, she is a pan-African British public health physician and urban epidemiologist with deep ties to Nigeria, South Africa and the UK. Her work bridges science, policy and society to design healthier, climate-resilient cities, grounded in the conviction that health must be built into environments. A widely published scholar, she is a Fellow of the International Science Council and the African Academy of Sciences and a World Economic Forum Young Global Leader.