Proposal of a PhD Programme (PhD) administered at the Politecnico di Milano

PhD in: SPATIAL PLANNING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

XXVIII Cycle

TYPE OF ACTIVATION PROPOSAL:

☐ A.) Re-proposal of a PhD already activated – no change to the training project
☐ B.) Re-proposal of a PhD already activated – no substantial changes to the training project
☐ C.) Re-proposal of a PhD already activated - substantial changes to the training project
☐ D.) Newly activated PhD (not applicable for the XXVIII cycle)

Proposing Department: DIPARTIMENTO DI ARCHITETTURA E PIANIFICAZIONE
PhD School of the Politecnico di Milano

Regulations of the PhD Programme in
SPATIAL PLANNING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
XXVIII Cycle

Campus: Milano Leonardo
1. General Information

PhD School of the Politecnico di Milano

PhD Programme: SPATIAL PLANNING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Official Language(s): English

PhD Programme campus: Milano Leonardo

PhD School Website: [http://www.ricerca.polimi.it/phd](http://www.ricerca.polimi.it/phd)

PhD Programme Website: [http://www.diap.polimi.it/index.php?id=146](http://www.diap.polimi.it/index.php?id=146)

2. General presentation of the PhD Programme:

The PhD Programme in Spatial Planning and Urban Development is addressed to foreign and Italian students and is fully taught in English.

The programme is focused on research and is intended to educate planners able to establish a dialogue with the best European and International PhD programmes in planning, urban policies and design and urban studies.

The approach of the PhD Programme in Spatial Planning and Urban Development is interdisciplinary and is based on the specific approach of Politecnico in design and territorial analysis.

The organisation of the PhD programme is based on introductory courses, regarding methodological aspects and core topics, and design workshops. Courses are also offered to the other Planning PhD programmes in the same Department. The new PhD Programme will take advantage of close cooperation, within the same Department, with the other two PhD programmes in Architectural and Urban Design and in Preservation of the Architectural Heritage.

3. Mission and Goals:

The programme is aimed at addressing and supporting research on the following topics:

1. **Cities in globalisation.** The processes of radical transformation of contemporary cities explored through a comparative approach, with specific attention to new globally developing and European cities. The main issues addressed are the social, economic and territorial transformations that have been taking place in cities over the last two decades as a consequence of globalisation processes; governance issues in evolving cities.

2. **Planning theory.** Different planning fields are explored using a critical and comparative approach. The main issues addressed are: paradigms, traditions and innovation in planning theory; spatial and land use planning and the relationship with citizenship and justice; comparative studies on planning systems; relationship between planning theory and practice; visioning and strategic dimensions in planning, policies and projects.

3. **Urban and territorial policies.** Sector policies and their relationship with the issues of governance and government to be analysed using a comparative approach. Some of the policies analysed will be:
welfare and cohesion, land use, mobility and infrastructures, environmental quality and housing.

4. Professional opportunities and employment market
The program has a strong international orientation and is aimed at meeting the demand for researchers skilled in analytical approaches to urban issues, as well as in planning, management and implementation of urban policies. PhDs with such profile could be employed by Italian and International academic institutions, public bodies and research centres.

5. PhD Programme Enrolment

5.1 Admission requirements
Italian and foreign citizens can apply. They are required to have graduated in accordance with the pre-existing laws MD 3.11.1999 n. 509 or to have a Master of Science degree in accordance with MD 3.11.1999 n. 509 or a Master of Science in accordance with MD 22.10.2004 n. 270 or similar academic qualification obtained abroad, equivalent in duration and content to the Italian qualification and for an overall duration of university studies of at least five years. Knowledge of the English language to at least B2 level is required. Admission to the programme will be decided according to evaluation of the academic curriculum, the cover letter and to the development of possible PhD research which candidates must submit together with their application in reply to the admission call.

5.2 Admission deadlines and number of places available
The number of places available is indicated in the call for admission to the 28th PhD Programme cycle: www.polimi.it/phd
Scholarships both on general and on specific topics are available, in accordance with that specified in the admission call.
6. Contents of the PhD Programme

Qualification attainment requirements

Attainment of a PhD in Spatial Planning and Urban Development requires study and research activity of at least three years full-time equivalent study, research and development of the PhD thesis.

The PhD in Spatial Planning and Urban Development foresees 60 credits from PhD level courses to be acquired as indicated in paragraph 6.3 below.

6.2 Development of research and the PhD thesis

The aim of PhD programmes at the Politecnico di Milano is the development in candidates of a research-oriented mind-set, with expertise and skills in a specific research topic. To develop a research-oriented mind-set, candidates must acquire problem-solving capabilities in a complex context, including in-depth analysis of the problem, identification of an original solution and the capability of evaluating a solution and its applicability in given contexts. These skills provide PhD candidates with major opportunities for development of their research both in the academic field and in public and private organisations.

The main objective is the development of an original research contribution. The PhD thesis must contribute to increasing knowledge in the research field of the candidate. Besides, it has to be coherent with the research topics developed in the department, in which the PhD Programme chosen by the candidate, is carried out.

The original research has to be submitted via a PhD thesis which contains and discusses the contribution, also in the field of the state of the art in the research community on the research issue. The PhD research will be developed under the guidance of a supervisor who supports the candidate in the setting-out and in the everyday activities regarding the development of the thesis. The supervisor does not have to be a member of the Academic Board and can also belong to an institution other than the Politecnico di Milano. The supervisor can be supported by one or more co-supervisors.

To develop the capability of carrying out research activities, the candidate must attend courses according to the PhD programme, defined for his/her study plan and pass them with a positive evaluation.

For each candidate admitted to the programme, a tutor, belonging to the Academic Board, is appointed. The tutor supervises and supports the candidate in the overall training path. The supervisor and the tutor can coincide. The choice of courses will be overseen by the tutor, and will be formalized in a study plan and approved by the Coordinator of the PhD Programme.

Other activities for the development of personal skills and research expertise are encouraged during the PhD programme.

The candidate must acquire the capability to present and discuss his/her work in his/her research community. Consequently both participation in international conferences and publication of research results in international journals with review are encouraged.
Candidates are also encouraged to carry out part of their research activities in contact with other research groups in their field of interest, preferably abroad. Research visits of at least three months are strongly encouraged to research groups through which the candidate can acquire further skills to develop his/her research work and the thesis. *(Certain PhD programme could decide to establish additional constraints concerning the duration of the period abroad).*

The duration of the programme is normally three years.

### 6.3 Objectives and overview of teaching activities

The Ph.D. Programme and the Ph.D. School may activate various types of training with different valences (courses, seminars, project workshops, laboratories). All activities will aim at:

- creating common starting knowledge for the PhD programme; examining the basic research issues (problems, theories, research methods) which represent the cornerstone of the PhD Programme and which identify clearly its cultural position;
- exploring in a specialised manner certain research topics related issues developed in the thesis.

Lectures are all in English.

Certain teaching activities entitle to acquisition of ECTS credits (Structured teaching activities); other activities, typically specialised and for which it is difficult to make an assessment of learning and quantification of the same, fall within the scientific activities which the Academic Board will take into account in the overall assessment, but whose value is not quantified in ECTS.

During the first year students attend introductory, main courses and workshops aimed at improving research skills. Students are expected to read the books listed in a recommended bibliography so as to share the relevant disciplinary knowledge. Each learning activity is subject to assessment via oral examinations and written papers. Detailed programmes are available on the programme website. By the end of the firsts year students should be able to submit a plan of their PhD thesis.

The core activity of the second year is a six month (at least) internship at a foreign university or agency working in the field of urban planning and policies.

The tables below show the foreseen path for candidates and refer only to coursework activities. At the same time, the programme foresees that the candidate is devoted to research activity in a continuous manner, following the guidelines of his/her Supervisor and of the Academic Board.

*First/Second Year*
### Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Possible details or reference to following tables</th>
<th>Number of credits (min-max)</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PhD School Courses</td>
<td>Electronic Resources for Research</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses characterising the PhD Programme</td>
<td>Planning Practices in a Global Perspective</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Global cities: problems and policies</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Book review</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction to Research Methods</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban design workshop</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transport Policies</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Planning and Citizenship</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other activities</td>
<td>Internship abroad</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Third year**

In the third year the candidate should be devoted entirely to research and development of the PhD thesis.

### PhD PROGRAMMES

**A)** The PhD Programme in Spatial Planning and Urban Development organises the following **Characterising Courses** (see table A)

For admission to the final exam acquisition of at least 55 credits is **mandatory**. These credits must be acquired via the “characterising” PhD courses offered by the PhD Programme.

**B)** The PhD School organises every year general and Interdoctoral courses and courses with foreign professors. Acquisition of **at least 5 credits** is **mandatory** from type B courses.

**C)** Credits can be obtained by choosing among other courses provided by other PhD programmes of the Politecnico and/or external entities. In this case, prior approval of the supervisor, the tutor and the coordinator is mandatory.

### SPECIALISTIC COURSES, LONG-TRAINING SEMINARS

Attendance of Specialist Courses, Workshops, Schools, Seminars cycles is strongly encouraged and (if these seminars, workshops are certified and evaluated) may permit acquisition of credits according the procedures established by the Academic Board and prior approval of the study plan submitted by the candidate.

These courses and workshops can be inserted in the study plan, even if they are not evaluated (and...
Therefore not qualified as credits), as optional “supplementary teaching”.

In the following, the schedule for the 2012-13 and 2013-14 academic years is provided. It is possible that other courses are subsequently activated at the PhD School; in this case candidates will be promptly informed in order to be able to insert these new courses in their study plan.

Table A: PHD COURSES CHARACTERISING THE PHD PROGRAMME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Course</th>
<th>Professors</th>
<th>A.Y./Semester</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning and Citizenship</td>
<td>Luigi Mazza</td>
<td>2012/13, 2nd</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Research Methods</td>
<td>Massimo Briccoli, Gabriele Pasqui</td>
<td>2013/14, 1st</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Practices in a Global Perspective</td>
<td>Alessandro Balducci, Luca Gaeta</td>
<td>2013/14, 1st</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Cities: Problems and Policies</td>
<td>Costanzo Ranci</td>
<td>2013/14, 1st</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport Policies</td>
<td>Marco Ponti</td>
<td>2013/14, 2nd</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Design Workshop</td>
<td>Remo Dorigati, Antonella Bruzese</td>
<td>2013/14, 2nd</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Review</td>
<td>Valeria Fedeli, Stefano Moroni</td>
<td>2013/14, 2nd</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B SUGGESTED CROSS–SECTORAL COURSES OR WITH A FOREIGN PROFESSOR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Course</th>
<th>Professor</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Resources for Research</td>
<td>Gabriella Signorini</td>
<td>2013/14, 1st</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>3-5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.4 Study plan submission

Each PhD candidate must submit his/her study plan. Candidates will have the opportunity to review it periodically (every three months) in order to adapt it to possible changes in the training offer or to needs justified by the development of his/her study plan. The study plan is approved by the Coordinator of the PhD Programme, according to the procedures established by the Academic Board of the PhD Programme itself.

6.5 Annual exam procedures

Every year the candidate is evaluated for admission to the next year. At the end of the third year the candidate is evaluated in order to be admitted to the final exam (held by the external Commission). The candidate presents his/her thesis work to the Academic Board at least once a year. After each annual evaluation, the candidate will receive an evaluation (A/B/C/D) or, if the candidate does not pass the exam, the candidate will be qualified as a “Repeating
candidate” (Er) or “not able to continue with the PhD (Ei)”.
In the last year, candidates having achieved sufficient results but who need more time to write their thesis may obtain an extension up to a maximum of 12 months.

6.6 PhD thesis preparation procedures

The PhD study and research work will be carried out, full time, during the three years of the PhD course. The possibility of internships or study periods in Italian or foreign companies or external entities and universities is foreseen.
The main objective is the development of an original research contribution.
The thesis must also be coherent with the research issues developed in the department in which the PhD programme, chosen by the candidate is developed.
The candidate must present the original thesis, discussing its contribution to the state of the art in the research field in the research community.
The PhD research will be developed under the guidance of a supervisor who supports the candidate in setting out and in everyday activities regarding development of the thesis.
On termination of studies, admission of the candidate to the final exam will be evaluated by the Academic Board and, subsequently a final exam is taken in order to attain the qualification, in which the research work carried out and the thesis will be evaluated by an Examination Committee composed of three members, of which at least two external examiners.

7. PhD Secretary Services

Marina Bonaventura
Department of Architecture and Planning
Via Bonardi 3, 1st floor
Telephone: +39-02-2395165
Fax: +39-02-2399 5435
E-mail: marina.bonaventura@polimi.it

8. Internationalisation and other activities

Carrying out study and research at other laboratories is strongly recommended.
The University also offers the possibility of PhD programmes with foreign universities as well as double and joint PhD programmes. Further information can be found on the PhD School and PhD programme websites