Photographing "Edgelands" - Project Frontiers - Questions and Answers

Why 'edgelands'?

Most people live close to "edgelands" making it easy for you investigate and photograph your local edgeland and visit the location repeatedly until you are satisfied with your pictures.

Looking at and visually exploring something we may have overlooked, and exploring our immediate surroundings, could even be considered a mindful approach.

Edgelands may not always be pretty and superficially may be unappealing, but they mark the transition between the different uses for land. Exploring edgelands poses a challenge on how we approach a subject and how we visualize it. To quote Andreas Feininger from his book on composition in photography: "…what counts is not what you look at, but how you look at it." [1]

What is the definition of 'edgelands'?

There are definitions of edgelands in the literature with the most common being the transitional, liminal areas of space to be found on the boundaries of country and town - with the spread of urbanisation, an increasingly important facet of the twenty-first century world.

But for the purpose of this project we want to keep it simple and broader than a "rural meets urban" as the definition implies. For example, you may choose to photograph the transition zone between Boroughs, between 'rich and poor' housing areas, between brown sites and new developments or, perhaps, areas which have be re-purposed.

We don't want to be too specific, in order to give you the most freedom and leeway for your creativity. The choice of definition which you include in your Project Description / Statement of Intent is yours!

Can I go out and take pictures during the government's Covid-19 restrictions?

We do not ask or encourage participants to contravene government-imposed restrictions and breaking the law. If a further "lockdown" is imposed during the time of this project we will review the closing date.

What do I do if the edgelands I want to photograph are privately owned?

We expect that most people will be able to photograph their project from public spaces; you can photograph a "private" space while standing in public space. Click here or here for general guidance and here for Met Police advice. This project is for artistic, non-commercial purposes.

If you need to enter private space, you would need to obtain permission from the landowner to photograph, and also to receive permission for the intended use of the images. It might help if you point out that you are working on a Royal Photographic Society photographic project.

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[1] Feininger, Andreas. Principles of Composition in Photography. Garden City, New York. Amphoto American Photographic Book Publishing Company, Inc. 1973. Third printing 1976. ISBN 0-8174-0552-6

Please note that permission for the usage of the images can be very specific, For this project, the permission need to cover all the potential uses by the RPS of these images including RPS publications and photobooks (printed and electronic) and RPS websites and social media.

Please be non-confrontational and don't argue with landowners, they've got the law on their side. It is the photographer's responsibility to abide by the current privacy laws.

If in doubt, it's better to pursue a different project.

Is aerial photography eligible?
Yes, but use of the drone must comply with legislation – click <u>here</u> These rules may make aerial photography challenging in urban areas.

Why do I need to include a Project Description / Statement of Intent?
The Project Description / Statement of Intent supports your vision and the message you want to convey with your images. It also includes your definition of what makes an "edgeland". A concise statement helps you to focus on the key points of your project. The description / statement and the five images should be mutually supportive.

The description / statement might further enhance this message and give the viewer additional information on your chosen topic.

What should my Description of Project Statement of Intent contain?
It should contain: -

- The title of your project
- Your name (first name and surname) and any RPS Distinctions
- Maximum 100 words about your project (see Project Description above)

Do I need to post-process the images?
If you want to, but it's not a requirement. Straight out of camera is fine if that suits you.

However, please keep in mind, that images often benefit from post-processing and adding the final touch.

Please note only JPG images will be accepted for the project. For technical image specifications, please see below.

What are the image specifications?
Images must be JPEG (*.jpg) format, file size below 10Mb, longest edge 4000 pixels, resolution 300 dpi, colour profile sRGB (please note: colour space and colour profile are two different things, please make sure that you apply the sRGB colour profile).

How do I need to name the files?
You will upload six files to the Dropbox link provided in your confirmation email.

File 1: A word document containing your Description of Project / Statement of Intent

Files 2 to 6: Your five image files

Please use the following file naming convention:

Your full name (first name followed by surname) followed by a number in ascending order to reflect the sequence of the photographs.

Example: -

John Smith – 0.doc (your Description / Statement).

John Smith 1 – Image Title .jpg (This will be the first image in John Smith's sequence of five images)

John Smith 2 etc.

Who does the image sequencing?

You define the sequence of the images. They will be printed in the order you specify (see file naming convention). You will have three double pages in the book; the first LH page will be your Project Description / Statement of Intent; the RH page and the other two double pages will be your five images in the order 1 to 5.

What happens to the copyright of my images?

The copyright stays with the creator of the images. All photographers are credited.

Where will the images be published?

All sets of images with the Project Description / Statement of Intent will be published in a photo book or several books, depending on the number of participants. All participants will be sent a pdf copy of the book(s).

We will publish selections of the work on the RPS websites and in RPS communications like newsletters of the regions and special interest groups, as well as on RPS publications and social media accounts.

What happens to my electronic images after the book has been printed?

The images will be kept until the end of 2022, to have the images available for the creation of further outputs. After that, they will be deleted.

Do the images need to be in digital form?

Yes. We cannot accept film negatives, prints or slides. All images need to be in digital form. Please see image specification.

Who do I contact if I want to participate?

Please sign-up here.

If you have any questions, please contact Judy at londonro2@rps.org or David at london@rps.org

How do I get the pictures to the coordinator?

Via Dropbox – link will be contained in your sign-up confirmation email.

Can I apply image processing techniques like HDR?

Yes, but please keep in mind that the processing technique should suit the subject matter. HDR might be a suitable technique for urbex or gritty scenes, but probably less so for a documentary approach or fine art approach.

Can I apply creative techniques like multiple exposures?

Yes, but please keep in mind that the processing technique should suit the subject matter.

Multiple exposures, intentional camera movement (ICM), Orton effect and the like might suit some subject matter better than others.

All elements of the final images should have been photographed / created by you.

Can I use a creative approach, or does it need to be 'straight' photography?
Every photographic approach, straight or artistic, is fine. It all depends on the subject matter and how you want to visualise it. The finished picture counts - it needs to convey your intention and what you want to express.

All elements of the final images should have been photographed / created by you.

Your images and Description of Project / Statement of Intent should mutually support each other.

Is work eligible which is part of a project I already started working on?
Yes, you can use images of a project you have started in 2020, but it's important that you only include new work photographed during the time window (1st May to 31st August 2021) of Project Frontiers.

I have a finished project I really like. Can I use these pictures?
No. It's a requirement that new work is photographs taken during the time period from 1st May 2021 to 31st August 2021.

However, you can use a project you started in 2020 as a starting point as long as you add new work, or you can revisit a previously finished project and add new work. (All new work to be taken between 1st May and 31st August 2021.)

Do I have to purchase the book made with the images of Project Frontiers?
No. There's no requirement to purchase the book, but of course it's nice to have a tangible product of the collated work, which can adorn your bookshelf and which you can show to relatives and friends. It could also make a nice gift. Also: the more people choose to purchase the book, the lower the price per copy.

I don't feel comfortable shooting in edgelands or engaging with the landowners to seek access to their land, e.g., an industrial or business park. What do you suggest?
Edgelands come in many different forms. It doesn't need to be deserted edgelands, dodgy areas, or privately owned land. Look for easily accessible, public areas.

If I am a member of a participating region and participating special interest group(s), can I submit two entries?
Yes, one as a region member and one as a member of each SIG.

J & D Hicks 30th April 2021