PhD in URBAN PLANNING, DESIGN, AND POLICY - 39th cycle

INTERDISCIPLINARY Research Field: THE IMPACT OF NEW DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES ON URBAN SPACES: PRIVACY ISSUES IN AN ETHICAL AND POLICY PERSPECTIVE

Monthly net income of PhD scholarship (max 36 months)

€ 1195.5

In case of a change of the welfare rates during the three-year period, the amount could be modified.

Context of the research activity

Interdisciplinary PhD Grant

The PhD research will be carried out in collaboration with research groups of the PhD programme in "SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND POLICY FOR SUSTAINABLE CHANGE".

See https://www.dottorato.polimi.it/?id=422&L=1 for further information.

Due especially to new digital technologies, the issue of privacy arises today not only in the case of "private spaces", but also (and often above all) in that of "public spaces". Two crucial privacy issues related to public spaces raised by new technologies are the following.

Firstly, the possibility of detecting and controlling access and activities by individuals in urban spaces (for example, via cameras; the use of technologies based on Artificial Intelligence techniques, such as facial recognition, makes the problem even more disruptive). Secondly, the possibility of collecting data on the location and movements of individuals (for example, as a consequence of the use of digital mobile devices).

New digital technologies therefore create problems for the issue of privacy which also involve risks of unfairness and discrimination. These issues require a critically rethinking of the application of new digital technologies in urban contexts that goes beyond the rhetoric of "smart cities" that has influenced the public debate so much in recent years. All this raises new problems, particularly regarding...
(i) the regulation of the use of new technologies, (ii) the responsibilities of those who can collect and manage data (both private and public subjects) and (iii) the policy and planning choices concerning the organization of public spaces. In this context, many of the traditional tools used to manage these problems are no longer applicable: think, for example, of informed consent and its inapplicability in the context of surveillance in urban spaces. New approaches in the direction of so-called "post-consensual privacy", typical of "Internet of Things" applications, need to be conceived.

**Methods and techniques that will be developed and used to carry out the research**

The research is expected to be developed through systematic literature review; conceptual analysis; qualitative empirical research.

**Educational objectives**

Improve the capacity of the PhD candidate to deal with complex problems thanks to interdisciplinary approaches and methods.

**Job opportunities**

According to its international orientation, the PhD program trains highly qualified researchers and professionals in the fields of spatial planning, design and management of urban projects and policy, social sciences, urban studies, and urban governance. Researchers with such profile may be employed by Italian and international academic institutions, public bodies, cultural foundations and research centres, public and private development agencies, and private firms.

**Composition of the research group**

12 Full Professors  
13 Associated Professors  
1 Assistant Professors  
55 PhD Students

**Name of the research directors**

Proff. Stefano Moroni, Viola Schiaffonati

**Contacts**

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<tr>
<th>Additional support - Financial aid per PhD student per year (gross amount)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Housing - Foreign Students</td>
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<td>Housing - Out-of-town residents (more than 80Km out of Milano)</td>
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<th>Scholarship Increase for a period abroad</th>
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Additional information: educational activity, teaching assistantship, computer availability, desk availability, any other information

Each PhD candidate has a **research budget** available as follows to purchase books and materials, and to finance the participation in courses, summer schools, workshops and conferences:

1st year: max 1.624,30 euros  
2nd year: max 1.624,30 euros  
3rd year: max 1.624,30 euros

**Total amount:** **4.872,90** euros per student

There are various forms of financial aid for both research and teaching assistantship. PhD candidates are encouraged to take part in these activities within the limits allowed by the
regulations.