



PhD in URBAN PLANNING, DESIGN, AND POLICY - 40th cycle

Number of scholarship offered	4
Department	DIPARTIMENTO DI ARCHITETTURA E STUDI URBANI

Description of the PhD Programme

The PhD programme in Urban planning, design and policy aims to explore the impact of contemporary urban change and understand how it can be governed through planning, design and policy-making activities.

The programme focuses on territorial, social, economic and institutional transformations in contemporary cities. It aims at addressing these as a complex of intertwined phenomena, which calls for new governance, planning and design approaches. By fostering a dialogue with the best international schools, this programme is the place for research and innovative approaches to urban studies, spatial planning and urban design.

PhD candidates are encouraged to reflect upon traditional and innovative practices in these fields by participating in research activities concerning cities and regions, paying attention to international comparison. This approach is fostered through the organization of international seminars and an internship period at one of the research institutes, universities or public agencies that make up the international network of the programme.

Further information is available at the website: <https://www.dottorato.polimi.it/corsi-di-dottorato/architettura/urban-planning-design-and-policy> .



PhD in URBAN PLANNING, DESIGN, AND POLICY - 40th cycle

**THEMATIC Research Field: HOW CAN SPATIAL PLANNING, POLICY OR URBAN DESIGN
CONTRIBUTE TO BUILDING ANTI-FRAGILE TERRITORIES?**

Monthly net income of PhDscholarship (max 36 months)
€ 1300.0
In case of a change of the welfare rates during the three-year period, the amount could be modified.

Context of the research activity	
Motivation and objectives of the research in this field	<p>This research bursary is funded by the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies under the Progetto d'Eccellenza 2023-2027, promoted by the Italian Ministry of Research. It is aimed to collaborate on its main objectives and activities.</p> <p>The Progetto d'Eccellenza 2023-2027 moves from the hypothesis that to contribute to the resilience of territories and institutions, it is necessary to help them develop an attitude of "anti-fragility".</p> <p>As philosopher Nassim Taleb proposes (2012), the ability to "thrive and grow when exposed to volatility, chance, disorder and stressors and to love adventure, risk and uncertainty" and to know how to take advantage of them. The anti-fragile resist crises and come out of them in better conditions. The Progetto d'Eccellenza 2023-2027 moves from the idea that we are living in a context of growing uncertainty and polycrisis, with which scholars such as Adam Tooze and others point to the complexity and cumulativeness of the conditions of crisis in which we are immersed. This condition is particularly challenging for people and places, producing growing fragilization and impacting the capacity of actors to conceptualize and perceive the cumulative nature of the crisis and deploy tools and capacities capable of dealing with it.</p>
Methods and techniques that will be developed and used to carry out the research	The Progetto d'Eccellenza 2023-2027 significantly shifts its focus of research from conceptualizing the problems of



	<p>its focus of research from conceptualizing the problems of fragilization to supporting the empowerment of public and private actors in addressing challenges and designing policies, actions, programs and projects that can deal with them. As part of the 2017-2022 project, we explored the hypothesis that the concept of fragility (alongside and unlike others around which the international scientific debate is structured) constitutes a privileged point of view for territorial and urban research and in the design field, as it requires a transdisciplinary and dynamic look at the various problems that affect and put territories at risk. We have developed an analytical approach to address the multidimensionality of fragility processes, from geological and ecological to demographic, economic and sociopolitical, to those related to historical and architectural heritage. In this new Project, we focus on the development of design methodologies and approaches that can help public administrations to take advantage/value from uncertainty, complexity, and fragmentation and to address approaches for urban-architectural design, urban and territorial policies and planning capable of producing enabling conditions, rather than conditions that "fragilize" territories.</p> <p>The PHD candidate applying for this bursary will present a project inspired by the "anti-fragility" conceptual framework within urban and territorial studies, with a strong focus on the role of spatial planning, policy and urban design in coherence with the doctoral programme's aim.</p>
<p>Educational objectives</p>	<p>The Competence Centre for Anti-Fragile Territories is the engine for developing the Progetto d'Eccellenza 2023-2027. It is designed as an open, experimental, collaborative physical space/virtual platform and programme for producing knowledge and innovative forms of action capable of building enabling conditions to help territories manage the transition and deal with uncertainty. The Centre promotes a programme of research and action aimed, in particular, at public administrations, which is invested in new responsibilities and questions that require skills and models of action that</p>



	<p>are not always available. While the role of technical knowledge is re-evaluated in conditions of urgency, emergency, and uncertainty, public actors struggle to equip themselves with original, experimental and critical times/spaces for reflection while often resorting to even more inadequate and ineffective solutions. The PhD project will collaborate with the primary objectives of the Competence Center, to experiment with a strategic role of the university in facilitating the transition from consolidated regimes of action towards contexts of design and organizational innovation to help bring out and guide the trajectories of change. In this respect the PhD candidate's proposal should promote and support explorations and innovative approaches to emerging and frontier issues such as preparedness to pandemics, international conflicts, and climate change, but also related to the challenges of digitalisation. On the other hand, to experiment and disseminate analytical and design approaches to actively addressing the multidisciplinary challenges posed by the ongoing transition processes. In this perspective, the PhD candidate is expected to develop skills based upon a methodological approach inspired by the following objectives: capacitation of public administrations, critical feeding of scientific and policy debate, co-production of experimental and highly qualified knowledge, outreach and social responsibility. The PhD candidate will be supported by the Center and take advantage from a lively and multidisciplinary research environment.</p>
<p>Job opportunities</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Composition of the research group</p>	<p>16 Full Professors 10 Associated Professors</p>



	1 Assistant Professors 55 PhD Students
Name of the research directors	Prof. Valeria Fedeli

Contacts
<p>Research supervisor: Prof. Valeria Fedeli valeria.fedeli@polimi.it</p> <p>PhD program coordinator: Prof. Luca Gaeta e-mail: luca.gaeta@polimi.it phone +39/02/2399.5426</p> <p>Contact in the PhD Office at DASTU: dr. Marina Bonaventura E-mail: marina.bonaventura@polimi.it; phone +39/02/2399.5165</p>

Additional support - Financial aid per PhD student per year (gross amount)	
Housing - Foreign Students	--
Housing - Out-of-town residents (more than 80Km out of Milano)	--

Scholarship Increase for a period abroad	
Amount monthly	650.0 €
By number of months	6

Additional information: educational activity, teaching assistantship, computer availability, desk availability, any other information
<p>List of 5 Universities, Companies, Agencies and/or National or International Institutions that are cooperating in the research:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Katholieke Universiteit Leuven 2. HafenCity Universitaet Hamburg 3. Bartlett School of Planning, UCL 4. Universidade de São Paulo 5. Sciences Po, Paris <p>Educational activities (purchase of study books and material, funding for participation in courses, summer schools, workshops and conferences): financial aid per PhD student per year ("DOTE"): total amount: 5.300,25 euro:</p>



1st year: max 1.766,75 euro

2nd year: max 1.766,75 euro

3rd year: max 1.766,75 euro

Teaching assistantship (availability of funding in recognition of supporting teaching activities by the PhD candidate)

There are various forms of financial aid supporting the teaching practice.

The PhD candidate is encouraged to take part in these activities, within the limits allowed by the regulations.

Workspace:

In the PHD room at Bldg. 14 in Leonardo Campus, workstations are available for shared use.

PhD candidates can use their laptops with a wireless connection.

Workstations and other equipment are available in the various departmental laboratories (Dastu) linked with the doctoral programme.



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OPEN SUBJECT Research Field: URBAN PLANNING, DESIGN AND POLICY

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€ 1300.0

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

Context of the research activity

Motivation and objectives of the research in this field

The PhD programme in Urban planning, design and policy aims to explore the impact of contemporary urban change and understand how it can be governed through planning, design and policy-making activities. The programme focuses on territorial, social, economic and institutional transformations in contemporary cities. It aims at addressing the latter as a complex of intertwined phenomena, which calls for new governance, planning and design approaches. By fostering a dialogue with the best international schools, this programme is the place for research and innovative approaches to urban studies, spatial planning and urban design. PhD candidates are encouraged to reflect upon traditional and innovative practices in these fields by participating in research activities concerning cities and regions, and paying attention to international comparison. This approach is fostered through the organization of international seminars and an internship period at one of the research institutes, universities or public agencies that make up the international network of the programme. Within the contemporary agenda, the PhD programme encourages research projects contributing to topics such as:

- Urban mobility as an integrated socio-technical and ethical challenge
- Contemporary landscapes, agricultural, forestry and park systems for the protection and sustainable development of cities and territories
- Socio-economic drivers of territorial change and their



	<p>impacts on production, tourism, and services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Cultural heritage as a laboratory for urban innovation •Rethinking urbanity: the contribution of urban design and regeneration processes •Radical uncertainty and its challenges to planning theory and practice •Digital transition and its challenges to citizenship and the right to the city •Energy transition in the face of climate change and geopolitical challenges •Policy innovation to support public administrations in the planning sector
<p>Methods and techniques that will be developed and used to carry out the research</p>	<p>The integration between different fields and disciplines of urban research on the one hand and between theory and practice on the other characterizes the approach promoted by the PhD programme. Based on this, introductory courses support educational activities, which focus on research methods, comparative assessment of best practices, and design workshops. The main courses and workshops provided in the first year are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •course on research design and methods, providing a methodological introduction to the doctoral dissertation (literature review, drafting of a research project), as well as research tools in the fields of urban planning, policy and design; •research-by-design workshop, in which different experiences and skills are combined to explore themes and methods of urban planning, policymaking and project design. The workshop, organized in an intensive work period, is anticipated by introductory seminars. <p>Each learning activity is subject to grading through oral examination and the submission of written papers. Detailed programs are available on the PhD programme's website. Within the end of the first year, PhD students will be required to submit a research proposal for their PhD dissertation. The core activities of the second year are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •an internship of six months in a foreign university or



	<p>agency working in the field of urban planning and policy;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •at least one paper submitted to an international journal and the participation in an international conference as a speaker. <p>During the third year, the PhD candidate should devote his/her time to research and development of the PhD thesis. For each candidate, one member of the Board is appointed as a tutor, responsible for supporting the candidate's work. A scientific supervisor is also appointed during the first year. The board of professors holds regular meetings with PhD candidates.</p>
<p>Educational objectives</p>	<p>The programme pays specific attention to the transition towards new, more sustainable and equitable modes of urban development as well as to pro-active advancements in planning practices and to potential innovations in traditional urban studies, urban design and policy approaches. The integration between different fields and disciplines of urban research on the one hand, and between theory and practice on the other, distinguishes the approach promoted by this PhD programme.</p> <p>The objective of the PhD programme is to provide PhD students with analytical and interpretative tools and research methods to advance research frontiers in the field of urban studies, spatial planning, urban design, urban policy and governance. PhD students are encouraged to reflect upon traditional and innovative practices in these fields by participating in research activities concerning cities and regions in Italy and abroad, paying particular attention to international comparison. This objective is achieved through the organization of international seminars and a period of internship to be carried out by PhD students at one of the research institutes, universities or public agencies that constitute the international reference network of the programme.</p>
<p>Job opportunities</p>	<p>According to its international orientation, the PhD program trains highly qualified researchers and professionals. It expects them to work in academic institutions, research</p>



	centres, public administrations and the private sector in fields such as spatial planning, design and management of urban projects and policy, urban studies and urban governance. PhD graduates with such a profile are qualified to be employed by Italian and international academic institutions, public bodies and research centres, as well as public and private development agencies.
Composition of the research group	16 Full Professors 10 Associated Professors 1 Assistant Professors 55 PhD Students
Name of the research directors	Prof. Luca Gaeta

Contacts

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Further information is available at: **Handbook** a.y. 2019/2020 of the PhD Program in Urban Planning, Design and Policy on:



<https://www.dottorato.polimi.it/corsi-di-dottorato/architettura/urban-planning-design-and-policy>

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